THESIS

"THE SCUM OF BOTH NATIONS": A GAELIC PERCEPTION OF GENDER AND

COMMUNITIES DURING THE CONQUEST OF ULSTER

Submitted by

Olivia N. Garl

Department of History

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Master's Committee:

    Advisor: Robert Gudmestad
    Co-Advisor: Jodie Kreider

    Ann Little
    Lynn Kwiatkowski

ABSTRACT

"THE SCUM OF BOTH NATIONS": A GAELIC PERCEPTION OF GENDER AND

COMMUNITIES DURING THE CONQUEST OF ULSTER

This thesis covers the conquest of Gaelic Ulster from 1555-1653 through a gender lens. Early modern Ulster's history is rift with dynamic, systemic change that has been occluded by previous scholarship. By bringing women out of the footnotes and fragments, this work establishes the importance of surveying colonization and conquest on two levels. It demonstrates how gendered perceptions of the Gaelic Irish isolated their nested identities to serve English constructions of the Other. In addition, it complicates the narrative of English sovereignty in Ulster by describing the complexity of Gaelic rule and its dependence on kinship networks prior to 1600. Gaelic kinship networks, reinforced by marriage alliances and fosterage, utilized regional ties to enforce their autonomy despite increased English presence in Ulster.

This work utilizes specific cases to demonstrate continuity and change over time in Ulster's Gaelic and settler communities during this period. Chapter 1 examines the use of marriage alliances and fosterage to reinforce Gaelic power from 1555-1600. It uses the examples of Agnes Campbell and Finola MacDonnell to show the permeable and alterable boundaries of Ulster's warrior society during this time of turmoil. Chapter 2 examines the role of settlers in Ulster's English and Scottish communities from 1600-1641. It explains the process of altering the Irish figure in print culture to serve English ambitions of conquest and how those realities differed in everyday life. Chapter 3 uses the 1641 Depositions to reflect on the drastic change in Ulster as it was superimposed on the 1641 Irish Rebellion. It examines 450 depositions taken in Antrim and

Down to analyze what gendered, coded language was used to construct or reconfigure images of settlers and natives, Protestants and Catholics, and victims and rebels.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

For Schuyler,

My inspiration to persist even in the face of adversity.

&

This work is dedicated to my female ancestors who moved from Scotland to Ulster and from Ulster to the American Colonies:

Rachel Boyd Blair (1644-1700)

Mary McAuley Bell (1664-1715)

Isabella Rankin Blair (1683-1765)

Ann Wilson Bell (1710-1756)

A legacy is a seed planted in a garden you never get to see. I am made up of the women that came before me.

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Introduction: *At the Crossroads* – Gender, Identity, and Communities in Early Modern Britain

The English Crown's endeavors to conquer Ireland first began in the mid-sixteenth century to bring the island under Henry VIII's control. While the colonial legacy of England is often told through its presence in India through the East India Company, they first practiced establishing colonial domain in Ireland. The story of Gaelic Ireland, defined in this thesis as the northern province of Ulster, cannot be told without examining the implications of colonization, Othering, and conquest of its people. The process of colonization heavily involves women, where their roles in community groups reveal the levels of social control held by men. The story of Ulster is often told through the eyes of men and their military or political pursuits. In order to fully examine the roles of women in Gaelic Ulster prior to and during the colonization process, we must remove women's voices from the footnotes.

Ulster's northern most coast faces Scotland, where only twelve miles of sea separates the Gaelic countries. Spatial proximity facilitated the movement of goods, mercenaries, and peoples across the Irish Sea for centuries and defined Ulster-Scottish amity.[1] Generations of Scottish mercenaries, employed by Gaelic lords to strengthen their power to strike against the Pale, landed on Ulster's coasts and carried the promise of new alliances.[2] This connection, linking Ulster to Scotland through the power of fighting men, deepened in the sixteenth century. As the English crown balanced its venture of conquests in Ireland, it simultaneously managed its relationship with Scotland. Queen Mary I, a Catholic queen, continued the crown's precarious relationship with Scotland and fixated on a new point of contention: the presence of Scots in Ulster.

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[1] See Figure A.1 for a map of Ulster and Scotland's proximity.
[2] Jonathan Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, updated ed. (Belfast: The Blackstaff Press Ltd., 2001), 56.

The relationship between Scotland and England strained as Scotland's status was "reduced to a satellite of the English crown" in the mid-sixteenth century.[3] Dynastic struggles spurred both countries to focus their attention on Ulster, as their ambitions and people interacted. In February 1555, Mary of Guise, Dowager of Scotland, received instructions from Mary I. In the instructions, Mary I extended "forbearance for the disorders committed by Scots in her realm of Ireland, as she considers they were done without her good sister's knowledge and her hope that she will redress them in time."[4] Her sovereignty, extended over *her* realm in Ireland, became threatened by Scottish presence in Ulster as they continued to aid Gaelic and Scottish ambitions. Ulster became entangled within the Anglo-Scottish power struggle, where the English crown took measures to expel Scots from the region to secure their claim in 1556.

Marian policy on Scots in Ulster transitioned from tolerance exchanged for obedience to measures of expulsion helmed by Thomas Radcliffe, Earl of Sussex. Sussex became Lord Deputy of Ireland in 1556 and quickly determined to position Ireland's diverse populations against the Scots.[5] Anti-Scottish rhetoric reverberated through Ulster as Mary I and Sussex aimed to invade the region to secure English claims over Ireland. Claims made against the Scots reflected the disobedience and chaos they inflicted on Ulster, as one of their leaders "[had] been permitted to overrun the North from the 6th year of King Edward VI."[6] The threat, impacting Mary's English planted settlers, "put man, woman, and child to the sword" where the Scots were guilty of "razing

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[3] Roger Mason, "Renaissance and Reformation: The Sixteenth Century" in *Scotland: A History*, ed. Jenny Wormald. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 120.

[4] Mary I and Phillip to Sir Thomas Challoner, "Instructions for Sir Thomas Challoner sent to the Dowager of Scotland in Februarie 1555" in *Calendar of State Papers, Scotland: Vol. 1, 1547-1563,* ed. Joseph Bain. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1898), 196-197.

[5] Ireland's diverse populations at this time were the Gaelic Irish (predominately in Ulster), Old English (descendants from the 1169 Anglo-Norman invasion), and the New English (settlers coming from England). These populations will be discussed in Chapter 2.

[6] "Mary, April 4, 1557" in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* ed. Hans Claude Hamilton. (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1860), 136.

the castles and burning everything to the gates of Dublin" outside of Ulster.[7] Eventually, Sussex gained approval of his expedition plans against the Scots and militarized the situation further.[8]

In November 1557, after Sussex's "warlike journeys" into Ulster, it became apparent that none of them would warrant lasting results.[9] One Anglican church official summed up events as a dismal occasion, as "The Northe is as far out of frame as ewer it was before, fore the Scotts berrithe as great rule as they dothe wysshe…"[10] Amidst the juxtaposition of volatile, but failed, English and Scottish campaigns in Ulster, its Gaelic leaders took strides to respond to such efforts as Ulster became less politically distant. Its two prominent leaders, Shane O'Neill and Calvagh O'Donnell, worked to consolidate their power at the time of Elizabeth I's ascension to the English throne.[11] Rather than idly wait to witness Elizabeth's own policies in Ulster, they further involved themselves with Scotland to strengthen their position in an increasingly at-risk Gaelic world.

This thesis covers the period leading up to and during the conquest of Gaelic Ulster from 1555 to 1653. During this period Ulster as it was ruled by Gaelic chieftains under the systems of Brehon law and tanistry. Since Brehon law was the early Irish system of governance, it was closely tied to the Catholic faith and embedded religious tensions as England sought to justify establishing more control over the island. Crown officials and travel writers criticized Gaelic elites for their adherence to Brehon law primarily because of its custom of tanistry. Unlike England's system of

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[7] Ibid.

[8] "Mary, June 23, 1557" in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* ed. Hans Claude Hamilton. (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1860), 138.

[9] G.A. Hayes-McCoy, "Conciliation, coercion, and the protestant reformation, 1541-71" in *A New History of Ireland: III Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691,* eds. T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin, and F. J. Byrne. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 76.

[10] George Dowdall, Archbishop of Armagh, to Nicholas Health, Archbishop of York, November 17, 1557, in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* ed. Hans Claude Hamilton. (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1860), 140.

[11] Shane O'Neill, chieftain of Tyrone, became one of the first Ulster lords to war against the crown during this time. Calvagh O'Donnell was the chieftain of Tír Conaill. Together, the lords held extensive lands in Ulster and aimed to expel English influence from them.

primogeniture, where the eldest male child inherited his father's lands, titles, and possessions, Gaelic tanistry allowed chieftains and a group of clan leaders to elect any eligible man as his successor. This practice featured heavily in Attorney General Sir John Davies' commentary about Gaelic Ulster, where he aimed to reform its legal codes to comply with England's common law.[12] This process directly impacted women, as they held more property and legal advantages beneath Gaelic Brehon law than English common law. As the process of conquest began in 1555, Ulster society thus stood at the brink of rapid change.

By the time Elizabeth I died in 1603, Britain's first Scottish king sat on the English throne. This changed the course of Ulster's history forever and marked the beginning of the end of Gaelic rule. James VI & I's ascent to the throne of England contained Ulster as a landscape for English ambitions. His grants of lands in Ulster's County Down and County Antrim to the Scottish peerage opened up Ulster for the final schemes of conquest. By supplanting Gaelic elites on their own lands, the Crown introduced settlement schemes that brought Scottish men and women to Ulster. Scottish women made their homes on Ulster's supposedly feminized lands, in the minds of the English believed to be broken by war and capable of carrying the fertile seeds of colonization. After the 1607 Flight of the Earls, where Ulster's elites fled to the Continent, the Crown's settlement schemes truly took hold. As English and Scottish women traveled to Ulster with their families, they transformed Ulster to a space rich in differing religious, cultural, and socioeconomic realities.

Plantation schemes followed private settlement schemes as the Crown advertised Ulster as the fertile grounds for English and Scottish families to live. Plantation involved the Crown more

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[12] Sir John Davies, *A discovery of the true causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued.* (Dublin: Printed for Samuel Dancer, 1664), 110-113. https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy2.library.colostate.edu/docview/2240885588?imgSeq=62&pq-origsite=primo&imgSeq=1.

than ever before, as Brehon law withered underneath the imposition of English common law. Settler populations in Ulster manufactured their own sense of what Benedict Anderson calls the "imagined community" and stuck with their own population groups, evident through marriage patterns. The tensions of a colonial society left the Gaelic Irish subjugated to new systems of law, agriculture, a new language, and changing customs. The remaining native Irish experienced lower socioeconomic realities that placed them as the tenants of English or Scottish undertakers. These tensions were exacerbated by the religious differences between New English and Scottish Protestants and Old English and native Irish Catholics. Tensions between these imagined communities erupted into the 1641 Irish Rebellion, plunging Ulster into chaos.

By 1641, settler communities in Ulster were well established and functioned as what Benedict Anderson calls "creole pioneers." In this, they displayed traits of English society while adapting the practice of their customs to their new realities in Ireland. This put them in conflict with the native Irish who still spoke Irish and practiced Gaelic customs to some extent. The 1641 Irish Uprising was a response to the colonization of Ulster and the ongoing War of the Three Kingdoms between England, Scotland, and Ireland. The conflict was localized in Ulster, where the tensions between natives and settlers erupted in communities and impacted individuals. This thesis argues that in order to explain Ulster's tumultuous change from the mid-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth century, the lens must be focused on gender and more specifically, how women acted through and in response to gender roles.

As England struggled with Scotland over Scots presence in Ulster, Gaelic elites worked to maintain and assert their regionalized power networks. Women were essential to that process and Gaelic power as they played essential roles in marriage alliances and raising foster children. Examination of Ulster's kinship networks demonstrated how elite women, such as Agnes

Campbell, used their femininity to manufacture their presence in a world ruled by the patriarchy. As the presence of the Crown increased, elite women took strides to advocate for causes that embedded them in the political and military processes of ruling Gaelic Ulster. Ulster's elite Gaelic women were keen in their understanding of the complex, ever-changing world around them and used their power to assert their positions despite the gender roles that sought to contain them.

This thesis focuses on the role of women and how their lives were bound by societal gender roles and power in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Rather than focusing solely on women, this work takes a gender analytical approach to examine the role of gendered constructions of behavior and power within the process of English and Scots colonization of Ulster. The conquest of Ulster and colonization schemes there impacted women by creating difference between English, Scottish, and Irish populations and their customs, religion, and practices such as marriage. By isolating the actions of women, this work seeks to illuminate how those differences were often pinned on women as symptomatic of effeminate men. When women were criticized for being lewd, licentious, or cruel, it was a sign that the men did not exercise proper patriarchal control over them. This was especially true with English commentary on Gaelic Irish society as the Crown tried to justify their conquest of Ulster. Women's roles in this pattern have been understudied in early modern British history and the history of Ulster.

The main methodology used in this work attempts to remove women from the footnotes by examining military and political primary and secondary sources on the conquest of Ulster. By combing through these records for women's voices, this thesis takes the observations about women and reads them against the grain for implications about femininity and masculinity. When the sources are read this way, it becomes clear that women's existence in the historical record is often

occluded by previous scholarship.[13] Irish and Scottish women's history scholars made progress towards bridging this gap by writing works about early modern women's lives. The works that mention Ulster's early modern women such as Agnes Campbell, Finola MacDonnell, and Elizabeth Montgomery often do so in fragments.[14] These mentions place Ulster's early modern women in the footnotes or in small segments without much effort to excavate them from the historical record. This thesis attempts to widen the field by opening this gap further.[15]

These works highlight women as either the subjects or figures in their works but do not focus on or feature Ulster's women's stories in isolation. Works on early modern Irish women rarely tend to mention Ulster's women, reflecting modern political divisions and archival source scarcity. Newer scholarship challenged older assumptions regarding the presence of Scots migrants in the plantation of Ulster and revealed Gaelic kinship networks that continued to maintain ties across the North Channel, particularly the Campbell family. Work on women's significant role in the process of colonization often focused on comparing Gaelic and British as a simple, horizontal group and demographic, thus ignoring other hierarchies of class, religion, region, identity, and other dynamics of power. Finally, Canny and Bardon provide minute details about Ulster's women and provide a theoretical basis for this work's approach on Ulster as an independent, Gaelic province and an experimental colonial landscape.[16]

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[13] Older, foundational works such as *A New History of Ireland, Vol. III: Early Modern Ireland* focuses largely on condensing and delineating early modern Irish history yet mentions women in fragments.
[14] Works that do this, while laying the foundation for this thesis, are Mary O'Dowd and Margaret MacCurtain's *Women in Early Modern Ireland,* Mary O'Dowd's *A History of Women in Ireland,* Gillian Kelly's *Anglo-Irish and Gaelic Women in Ireland,* and Jane E.A. Dawson's *The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary, Queen of Scots.*
[15] Other works that contribute to our understanding of Ulster's early modern women are M. Perceval-Maxwell's *The Scottish Migration to Ulster in the Reign of James I* and Jane Ohlmeyer's *Making Ireland English.*
[16] Nicholas Canny's later work, *Making Ireland British, 1580-1650,* improves upon the brief mentions of women yet merely mentions them when connected to men. Jonathan Bardon's *A History of Ulster* is the first work of major scholarship that focuses solely on Ulster but also occludes women in the narrative.

This thesis examines both the presence of women and their expected roles during the conquest and colonization of Ulster by England in the late sixteenth century. Their presence and the societal hierarchies, power networks, and governmental actions they brought with them transformed Ulster into a complex colonial society. This thesis challenges the view of Ulster and the project of colonial plantation as one of simple binaries, revealing the complexity of relationships that changed over time for colonizer and colonized, settlers and soldiers, Gaelic women and Englishmen, Gaelic men and English women.[17] It argues that women's central place in the colonization process aids in explaining the rationale, methods, and consequences of change over time in Ulster.[18] It also maintains that the imagined community translated to consequences for the real community, regardless of national origin, language, or socioeconomic status of historical actors.[19] Finally, it attempts to create a full-fledged image of Gaelic Ulster's power network that was reliant on feminine gender roles prior to conquest.

The work begins with a discussion of Gaelic power and kinship networks in Ulster prior to colonization schemes of the seventeenth century. Chapter One focuses on 1555-1600 and explains how women's roles in marriage alliance and fosterage were crucial to upholding Gaelic power. It demonstrates how feminine power translated into advantages transferrable by marriage and put into context by fosterage. It also explains the violence at the end of the sixteenth century that culminated in the Nine Years War and the decimation of Ulster's Gaelic elite. Chapter Two explains the process of private settlement and the gendered cultural, social, and legal implications

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[17] This work shows how Ulster's society was embedded with gendered nuances that defined the masculinities and feminities of the individuals that lived there. By investigating the use of language and configuration of women in primary sources, this work maintains that feminine gender roles reacted to and were configured by masculine gender roles. Feminine gender roles were not fixed on a binary and acknowledging this opens the insights that can be found when looking at early modern Ulster.

[18] Ann Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*. (Berkley: University of California Press, 2002).

[19] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*. (London: Verso Press, 2016).

of plantation in Ulster from 1600-1641. It explains the ways Ulster's systems transformed to mirror those of England and became home to settlers and their families. While this process continued, the native Irish also experienced change that culminated in frustrations leading to the 1641 Irish Rebellion. Chapter Three analyzes the 1641 Depositions, a set of testimonies taken during the wake of the Rebellion. By examining depositions taken from men and women in County Down and County Antrim, it explores the ways women made spaces for themselves in formal court spaces in the face of violence and conflict. It demonstrates how the colonial process altered native and settlers' lives and how they were magnified during the Rebellion's violence.

Chapter 1: Marriage, Fosterage, and Power in Gaelic Ulster, 1555-1600

The province of Ulster stood at the brink of rapid change as Mary I took the English throne in 1553.[20] The reaches of northern Ireland occupied a precarious place on the borderlands of English rule where Gaelic customs, Gaelic Brehon law, and gender relations insulated Ulster from outside forces. Gaelic lords, accustomed to ruling as chieftains with large swathes of land under their control, found themselves isolated from the English Pale's society because of their societal and legal roles. As the crown's Irish plantation schemes[21] intensified in Laois and Offaly and Munster, Ulster transformed into the epicenter of conflict between the English and the Scots, as well as the English and the Irish.[22] When Highland Scotsmen and their clans arrived in Ulster to claim lands for themselves, their presence jeopardized English control of Ireland and Scotland's position transfigured into disobedience in English eyes. Politically speaking, Ulster retained its separate existence and identity by associating with both Scotland and England in limited capacities. Gaelic chieftains made alliances to preserve themselves by creating advantageous marriage matches and fostering children within Ulster and reaching out to Scotland. These customs centered upon the social, religious, and national status of women and the children they birthed and thus, women embedded themselves as crucial elements of Ulster's elite Gaelic kinship bonds from 1555-1600. Elite women were crucial to Ulster's politics and diplomacy, where their use of various types of power defined relations with Scotland and England.

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[20] See Figure A.2 for a map of Ulster's counties.

[21] The English crown managed Irish populations through plantation schemes that anglicized areas of Ireland. They imposed control over these areas to bring Ireland under greater English control under Henry VIII. Ulster was the last province of Ireland to come under English control.

[22] Jonathan Woods, "Mary I, Mary of Guise and the Strong Hand of the Scots: Marian Policy in Ulster and Anglo-Scottish Diplomacy, 1553-1558" in *Colonization, Piracy, and Trade in Early Modern Europe: The Roles of Powerful Women and Queens*, eds. Estelle Paranque, et. al. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 17.

To increase their claims to power, Ulster's lords formed what Jane Dawson deemed a 'Gaelic international' through marriages with elite Scottish families.[23] Marriage matches, orchestrated by ruling lords, functioned as alliances transferrable to a specific cause or location. Elite Gaelic women, often thought as natural resources to produce heirs and uphold marriages, infused alliances with feminine power. Their status and fertility, coveted by advantageous men, positioned them as a crucial element of political happenings in mid-sixteenth century Britain. Movement from one family group and integration into another transfigured elite women's status, realigning their identities with that of their new families.[24] This simplistic, rather binary view of marriage ignores the continued relationships between maternal families and brides, as well as ignores the different social construction of marriage, inheritance, and gendered behavior in Gaelic society. Marriage could act as a source for empowerment as well as a constraint for both women and men, based in large part on the degree which they met social expectations for their gender.[25]

Thus, during the early modern period marriage, treated as a form of political affiliation and power formation, operated within confines of societal expectations. While gender roles varied depending on ethnicity, class, and religion, women acted as agents of familial and feminine power. Elite women's roles in the early modern household left them to grapple with the limitations and advantages of political decisions that accompanied their femininity.[26] In this view, politics and

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[23] Jane Dawson, "Two Kingdoms or Three? Ireland in Anglo-Scottish Relations in the Middle of the Sixteenth Century" in *Scotland and England, 1286-1815*, ed. R. A. Mason (Edinburgh: John Donald Press, 1987), 131.
[24] While it is not productive to define rigid identities for historical actors, I will attempt to measure how ideas of these gendered identities changed.
[25] As Joan Wallach Scott argues, gender functions as the "primary aspect of social organization" that is largely determined by culture and constituted by social hierarchies.[25] Gender assigns societal roles and awards varying degrees of power. To understand how gender and power function together, it is crucial to view social organization as inherently political because it involves unequal distributions of power.
[26] For discussions of early modern gender, feminity, and politics, see *The Heart and Stomach of a King* by Carole Levin (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013) and *The Bewitching of Anne Gunter* by James Sharpe (New York: Routledge, 2001).

gender intertwine to form a basis of agency that reveals the importance of marriage alliances and fosterage in sixteenth century Ulster.

This chapter examines the importance of marriage and fosterage in Gaelic Ulster from 1555-1600. It considers the motivations and political factors that drove elite men to arrange marriages and foster children between Ulster and Scotland. By moving beyond the assumption that only men made decisions in this process, it reveals how women participated in, negotiated with, and acted within this realm of power dynamics. Conversely, it will examine the manufactured kinship network of fosterage and its impact on Gaelic power. These elements reveal Gaelic society in transition at the end of the sixteenth century, forming as a precursor to settlement and plantation schemes of the seventeenth century. This approach differs from existing scholarship by inserting Gaelic constructions of gender at the heart of the narrative. Scholars such as Nicholas Canny point to militaristic and legal systems to explain how Ulster's colonial status surfaced during this time. While these works mention women, they do not examine their centrality to the colonization process. Women were beacons of civilization or incivility, often placed on opposite ends of the same spectrum. Gaelic women reveal how the interaction between English authorities and Irish natives muddied the notions of femininity English commentators used to judge Othered populations. Removing women from the footnotes of these established works demonstrates how Gaelic society was both complex and disjointed before the conquest of Ulster.[27]

Gaelic culture relied heavily on kinship bonds and close family loyalties.[28] These relationships influenced every aspect of rule as Ulster was a clan-based society. Its society tied

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[27] I build on the works of Mary O'Dowd and Margaret MacCurtain's *Women in Early Modern Ireland*, Nicholas Canny's *Making Ireland British*, Joan Scott's *Gender and the Politics of History,* and Jane E.A. Dawson's *The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary, Queen of Scots* to position this chapter's argument.

[28] Chris Lawor, "Burning their bridges: the opposition of the Gabhal Raghnaill and the Feagh Mac Hugh O'Byrne to the process of Anglicisation during the long sixteenth century" in *Politics, Kinship, and Culture in Gaelic Ireland, c. 1100-c. 1690: Essays for the Irish Chiefs' and Clans' Prize in History*, eds. Joseph Mannion and Katharine Simms. (Dublin: Wordwell Ltd., 2018), 25.

identities and economic and political activity to membership in an extended kinship network.[29]

Family bonds, whether adoptive or biological, created identities for Ulster's Gaelic population where systems of inheritance, property rights, and cultural norms embedded themselves in community status. Chieftains appointed their successors through tanistry, where they nominated the next leader during their lifetime. As a tenant of Gaelic Brehon law, tanistry could pass leadership to men outside of the chief's immediate family. While this possibility was not uncommon, many families vied to keep succession within their close and immediate group of male relatives.[30] As will be demonstrated later in this chapter, dissent and chaos often followed the rise of contested successors.

Brehon law, the Gaelic system of law in Ulster, reinforced the societal expectations imposed on the Gaelic population in early modern Ulster. Under it, land owned by an extended kin group could transfer to non-biological heirs upon the death of a chief.[31] While this process wove together male members of a kinship network, it undoubtedly created tensions. The multi-faceted importance of land in Ulster, supported by semi-nomadic agricultural practices, was a subject of English scrutiny and derision prior to conquest. Brehon law and tanistry, the practice of electing an heir apparent, stood diametrically opposed to English common law and primogeniture.[32] English common law insisted that primogeniture, a custom of inheritance going to the eldest born son, was the only appropriate way to handle the succession of familial rights. One difference not often discussed by contemporary critics, however, was how women could hold

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[29] Adam Donald Pole, "Customs in Conflict: Sir John Davies, the common law, and the abrogation of gavelkind and tanistry" (Master's thesis, Queen's University at Kingston, 1999), 63.

[30] Fiona Anne MacDonald, "Ireland and Scotland: Historical Perspectives on the Gaelic Dimension 1560-1760" (Ph.D. diss., University of Glasgow, 1994), 11.

[31] Katherine Marie Green, "The Colonization and Representation of Gaelic Culture: Elizabethans in Sixteenth Century Ireland" (Master's thesis, Arizona State University, 2015), 2-3.

[32] The differences between Gaelic and English systems of rule will be described in more depth in Chapter 2.

property in Brehon law. English critics of Gaelic society ignored this reality, leaving women out of the discussion on property until seventeenth century colonization schemes emerged. This was significant in the process of colonizing Ulster because women served as a barrier to conquest and painted Gaelic Irish men as effeminate and less civilized. This gap sheds light on the construction of power in Gaelic Ulster while gender reveals its nuances. Ulster's gendered nuances often appear in the system of fosterage.

While elite children of both sexes experienced fosterage, this section will only focus on those bonds between men. This system mostly sent boys to other families to solidify their claims later in life and to enhance their power. Fosterage also included girls, yet boys make up the most visible representation in the archival record. Fosterage networks relied on the construction on gendered societal norms as it built alliances and educated children through non-biological kinship bonds. This also hints at gender's key role in Ulster's clan-based society and the process of colonization. Elite parents chose to send their children to the homes of their vassals for a period of time during their youth. Most often, it was a symbiotic relationship where fostering elite children could grant loyalty, funds, status, or influence to foster parents.[33] Through this custom, Ulster's elites created another dynamic of the kingroup and used it to reinforce their status in Gaelic society. Foster parents took pride in their association with elite families and often reflected the masculine aspect of parenting that accompanied this system. Fosterage appeared as a way to "nourishe sure friendship, so beneficiall every waie that commonly five hundred kyne and better are geven in reward to wynne a noblemans childe to foster."[34] Families could 'wynne' the right to foster an elite couple's child through coming to a mutually beneficial arrangement. While the benefits of

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[33] Clodagh Tait, "'Kindred Without End': Wet-Nursing, Fosterage and Emotion in Ireland, c. 1550-1720" in *Irish Economic and Social History* 47, no. 1 (2020): 20.

[34] Edmund Campion, "Campion's historie of Ireland: the first book" in *A historie of Ireland* (1571), eds. Rudolf B. Gottfried and James Ware (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1940), 44.

manufactured kinship relations upheld relations between adults, it also prescribed meaning to children raised in a secondary familial group. Their formative years with foster families helped protect them from violence and created strong alliances later in life. Contested tanistry claims could impose violence upon vulnerable children by their biological kin.

The social consequences embedded in fostering elite children could deem a child's bonds to their foster family as more important than ones with blood.[35] This custom, practiced in Ulster since the early medieval period, constructed fostered children's world view and assigned emotional bonds that often survived for their whole lifetimes. Foster brothers, in particular, experienced the lasting effects of social bonds communicated through political power. They often depended on these bonds to reinforce their kinship networks by assigning positions within their militaristic forces and households. Many men fostered as children had an additional name from their foster family or the place where they spent their youth.[36] One example of this ancient custom, displayed by Turlough Luineach O'Neill, demonstrates how Luineach designated his formative years spent with the O'Luney family. O'Neill was commonly referred in letters as Turlough Luineach and this gesture displayed manufactured kinship bonds at work.[37] His status, built through fosterage, connected him to several sources of power in Ulster. As the O'Neill chieftain fostered by the O'Luneys, Turlough extended influence through showing strength attributed to his biological and foster families.[38] Turlough's name signified the alliances and loyalties he maintained through his

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[35] Anne Laurence, "The Cradle to the Grave: English Observation of Irish Social Customs in the Seventeenth Century," in *The Seventeenth Century* 3, no. 1 (1988): 77.

[36] Hill, *An Historical Account of the Macdonnells of Antrim,* 27.

[37] For examples see: Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex, to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, June 29, 1575, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 3: 1571-1575, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 886 and Sir Henry Sidney to Lords of the Council, March 17, 1576, in in *Letters and Memorials of Sir Henry Sidney*, Vol. I, ed. Arthur Collins (London: T. Osborne, 1746), 164-168.

[38] The scholarship on fosterage during the early modern period is sparse and mostly focuses on the ways it was codified in Brehon law. When it is discussed, it is done in context with English commentary about Irish customs and law during this time. Chapter 2 will explore these themes more.

foster family, upholding Gaelic power's kinship networks by publicly acknowledging this special role.

The influence of fosterage often extended on a generational level as fostered men used their own wards for status, maintenance of the kingroup, and sometimes, political maneuvers. The transference of sons to other households as a way to bolster political power functioned differently when upholding agreements and symbolized a bond of good faith between both parties.[39] Femininity also had a role in this process as women had the legal right to name their sons' fathers, eliminating bastardy common under England primogeniture. This meant that women had power in relation to men and their femininity could both transform gendered power and be used as a marker of difference. Turlough O'Neill, for example, offered his son and his foster brother's son as pledges to uphold a peace agreement he made with Elizabeth I.[40] In this instance, Turlough's son and foster son fulfilled a promise of peace in a way similar to traditional fosterage agreements. While staying with Sir Walter Devereux, the young men symbolized their biological families, the multi-generational bonds of fosterage, and compromise or the threat of negotiating with the English.[41] On an individual level, their experiences formed bonds they could rely on later in life and exposed them to English customs in an ever-changing world. In fact, some Gaelic men were fostered by English families and formed unique, nested identities as Ulster moved into the Crown's orbit.

Gaelic women, crucial to kinship networks, fulfilled certain feminine roles focused around the social emphasis placed on hospitality. Hospitality was one of the privileges a chief enjoyed

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[39] Daughters were sometimes involved in fosterage but I have found little evidence of it in the records.

[40] Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex, to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, June 29, 1575, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 3: 1571-1575, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 886.

[41] Turlough's ability to pledge both his son and foster brother's son reveals the closely knitted bonds between foster brothers during this time. Turlough negotiated this arrangement with the assistance of his foster family, likely using the connections to provide security for his kingroup at large. Multi-generational connections underpinned Turlough's ability to negotiate with English forces and allowed him to strengthen his powers of negotiation by sending two young men in his kingroup.

through demanding patronage of his followers and could take form through requiring food and lodging as a traveler, the right to be entertained by his liegemen, or billeting of servants on the inhabitants of his landholdings.[42] Women were key to providing the honor associated with hospitality practices, their place in elite households situating them amongst the structure upheld by servants, bards, hereditary physicians, priests, and other members of the Gaelic literary class.[43] Exposure to what Katharine Simms deems "the wealth of vernacular learning" may have created circumstances for elite women's literacy through bardic poetry.[44] Their realities, while inaccessible to women of lower classes, opened up opportunities to yield feminine power in Ulster prior to the imposition of English common law in the early seventeenth century.

Women in Gaelic society, contained by the Catholic faith and patriarchal familial control, had limited formal privileges under customary and secular Brehon law.[45] Brehon law, first formulated in the ancient period, evaluated individuals on their social position, birth, and wealth. Class boundaries established the privileges granted to women, where they could separately hold lands purchased during their marriages and redeem the property upon a husband's death.[46] While scholarship on women's position within Brehon law is scarce, it is possible to speculate on how it impacted their lives.[47] If a woman held these privileges, her power was determined by her birth

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[42] Katherine Simms, "Guesting and Feasting in Gaelic Ireland," in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 108 (1978): 68.

[43] Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Irish English: The Irish Aristocracy in Seventeenth Century Ireland*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 425.

[44] Katherine Simms, "Women in Gaelic Society during the Age of Transition" in *Women in Early Modern Ireland,* eds. Mary O'Dowd and Margaret MacCurtain. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 32-34.

[45] Ohlmeyer, 173.

[46] Steven G. Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors 1447-1603: English Expansion and the End of Gaelic Rule,* 2nd ed. (New York: Ashley Wesley Longman Ltd., 1998), 41.

[47] Brehon law remains understudied due to the paucity of records related to it. Brehon laws, in place before the medieval era, remain in few archives and are written in Irish. The dichotomy between written law and its practice transformed over the centuries, often muddying historians' perceptions of it. By the time contemporary observers commented on brehon law in the early modern era, they did so to explain why Ireland, and more specifically Gaelic areas, 'failed' to prosper. In addition, Irish Gaelic primary sources on brehon law are scarce. This situation, hindered by the 1922 Public Records Office fire, removes the possibility of fully examining brehon law in this thesis.

family rather than her marital one. Gaelic Irish women were not presided over solely by their husbands nor did their wealth pass into their husbands' hands, unlike Anglo-Irish marriage customs dictated by English common law.[48] This sense of feminine autonomy was viewed by the English as a sign of difference because it granted Irish women more freedom and deviance because they were not hedged beneath absolute patriarchal authority. This implied that Gaelic masculinity was effeminate because Ulster's men did not have complete control over their women.

As Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks asserts, legal systems in early modern Europe functioned as theory where codes applied to idealized situations rather than reality.[49] Idealized, secular laws reflected formal notions of socioeconomic hierarchies rather than being representative of informal actions. When we examine Brehon law it is possible to see how it reinforced different gendered, societal hierarchies in Ulster. The divisions between men and women, codified in Brehon law, embedded themselves in kinship structures where masculinity and femininity defined social organization. Brehon law cast men as legally compliant to the sovereignty of their chiefs, left to fulfill obligations of providing hospitality, political backing, and fostering elite children. Fostering elite children was a masculine role that reinforced a societal hierarchy between elite and vassal families. Patriarchs decided where children went, how long fosterage terms were, and the rewards for the hosting families. Women contributed to this process as wetnurses and foster mothers but did not make the decisions pertaining to the movement of foster children from one place to another. Women, held measures of legal agency depending on their class status, were cast as figures not preferential to men but who could receive power through inheritance.[50] In the medieval period,

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[48] Gillian Kenny, *Anglo-Irish and Gaelic Women in Ireland, c. 1170-1540.* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 67-69.

[49] Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 4th ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 51.

[50] Wiesner-Hanks argues that primogeniture was often negative for women as they did not receive the power transferrable through inherited goods or property. While women were not given elevated status through brehon law,

female heiresses' property would revert back to her birth family or to her named heir after her death.[51]

Socioeconomic status bolstered the position of elite women, where they made an impact on localized society through their ties to the kinship network. Hospitality, involvement in learned society, and attainability of property served as tenents of elite Gaelic women's identities in Ulster. These parameters help define functions of societal power not often shown through militaristic or political histories of early modern Ulster. Elite women's power took form through social and familial roles and reveals a new angle to view their agency. This chapter uses the specific case of one woman, Agnes Campbell, to demonstrate the role of gendered relationships of power between Gaelic Ulster and Gaelic Scotland during the early years of English encroachment into Ulster in the sixteenth century.

Archibald Campbell, fifth earl of Argyll, asserted the advantages of Clan Campbell's connections to Lowland courts and West Highlands clans by involving himself in Ulster's politics.[52] His connections to O'Neill and O'Donnell capitalized on the centuries-old confluence of Scotland and Ulster's Gaelic amity. As Jane Dawson explains, in "Gaeldom, political power was diffuse, being shared between a group of independent chiefs, each able to exercise sovereign powers within their areas of influence."[53] By using their power to create alliances with Scottish figures such as the Earl of Argyll, Gaelic leaders demonstrated how they operated outside of the confines of English and lowland Scottish governance. The nexus of Ulster and the Highlands and

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they could receive power through the small fissures in secular law. This shift on social scales, amplified through the lens of law, places women as contenders for power in patriarchal Gaelic society. This did not mean they would be able to receive the power a male chieftain held but it complicates our view of power in Ulster before conquest.
[51] Kenny, 70-72.
[52] Jane E.A. Dawson, *The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary, Queen of Scots: The Earl of Argyll and the Struggle for Britain and Ireland.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 8.
[53] Ibid, 5.

Isles' relationship founded itself in cultural and social unity, revealing the importance of kinship networks vital to Gaelic power structures. Scottish women were central in these relationships as they married Ulster's men and participated in fosterage.

Elizabeth I inherited a country in crisis, exacerbated by Ulster's perceived vulnerability to Scottish and other foreign influences.[54] During Elizabeth I's reign (1558-1603) Ulster witnessed further encroachment by English forces with the ambition of gaining full rule over Ireland. Shane O'Neill, the youngest son of the Earl of Tyrone, was the formidable symbol of Gaelic rule unwilling to waver beneath English infiltration.[55] O'Neill was his clan's tanist, or preferred successor, to follow his father and stood opposed to the claim made by his half-brother, Matthew, Baron of Dungannon. According to Gaelic practices, O'Neill held the support of his kinship group despite his birth order. Dungannon, however, symbolized the intensification of English presence in Ulster as his title gave him the right to the earldom under English primogeniture customs.[56] In 1559, following his father's death and Dungannon's murder, O'Neill stood as the premiere challenger to Elizabethan control in Ulster.

The situation between O'Neill and Dungannon illuminates the tensions that embroiled Gaelic leadership during the mid-to-late sixteenth century. When English officials, such as Sir John Davies, advocated for the imposition of English common law in Ulster to bring it under control, the region's chieftains found themselves at odds with both internal and external power dynamics.[57] O'Neill's adherence to the Gaelic system of rule positioned him as Ulster's more powerful lord, where he raided the Pale and waged war on Calvagh O'Donnell, an ally to the

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[54] Hayes-McCoy, 80-81.

[55] The title of Earl of Tyrone was an English one, reflecting Gaelic Ulster's ongoing attempts for recognition of their political aims.

[56] Ellis, 268. This was significant as his official title symbolized his ties to English ambitions, therefore affiliating himself with them.

[57] John Davies' outspoken views on Irish society and law will be analyzed in Chapter 2.

crown.[58] The combination of his power, use of Scots mercenaries forces, and ambition worsened English views of Gaelic rule. O'Neill's actions positioned him as a traitorous usurper to English order, as he sought "to repossesse himself of his father's and brother's estates and possessions, and feloniously and trayterusly cause his men to pray and borne dyverse of the possessions of her Majestie's true and good subjects in the Englysh pale."[59]

As Sussex, Lord Deputy of Ireland, intensified his attempts to subdue Ulster, O'Neill viewed the efforts as "an unjust war against me."[60] His movement through the region came to a halt as he was summoned to the court of Elizabeth in January 1562. While the two powers attempted to reach an agreement, O'Neill's presence in London sparked curiosity via offering a glimpse of the 'wild' or 'barbarous' Gaelic Irish the crown tried to manage in Ulster.[61] This moment served as a glimpse of the future of Gaelic-Anglo relations as O'Neill and Elizabeth reached a temporary truce. This agreement, meant to subdue O'Neill from wreaking more havoc on English rule in Ireland, failed. Upon his return, he violently reasserted his power until his death in 1567. O'Neill justified the turmoil and violence in Ulster by asserting his place as rightful ruler over the region's lands by stating "with this sword I won them, with this sword I will keep them."[62] His position as the warlord and chieftain posed him as a defender of his people and lands, linking Gaelic masculinity to the violence and turmoil often needed to hold territories.

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[58] Bardon, 76.

[59] Thomas Radcliffe, Earl of Sussex, "No. I: A Proclamation, Set forth by the honorable Erle of Sussex, Lord Leutenant Generall of the Quene's Majestie's realme of Ierland, with th'assent, and consent, of the Nobelytie and Counsell of the same realme," in *State Papers of Ireland, 1561*, *4.* Published in "Original Letters in the Irish and Latin Languages, by Shane O'Neill, Prince of Tyrone, and Proclamation of High Treason against Him by Queen Elizabeth" *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* First Series, Vol. 5 (1857), 262.

[60] Shane O'Neill to Thomas Radcliffe, Earl of Sussex, July 1, 1561 in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* First Series, Vol. 5 (1857), 268.

[61] Bardon, 77.

[62] Shane O'Neill to Sir Henry Sidney, February 5, 1566, in *Ireland under the Tudors*, Vol. 2, ed. Richard Bagwell. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1885), 104.

O'Neill's violent display of power reveals one way Gaelic society transformed as a response to English presence in Ulster. As the nature of relations with Gaelic Ireland changed throughout the sixteenth century, the crown made allies out of Catholic Gaelic lords and granted them peerage ranks, such as earldoms.[63] In a clear rejection of the ascent of a new Protestant monarch, three rebellions took place in Elizabethan Ireland to assert power and customs intrinsic to Gaelic society. O'Neill's was the first, followed by the Earl of Desmond's rebellion in Munster, and finally Tyrone's Rebellion at the end of the century. These displays of militaristic and political power were a localized response to English colonial ambitions coming out of Dublin.[64]

By 1569, two years after Shane O'Neill's death, a new chief assumed power as the head of the O'Neills in Tyrone. Turlough Luineach O'Neill, named so because he spent his childhood being fostered by the O'Luney family, serves as a point of departure to explore how marriage and fosterage underpinned Gaelic power in Ulster.[65] As mentioned earlier, Scotland and Ulster formed a connection over the centuries as Scots mercenaries and weapons supported the power of the Gaelic world. The interwoven polities, reinforced by the transfer of power in militaristic capacities, also strengthened their bonds through marriages and fosterage. As Dawson reminds us, "the structures of government were important, but at each level of the political process it was the personal and kin networks that ensured they worked."[66] Such bonds were reinforced by the 1569 marriage of Turlough Luineach O'Neill and Agnes Campbell, a Scottish widow.

Clan Campbell, one of the largest and most powerful Highland clans, held the earldom of Argyll. Ruling Argyll granted the Campbells political autonomy, where they preserved clan unity

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[63] Shane O'Neill's father and half-brother embodied the creation of English peerage ranks beyond the Pale. While both relatives certainly accepted their English titles to some extent, this thesis does not examine their decisions to do so.

[64] Dublin was the English seat of power in Ireland and served as the core of colonial power.

[65] Bardon, 81.

[66] Dawson, *The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary, Queen of Scots*, 11.

through dual involvement in both Highland and Lowland society. While calling on cadet branches to acknowledge the clan's status in the *Gàidhealtachd*, or the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the Campbells also situated themselves within the intellectual and political realm of the Lowlands.[67] Possessing the ability to impact both worlds meant that the clan was recognized not only by other Gaelic kin-groups but the Scottish crown as well.[68]

Highland clans like the Campbells placed their primary responsibility on protecting their family units from the threat of power challenges. Underpinned by a collective identity, clans strove to enhance their status through loyalties, fosterage, and marriage alliances. The creation of ties between clans was similar to the habits of Gaelic rulers in Ulster as the same three tenants applied there. In the *Gaeltacht* clans attached meaning to the communities they created through the transference and transfiguration of power.[69] Loyalty took form through respect for and obedience to a laird or chieftain and his respective land holdings. Environmental factors drove Gaelic leaders, in both regions, to capitalize and use terrain for the maintenance of their power through the landscape. During this time, territorial holdings were synonymous with power and symbolized the literal foundation and self-image of elite kin-groups in opposition to other clans and the English.[70]

Close associations with land, and the power it imbued, stabilized the power held by leaders in Ulster and Scotland. If land was the formidable place where foundations of political autonomy were laid, what role did the household play in upholding its power? As mentioned earlier, elite households in the *Gaeltacht* structured themselves around elements of hospitality and maintaining relationships within their social network. Gaelic lords saw themselves as superior to their English

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[67] Ibid, 59-62.

[68] Evidence of this in the sixteenth century is found in the 1553 marriage between Archibald Campbell, fifth earl of Argyll, and Jane Stewart, the illegitimate daughter of King James V. Jane served as maid of honor to Mary of Guise.

[69] Gaeltacht signifies the Scottish speaking world.

[70] Ibid, 12.

enemies and used constructions of masculinity to uphold their claims in Ulster. These relationships were doubly important, as they were where kinship networks and the maintenance of political authority intertwined. Authority, as a functionary tool of the imagined community, could be built or maintained in two ways in Gaelic society.[71]

Masculine militaristic and political ventures in the Gaelic world, driven by the need to defend territorial claims, entrenched authority in the landscape. The physical attributes of authority reinforced the conceptual frameworks of the kin group. An example of this can be found in Shane O'Neill's attempts to conquer and obtain other Gaelic leaders' holdings in the mid-sixteenth century. O'Neill utilized his political authority over the landscape by using power to increase his territorial holdings. Land holdings symbolized the power a chieftain held and demonstrated the extent of his influence. Before waging war to gain land, Gaelic lords attempted to arrange alliances that would benefit their ambitions. When lords fabricated relationships to reinforce their sense of power and gain military allies, they prioritized their family status as essential to maintaining order. To influence political events, as they stood to threaten or change established order, Gaelic lords in Ulster used the options available to them. Often times, a wise choice was to exert influence through arranging a marriage alliance for a female relative.

Gaelic society often expected women to be humane, charitable, virtuous, patient, and witty.[72] These terms, mentioned by Gaelic women's obituaries in several annals, reveal the values invested into society as a way to appraise the status of women. Societal construction of femininity emphasized feminine virtues related to the household, childbearing, and marriage. While bards,

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[71] While Anderson's *Imagined Communities* mostly discusses the conscious links between identity formation and groups, his argument is underpinned by discussions of authority. His work demonstrates how authority functions differently based on the ideas held by the imagined community. In this case, authority was upheld by the imagined community of the Gaelic world.

[72] Bernadette Cunningham, "Women and Gaelic Literature, 1500-1800" in *Women in Early Modern Ireland,* eds. Mary O'Dowd and Margaret MacCurtain. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 148.

supported by patronage, praised women for beauty and status, they often ignored the political influence elite women exerted.[73] They likely did this to challenge the power women had over them as patrons. Patriarchal society overshadowed the contributions of elite women when they extended beyond the domestic sphere. Yet womanhood in the Gaelic world was not monolithic, and marriage granted elites the opportunity to destabilize the social order. This was significant as Highland lairds often used their daughters and younger sons to expand their political power entrenched in kinship groups. One example of this is Agnes Campbell. Born sometime in the early sixteenth century, Agnes embodied the political prowess of her clan.[74] As the daughter of the third earl of Argyll, Agnes' blood status placed her with others at the top of the "hierarchy of importance and obligation" used by nobles to calculate kinship to others.[75]Indeed, Agnes' status as the third earl of Argyll's only daughter enhanced her prospects for marriage.[76]

Marriage in Gaelic Ulster during the early modern period rooted itself in customary Brehon law as well as Catholic canon law and was a feminine strategy for building authority.[77] While Catholicism functioned as the religious authority in marriages, Gaelic leaders acted under their own code of ethics accorded by their clan-based society. Customs such as tanistry were influenced by marriage, as leaders often had wives and concubines or, more likely in the sixteenth century, married and divorced several times.[78] Gaelic masculinity was not bound by blood status like the

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[73] Ibid, 150-151.

[74] While several historians mention Agnes in their works, these instances are fragmentary. Works such as O'Dowd and McCurtain's *Women in Early Modern Ireland,* Dawson's *Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary, Queen of Scots,* Hill's *Fire and Sword,* Bardon's *A History of Ulster*, and O'Dowd's *A History of Women in Ireland* mention Agnes, they only do so in small increments.

[75] *Campbell Letters, 1559-1583*, ed. Jane Dawson. (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1997), 9.

[76] See Appendix, Figure A.3 for Agnes Campbell's family tree.

[77] It is important to note that despite the ongoing and far-reaching Protestant Reformation, most of Ulster's native population remained Catholic during the sixteenth century. While some settlers were Protestants, such as the English soldiers the crown placed to keep the Scots population under control, large numbers did not start moving there until the early seventeenth century. These dynamics will be discussed in Chapter 2.

[78] Kenny, 69.

English system of primogeniture. Instead, it evaluated future leaders based on worthiness of any given role. Elite women in this system experienced more freedom yet they did not have the long-lasting stability of single marriages. This meant that marriages, or other arrangements, could produce a number of children whose lives were defined by their parents' status. Marriage alliances took these status markers into account to enhance the power of a family group. Women in these alliances could exert political influence as their positions were enhanced by Gaelic society's social structure and customs.[79]

Ulster's elite families often adopted new customs and practices for political survival.[80] When political arrangements demanded change, they often found solutions through marriages. Elite Gaelic women, raised to fulfil a sex-specific role in a patriarchal society, represented the political potential of marriage. As conflict with the English intensified throughout the sixteenth century, these elite women were crucial to upholding Gaelic power networks. Educated and born from powerful bloodlines, they possessed the biological capacity to produce heirs. Birthing children held its own power in Gaelic society, where women could publicly declare their child's paternity despite their marital status. Brehon law upheld their decisions through divorce and the grants of property that accompanied some public claims. Men had to acknowledge these children, as all sons attributed to them could receive part of their inheritances.[81] This cycle of reconfiguring familial bonds placed women at its core, as they embodied the potential of future generations and made key political decisions.

Agnes Campbell destabilized the social order of Ulster when she married Turlough Luineach O'Neill in 1569. Her first marriage, to James Stewart of Bute, Scotland, most likely

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[79] Mary O'Dowd, *A History of Women in Ireland, 1500-1800.* (Harlow, England: Pearson Longman, 2005), 25.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid, 23.

occurred as an advantageous political move for the Campbells.[82] As one of the most powerful figures of the Highlands and Islands, the earls of Argyll sagely used the clan's seat on Loch Fyne to influence their geographical sense of power.[83] Clan Campbell's seat, situated in the south western Highlands, was roughly thirty miles directly north west of Clan Stewart's seat at Mountstewart in Bute.[84] The spatial proximity between the two familial groups made for an advantageous match and added to Campbell's power.

Her first marriage to James Stewart, however, ended in an annulment.[85] This was not uncommon in the Highlands, as serial or trial marriages occurred when divorces were easily granted.[86] This was not unlike the marriages under brehon law in Ulster, where tanistry customs rooted in the likelihood that an elite leader had children with multiple women. These trends reveal the ways Gaelic society in Ulster and Scotland functioned in comparison to English customs. Although the year of her first marriage is unknown, the union did not produce any children. After the dissolution of Agnes' marriage to James Stewart, the search continued to find another suitable match. James MacDonnell, the Lord of the Isles, proved to be a worthy husband on several counts, as he grew increasingly involved in political tensions in Ulster. James declared himself Lord of the Isles in 1546, proving the confidence his fellow Highlanders held in his political abilities.[87] He defended his role as Lord of the Isles, asserting that he received it through "the consent of the

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[82] Dawson, *The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary, Queen of Scots*, 16.

[83] See Appendix, Figure A.2 for a map of the Highlands.

[84] Robert Douglas, Esq., *The peerage of Scotland: containing an historical and genealogical account of the nobility of that kingdom.* (London: A. Miller, R. Baldwin, D. Wilson, and T. Durham, 1764; Ann Arbor: Text Creation Partnership, 2011), 111. https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/ecco/004896980.0001.000/1:54?rgn=div1;view=fulltext

[85] Dawson, *The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary, Queen of Scots*, 81.

[86] Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart, "Women and Gender in the Early Modern Western Gàidhealtachd" in *Women in Scotland, c. 1100-c. 1750*, eds. Elizabeth Ewan and Maureen M. Meikle. (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 236.

[87] James MacDonnell to King Henry VIII and his Honours, January 24, 1546, in *State Papers Published under the Authority of his Majesty's Commission: King Henry the Eighth,* Vol. 3 (London: His Majesty's Commission for State Papers, 1834), 548.

nobilitie of the Insulans."[88] The authority vested in him was only bestowed by the Insulans, Scots for the Islanders, and elevated him to a place of prominence in western Scotland.

The title of Lord of the Isles granted considerable power to James, as the family's seat in Dunyvaig faced the upper reaches of Ulster.[89] This advantageous position involved the MacDonnells in Ulster's complex politics through common maritime pathways of movement for mercenaries, goods, and settlers. In the early sixteenth century people from the Isles began settling permanently in the Glens of County Antrim.[90] MacDonnell's last name reflected this change, as it was often used for the Donalds, or MacDonalds, who settled in Ireland. Their presence there upset the Crown's weak hold over Ulster, who later targeted Scottish presence in Ulster until policy shift took place under James I. Power, achieved through expansion to and settlement in Ulster, was evident in James MacDonnell's letter to Henry VIII where he signed off as "of Dunnewaik and the Glinnis."[91] This was significant as his signature reinforced his geographical sense of power attributed to his reign as Lord of the Isles, solidifying his position an ever-connected world.

Given the ongoing entanglement of English, Scottish, and Gaelic Irish powers in Ulster during this time, Agnes' marriage to James MacDonnell was a logical choice. While Agnes did not have a choice in spouse, she asserted herself through giving counsel to James. One early historian claimed she "had perhaps excited doubts in his mind as to the desirability of destroying the Argyle power."[92] This insight, while merely fragmentary, reveals the power Agnes could have held in her marital arrangement and how some sources blamed her for his aggressions. While we

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[88] Ibid.

[89] See Appendix, Figure A.4 for a regional map of the Islands and Ulster.

[90] Paterson, 84.

[91] James MacDonnell to Deputy and Council of Ireland, January 24, 1546, in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII,* Vol. 21, eds. E.J. Gairdner and R.H. Brodie (London: His Majesty's Commission for State Papers, 1908), 50.

[92] Richard Bagwell, *Ireland Under the Tudors,* Vol. 1 (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1885), 281-282.

must take care not to assume things from this small fragment, it makes sense that she would speak her mind on affairs concerning Argyll. As the daughter of the third earl and actively involved in the fifth earl's affairs, she developed her keen nature through being perceptive and sharp in her evaluation of the time's political climate as well as writing letters to Scottish, English, and Gaelic Irish political figures.[93]

Agnes' formative years in the Highlands involved her in a world where her family's status was synonymous with regional and national power. The Earls of Argyll worked with Scotland's monarchs, where they exerted influence in the Lowlands through involvement in parliament, legal matters, and diplomacy.[94] As Agnes became more visible in the realm of politics during her marriage to James MacDonnell, she used this experience to navigate her own status in the world. Moving from single to married status exacerbated the sharp discernment she inherited through familial circumstances. Unwilling to remain idle, Agnes created a role for herself imbued with power and agency not often afforded to women of the time. For the rest of her life, Agnes' marriages entangled her in Ulster's ongoing tensions and made her a well-known figure among the English, Scottish, and Gaelic Irish alike.

The Crown's influence over MacDonnell's affairs extended beyond James himself, encompassing the fifth earl of Argyll and Shane O'Neill's Irish enemies.[95] Deputy Sidney and Elizabeth's secretary, Sir William Cecil, strove to use Argyll's connections with MacDonnell against Shane O'Neill's reign in Ulster to divide and conquer. This alliance came into fruition as

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[93] Very few accessible records speak of Agnes Campbell. Yet, those that do mention her wit, sharpness, and the 'dominance' she held over her third husband, Turlough Luineach O'Neill. I will discuss these attributes later in this chapter.

[94] Examples of this in Agnes' father's time as earl can be found in the following sources: Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, August 3, 1526, in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of King Henry VIII,* Vol. 4, ed. J.S. Brewer (London: Longman & Co., 1870), 693. and Scotland, 1526, in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of King Henry VIII,* Vol. 4, ed. J.S. Brewer (London: Longman & Co., 1870), 646.

[95] Ciaran Brady, *Shane O'Neill* (Dublin: Historical Association of Ireland by University College Dublin Press, 2015), 59.

Elizabeth authorized the subjugation of O'Neill to end the "continuance" of his "evil disposition."[96] While O'Neill was the target, he was not unaware of the events surrounding his unpopularity with the English. He proposed marriage as a solution to the flux and flow of Ulster's affairs, where he hoped to marry Argyll's sister to form his own alliance.[97] Ironically, the agreement to subdue O'Neill solidified because of the marriage between the Earl of Argyll's stepmother, Katherine MacLean, and the lord of Tír Conaill in County Donegal.[98] As Argyll showed in orchestrating this match, marriage alliances proved to be a worthy venture in procuring power.

Upon Shane O'Neill's return from court in London in 1562, violence signalled the chaos that would soon engulf the region.[99] Agnes Campbell held a personal stake in the ongoing tensions between Ulster and Scotland's factions, signalled by her 1564 letter to the Laird of Glenorchy.[100] She wrote him to "advertiss yoww of thair dayat [date] befoir thair cumin [coming] to Scotland."[101] Her warning was issued against the MacGregor men working with Sorley Boy MacDonnell and demonstrates her political knowledge. Her status as a Campbell divided her attention between Scotland and Ulster, where she used her literacy to take an active role in ongoing events. Informing her clansman of the movement of people from Ulster implied that Agnes was a symbol of familial power and information in her marriage as well. She was the bond that connected Glenorchy to

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[96] Elizabeth I to Lord Lieutenant Sussex, August 15, 1560, in *Calendar of the State Papers relating to Ireland, of the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth (1509-1603),* Vol. 1: 1509-1573, ed. Hans Claude Hamilton (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1860), 161.

[97] O'Neill to the Earl of Argyle, July 19, 1560, in *Calendar of the State Papers relating to Ireland, of the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth (1509-1603),* Vol. 1: 1509-1573, ed. Hans Claude Hamilton (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1860), 160.

[98] William Maitland to William Cecil, April 10, 1560, in *Calendar of State Papers Foreign, Elizabeth, 1558-1589*, Vol. 2: 1559-1560, ed. Joseph Stevenson (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1865), 525.

[99] Details about O'Neill's court visit can be found on p. 8-9.

[100] Glenorchy was Colin Campbell, the sixth laird of one of Clan Campbell's major cadet branches.

[101] Agnes Campbell, Lady Dunivaig to Glenorchy, September 11, 1564, in *Campbell Letters, 1559-1583*, ed. Jane E.A. Dawson, (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1997), 81.

regional events beyond the central Highlands.[102] This letter reveals that while MacDonnell reconfigured his plans for Ulster, she promoted a sense of diplomacy. Her literacy, proved through this and later sources, established her as a contributor to the workings of elite Gaelic power.

Agnes Campbell's status as a powerful, elite woman in Ulster reflected her nested identities. In one view, she was a Campbell and extended the clan's virtues through literacy, keen political discernment, and feminine power. Sharing the events in Ulster with a Scottish laird demonstrated the intimate knowledge she had by birth and literacy. Her role as a MacDonnell elevated her Scottish identity, where her marriage offered localized knowledge on the struggle for power in Ulster. Letters written by Agnes' hand created a network of communication linking Ulster to Scotland. She was the nexus of her personal connections, aiding both regions with information crucial to ongoing political maneuvers.

By 1565, the tides turned against the Argyll-MacDonnell alliance as O'Neill proposed full-fledged war against the MacDonnells to prove his loyalty to the crown and earn the title of Earl of Tyrone.[103] As MacDonnell's Scottish forces entered County Down, O'Neill's men met them at each challenge. The final battle, in the valley of Glentaisie, left James MacDonnell as a prisoner of O'Neill on May 2, 1565; he succumbed to his injuries in July 1565.[104] His death bestowed Agnes Campbell with the status of widow and its life-altering changes. Enmeshed in being both a widow of the clan leader and a mother of five children, Agnes must have experienced incredible forces that pushed and pulled her in several directions towards her unknown future. Her children Archibald, Angus, Ranald, Finola, and Catherine became involved in Ulster-Scotland-England relations as time went on. Regardless of her widowed status, her next marital arrangement

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[102] Glenorchy is northwest of modern-day Clifton, Scotland.
[103] Brady, 70-71.
[104] Shane O'Neill to Lord Chief Justice Nicholas Arnold, May 2, 1565, in George Hill's *An Historical Account of the Macdonnells of Antrim* (Belfast: Archer & Sons, 1873), 133-135.

remained in the hands of her nephew, the fifth Earl of Argyll, as he held authority over her status in the kingroup as clan leader.

When James' death reconfigured MacDonnell power in Ulster, it became uncertain how Agnes and her children would fit into the rapidly evolving political climate.[105] She made her wishes known to the Earl of Argyll in no uncertain terms, as she was "very desirous of revenge of her husband's death and will accept no conditions."[106] Her eldest son, Archibald MacDonnell, worked to free Sorley Boy with Argyll's assistance, where around one thousand men were sent by the Earl to "parley with O'Neile about Macconel's lands."[107] While this meeting ended in a stalemate, it revealed Agnes' views on familial and political matters. Her intellect, a tool to navigate this complex realm of politics, likely paired with experience to give counsel to her sons Archibald, Angus, and Ranald. Her unwavering determination to see O'Neill meet vengeance for James' death was likely, but not fully, satisfied by O'Neill's death in 1567.[108] Turlough Luineach O'Neill, Shane's successor, became the new chieftain of the O'Neills and Agnes' third husband in 1569.

Agnes' status as a widow placed her in a juxtaposition between the entitlements of widowhood and subjugation to Argyll's political whims. As a powerful figure with precedence and experience of the *Gaeltacht*'s intricacies, Agnes used her agency to demand retribution for James' death. Her views aligned with, and likely influenced, those of her sons who desired the same fate for O'Neill.[109] The primary authority in decisions involving her childrens' lives and her marriage prospects, however, was Argyll. Before 1567, he had some degree of communication

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[105] See Appendix, Figure A.3 for Agnes Campbell's family tree.

[106] Thomas Randolph to Sir William Cecil, June 13, 1566, in *Calendar of State Papers relating to Scotland and Mary, Queen of Scots, 1547-1603*, Vol. 2: 1563-1569, ed Joseph Bain (Edinburgh: H.M. General Register House, 1900), 284.

[107] Henry Killegrew to Sir William Cecil, June 28, 1566, in *Calendar of State Papers Foreign, Elizabeth, 1558-1589*, Vol. 8: 1566-1568, ed. Joseph Stevenson (London: Longman & Co, 1871), 95.

[108] Without diaries or first-hand accounts of Agnes' reaction to O'Neill's death, we cannot know exactly how she felt. It is probable that she felt bittersweet relief, as O'Neill met his end by MacDonnell's men in Ulster.

[109] Henry Killegrew to Sir William Cecil, June 28, 1566.

with O'Neill who believed he "will marry James MacDonnell's wife, base sister of the earl of Argyll."[110] While Agnes was not forced to marry Shane O'Neill, Argyll's decision may have been influenced by her and her sons' desire for revenge.[111] To form a triad alliance between the MacDonnells, O'Neills, and O'Donnells, Argyll negotiated marriages for both Agnes and her daughter, Finola MacDonnell.[112]

Agnes married Turlough Luineach O'Neill, a match he requested himself, as he required "a marriage between himself and the late James MacDonnell's wife…"[113] Hugh O'Donnell, one leader in the alliance, also "sent to Scotland for wives" and married Finola.[114] The power embedded in this pair of marriages shows best through Agnes' dowry. The clan-centered duty and power woven into Gaelic marriages became apparent through dowries. Her dowry, also known as a *tochar* in Scots Gaelic, was approximately one thousand mercenaries.[115] Finola, too, arrived in Tír Conaill with her own mercenaries as a dowry. These displays of power through women's dowries were unusual except in the case of elite women like Agnes and Finola. As women embodied the transference of power from one familial group to another, physical and material goods served to cement newly formed alliances. Noble Scottish women marrying Ulster's lords in the late sixteenth century bolstered military power, as mercenary dowries augmented the political

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[110] Lord Deputy Henry Sidney to the Privy Council, April 15, 1566, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 1: 1566-1567, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 42.

[111] Dawson, *The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary, Queen of Scots*, 158.

[112] Ibid, 168.

[113] Commissioners for the north, Lord Louth, James Dowdall, and William Bathe to Lords Justice Weston and Fitzwilliam, November 29, 1567, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 1: 1566-1567, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 239.

[114] Lord Justice William Fitzwilliam to Sir William Cecil, November 27, 1567, in *Calendar of the State Papers relating to Ireland, of the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth (1509-1603),* Vol. 1: 1509-1573, ed. Hans Claude Hamilton (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1860), 351.

[115] Captain William Piers to Lord Chancellor Weston, August 5, 1569, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 2: 1568-1571, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 181. Various historians have cited the number of mercenaries anywhere between 1,000 and 2,000. The most commonly noted number is 1,200.

benefits of marriage.[116] These mercenaries were loyal to their Irish husbands, rather than the women themselves.

Agnes' identity as Turlogh O'Neill's new wife caught the attention of English chancellors and statesmen in Dublin. They soon regarded her as an influential figure. Upon her arrival in Ulster in the summer of 1569, when she was likely in her forties, the couple received correspondence asking them to share *their* intentions.[117] When officials assumed O'Neill would soon rebel, the movement of Agnes' Scots mercenary forces reinforced their fears. Turlough acted quickly, assuming command in a move that appeared as if "all of the Irish of the north have joined with O'Neill…"[118] By the spring of 1570, Agnes returned to Scotland, yet she was unable to return without obstacles, as "her son has kept her…and will not allow her to return to Ireland."[119] Her son's support from the Earl of Argyll may have limited Agnes' mobility in Scotland, limiting her agency by forcing her to stay until they decided how to proceed with her mercenaries. This entanglement reveals Agnes' position in three factions spread across Ulster and western Scotland, where her experienced and multi-generational identity were sometimes constrained by the roles constructed for her by patriarchal society.

The words used to describe Agnes in contemporary sources included wife, mother, daughter, widow, and lady.[120] This language reveals how patriarchal society in both Highland Scotland and Gaelic Ulster framed their perceptions of her identity, placing her as an accessory of

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[116] O'Dowd, 13.

[117] Terence Daniel, dean of Armagh, to Lord Chancellor and Council, August 26, 1569, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 2: 1568-1571, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 184.

[118] Lord Chancellor Weston to Sir William Cecil, September 2, 1569, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 2: 1568-1571, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 189.

[119] Sir Nicholas Malby to Sir William Cecil, April 8, 1570, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 2: 1568-1571, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 220. This son was most likely Angus MacDonnell, taken under Argyll's protection after James' death in 1565.

[120] These terms are used in letters and contemporary accounts mentioning Agnes.

powerful men. Kinship ties, vitally important to the security of Gaelic power, portrayed her first as a cog in the wheel of reproduction, meant to maintain the powers that be. Her status as a Campbell reiterated this worth as she married three men of prominent families. Her son, Angus MacDonnell, complicated these dynamics in 1570. As the son of Agnes and James, Angus experienced the world of elite politics during turbulent times. Being protected by his cousin, Argyll, likely influenced his views on the situation his mother was in in Ulster. As Agnes returned to Scotland in 1570, she found herself entangled in these political entanglements. All at once, she held the status of wife to Ulster's most prominent leader, mother of the surviving MacDonnell heirs, and aunt of the Earl of Argyll.[121] While her opinions did not equivocate to unbridled action, her power was not lost in this realm of politics, especially as the Earl of Argyll regarded her as his "forthright kinswoman."[122] Argyll made time to give her counsel, as he often travelled to "to speak with an Aunt lately out of Ireland."[123]

Agnes' ties to her powerful uncle demonstrated her headstrong and keen nature elevated her among the Gaelic elite, where she utilized power to her advantage. Treating each situation as malleable to her duties and desires, Agnes' life demonstrated that early modern Gaelic gender roles were not fixed within a binary. She was simultaneously mother, wife, aunt *and* procurer, asserter, negotiator of aspects within her control. In fact, her place in Ulster sparked discussions of her influence over O'Neill as English officials commented on the "lewd Counsell of his Wyffe."[124] This term implied that Agnes' vulgar counsel made her husband, Turlough O'Neill, effeminate as

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[121] After Agnes' oldest son's death in 1569, her son Angus took over in place of his brother and father.

[122] Dawson, *The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary, Queen of Scots*, 206.

[123] Henry Killigrew to William Cecil, April 14, 1573, in *Calendar of State Papers relating to Scotland and Mary, Queen of Scots, 1547-1603*, Vol. 4: 1571-1574, ed. Joseph Bain (Edinburgh: H.M. General Register House, 1900), 544.

[124] Sir Henry Sidney to the Lords of the Council, March 17, 1576, in *Letters and Memorials of Sir Henry Sidney*, Vol. I, ed. Arthur Collins (London: T. Osborne, 1746), 164.

he could not control her. This coded language reveals how Gaelic elites were Othered through the construction of imagined communities in this period. Agnes' public reputation preceded her through motherhood, as she appeared in correspondence about her sons Angus and Ranald MacDonnell. Agnes, "whose designe" it was to "make her younger Sonnes…Starcke in Ireland (for that is **her** term)," put Angus and Ranald's futures above other political priorities.[125] She clarified her position in Ulster and Scottish identity through this association, as "she sayeth she is not here, in Respect of herself, but for the Benefitt of her Sonnes, and the Wealth and Good of her Countrie."[126] In this declaration, Agnes revealed the centrality of national identity as she strived to create connections for her children through actions and their link to motherhood.

As a member of the larger Campbell kingroup, Agnes first expressed her agency within the confines of gender roles. Evidence of this, found in her roles of mother, wife, and aunt, demonstrates the influence she nurtured in her early adult years. When political sensitivities changed after her marriage to James MacDonnell, she used her position to assert her opinions.[127] After his death, her voice became increasingly prominent in the sources and showed how political circumstances underpinned personal change in Agnes' life. Her focus, set on establishing prominent positions for Angus and Ranald in Ulster, grew out of foresight and experience. She trod the lines of societal expectations as she "professed herself friendly, but the clan would never forego its Irish claims until it was quite extinct."[128] Motherhood was the venue she used to promote and achieve change in her station as the O'Neill's wife. Her Scottish identity symbolized power

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[125] Ibid. Parentheses in the source text, bold added for emphasis.

[126] Ibid. Countrie likely meant Scotland.

[127] Agnes' impact on MacDonnell's decisions is not well measured yet historians hint that she kept him loyal to the Scottish crown. While this is speculative, it reveals how the impact of a woman like Agnes was viewed as harmful because of her undue influence.

[128] Bagwell, *Ireland Under the Tudors,* Vol. 2, ed. Richard Bagwell. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1885), 150.

and familial ties that upheld her status as a "true Campbell" in her dealings with English authorities as Sir Henry Sidney described her as "one very well spoken of, of great Modestye, good Nurture, Parentage, and Disposition."[129] This statement contrasted with the one deeming her "lewd", demonstrating how gendered perceptions of behavior Othered the enemy and used to attack them in the imagined community.

Status and power defined Agnes' relationship with O'Neill, where English commentary remarked that he was "Upon point to sunder from his wife."[130] After their marriage in 1569, the pair had a falling out as O'Neill's lands "are ruined by his soldiers and the Scots are weary of his inability to pay them."[131] Again, this suggested that Turlough O'Neill was effeminate and broke English codes of masculinity. Her status as a wife did not prevent her from returning to Scotland, nor did it stop her son Angus from barring her departure. This odd juxtaposition revealed that symbolism attached to Agnes depended on the perception of those defining her. Upon her return to Ulster, she took up the role of diplomat and wrote to the Earl of Morton asking for his support in reaching an agreement with the queen, stating she "induced her husband to peace."[132] Agnes made Turlough's status her own concern, exerting her power to influence political and familial matters. She personally wrote to the queen, emphasizing that "her nature causes her to wish peace and tranquillity in all places" and asked Elizabeth to "accept and receive her husband in the queen's

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[129] Sir Henry Sidney to the Lords of the Council, November 15, 1575, in *Letters and Memorials of Sir Henry Sidney*, Vol. I, ed. Arthur Collins (London: T. Osborne, 1746), 77.

[130] Lord Deputy Sidney to the Privy Council, December 27, 1569, in *Calendar of the State Papers relating to Ireland, of the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth (1509-1603),* Vol. 1: 1509-1573, ed. Hans Claude Hamilton (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1860), 424.

[131] Lord Deputy Sidney to the Privy Council, December 27, 1569, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 2: 1568-1571, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 203.

[132] Agnes Campbell, Lady of Dunyavaig, and wife of Turlough Luineach O'Neill, to the earl of Morton, March 17, 1571, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 2: 1568-1571, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 256.

service and subjection."[133] This correspondence to the queen symbolized Agnes' nestled identity as the nexus of English relations to the O'Neills in Ulster. Instead of being an enemy to Elizabeth in the name of Ulster, she offered herself as an intercessor and part of an alliance.

To some, Agnes was "a great practiser for the bringing of that part of the realm to be Scottish."[134] This insight revealed how Agnes used her Scottish identity to manipulate societal gender roles. While Agnes was not independent of her male relatives, she impacted power dynamics within the parameters of patriarchal rule. By using her Scots, personal, and political identities to bolster her use of power, she asserted herself as a political figure in Ulster. In fact, her identity as an elite Scots woman proved advantageous in her second and third marriages. While the MacDonnells began settlement in Antrim before her marriage to James, she extended influence there through their five children. Her tenacious attitude in securing prominence for Angus and Ranald complimented Finola's presence in Ulster.

The first sign of Agnes' power in her third marriage was her dowry of mercenaries that increased O'Neill's forces to over 5,000 men.[135] While her influence over her children's lives was significant, it was her apparent force used to guide O'Neill's decisions that surfaced in English commentary. O'Neill's desires to invade the Pale, English-controlled Ireland, required the use of Agnes' dowry and the crown's aim that "Turlough should be weakened" directly impacted her and her children's futures.[136] Agnes' role in Ulster's shifting dynamics grew both more complex and

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[133] Agnes Campbell, Lady of Dunyavaig, and wife of Turlough Luineach O'Neill, to Queen Elizabeth, March 17, 1571, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 2: 1568-1571, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 256.

[134] Captain William Piers, "Articles set down by Captain Piers for the reformation of the north of Ireland," November 1574, in *Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts, Preserved in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth: 1515-1574,* Vol. 1, eds. J.S. Brewer and William Bullen (London: Longmans, Green, Reader & Dyer, 1867), 490-91.

[135] J. Michael Hill, *Fire and Sword: Sorley Boy MacDonnell and the Rise of Clan Ian Mor, 1538-1590* (London: The Athlone Press, 1993), 136-137.

[136] Sir Brian MacFelim O'Neill to Sidney and Council, March 19, 1571, *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Tudor Period*, Rev. ed., Vol. 3: 1571-1575, ed. Bernadette Cunningham (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission, 2009), 6.

convoluted as the crown tried to drive a wedge between Sorley Boy and O'Neill. While Agnes represented fealty to O'Neill, she was also the former sister-in-law to Sorley and mother of MacDonnell children.[137] Entangled in political expectations, Agnes simultaneously advocated for her sons' claims in Ulster and countered O'Neill's vacillatory nature with her shrewd opinions. Her influence over him increased as he grew "sicke and weake" and yielded to her counsel, a move that left the English suspicious.[138]

Agnes' assertion of power was also associated with Scottishness through Turlough's use of her mercenary forces. According to the English, as he grew "rather hated of his owne Followers", it became apparent that "without Scotts he is verye weak, and easye to be dealt with."[139] Agnes and her forces, then, became both a solution and a source of trouble in this pitfall. Without the strength to carry out his ambitions in Ulster, O'Neill sought peace and promised to "put away his wife" if the Lord Deputy would "do one day's service upon the Scots to make them stoop."[140] While this promise was seemingly fulfilled, it most likely occurred because Turlough was cognizant of his position and weary. Turlough O'Neill was framed in conjunction to the Scots as "an Instrument and Scourge for theim, to continue theim in the Bonds of Obedience."[141] While this era of Ulster's history grew more complex, it was also influenced by the intricate web of warrior culture in the Gaelic world.

Finola fit into this multi-generational pattern by exuding her own influence in Ulster, where she involved herself in O'Donnell affairs and used Agnes' help in countering any Anglophile

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[137] Angus MacDonnell's character may suggest that he intended to keep his mother away from O'Neill to bolster Sorley's claims in Ulster. See J. Michael Hill's *Fire and Sword* and Jane Dawson's *The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary Queen of Scots.*

[138] Sir Henry Sidney to the Lords of the Council, March 17, 1576.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Ibid.

[141] The Lords of the Council to Queen Elizabeth, September 12, 1577, in *Letters and Memorials of Sir Henry Sidney*, Vol. I, ed. Arthur Collins (London: T. Osborne, 1746), 216.

advice coming from Dublin. Known as *Iníon Dubh,* the Dark Haired, Finola cemented the O'Neill-MacDonnell-Campbell alliance and possessed her own militaristic strength. When English Lord Deputy John Perrot imprisoned her son Aodh Ruadh O'Donnell in Dublin Castle, she and her mercenaries rained terror.[142] They targeted top supporters of Perrot's plans to reform Tír Conaill, assassinating or intimidating them into silence. Her ferocity and keen political tactics placed her as a symbol of the links between Ulster and Scotland, taking up action in her marriage alliance to carve out a space for herself in the turmoil of late sixteenth century power relations.

Hugh O'Neill, son of Siobhàn Maguire and successor to Turlough O'Neill, symbolized a new era of Anglo-Gaelic relations during the last few decades of the sixteenth century. During infancy, Hugh was the ward of the Gaelic O'Hagan and O'Quinn families.[143] Later in childhood, he became the ward of Giles Hovenden, an English settler, further to the south in Laois and grew particularly close to his foster brothers.[144] These bonds deeply impacted Hugh's adulthood and later status as Earl of Tyrone, an English title, as he relied on his foster brothers for trusted advice and military aid.[145] His entanglement in Anglo-Gaelic relations gave him a unique perspective on English ambitions in Ulster, where his proximity placed him in two imagined communities. As his prominence in Ulster grew, his status hailed him as "so allied by kindred in blood and affinity as also by marriages and fosters and other friendships as if he should be ill-disposed might hap put the crown of England to more charges than the purchase of Ulster should be worth."[146] This quote stressed Hugh's kinship ties as well as the dangers he posed to the Crown's ambitions by crossing

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[142] Simms, "Women in Gaelic Society during the Age of Transition" in *Women in Early Modern Ireland,* eds. Mary O'Dowd and Margaret MacCurtain. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 36.
[143] Hiram Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion: The Outbreak of the Nine Years War in Tudor Ireland* (London: The Boydell Press, 1999), 96.
[144] Ibid, 93.
[145] Tait, 22.
[146] Public Records Office, London, SP 63/145, no. 16, cited in Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion*, 96.

the lines of both English and Gaelic societies. Familiar to both English and Gaelic communities, Hugh used this position to assert himself within both communities during the Nine Years War.

Hugh received the title of Earl of Tyrone in 1585, a position granted by Queen Elizabeth because of his loyalty and symbolic of English patronage and his role in English rule of the area.[147] While his proximity to the English seemed beneficial to their control over Ulster, he soon prioritized his own ambitions. By 1586, Hugh controlled two-thirds of Tyrone and vied for dominance over Turlough who he claimed "stepped into the usurped name and power of O'Neill" after Shane's death in 1567.[148] This claim, bolstered by Elizabeth's support, ushered in changes that led to war. In 1587, his determination to maintain control in Ulster allied him with Angus MacDonnell, the lord of Scotland's Clan Donald South and Agnes Campbell's son.[149] In this arrangement, Clan Donald distracted the Scottish MacLeans and prevented them from assisting the Irish MacShanes, allies of Turlough O'Neill. This complex web of power dynamics revealed the eventual erosion of Gaelic control in Ulster as clan rivalries overshadowed anti-English actions.

In the early 1590s, tensions increased between Hugh and Turlough as they began raiding each other's territories.[150] By 1593, Turlough's power reduced to the point of being 'pensioned off' and his role in the feud supplanted by Hugh Roe O'Donnell, Finola MacDonnell's son.[151] O'Donnell, lord of Tír Conaill, gained power after a thirteen-year succession crisis found multiple

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[147] Hugh received financial assistance from the crown during his early career and received a good English education. For more about this, see Morgan's *Tyrone's Rebellion,* 92-95.

[148] Hugh O'Neill, "The humble petition of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, to the Queen", 1587 in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* Vol. 3: 1586-July 1588, ed. Hans Claude Hamilton. (London: Longman, Truebner, Parker, Macmillan, Black, and Thom., 1877), 290.

[149] The Earl of Tirone to the Lord Deputy, July 10, 1587, in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* Vol. 3: 1586-July 1588, ed. Hans Claude Hamilton. (London: Longman, Truebner, Parker, Macmillan, Black, and Thom., 1877), 397-98.

[150] Morgan, 107-109.

[151] Ibid, 110.

tanists vying for the position. Power dynamics shifted as O'Donnell married Hugh O'Neill's daughter.[152] This marital alliance threatened the crown's policy in the region as O'Donnell, being "matched in marriage with the greatest in Ulster" could make Gaelic power too strong.[153] This conjunction of forces culminated in war as Tyrone drew "to his party all the chief Lords of countries" and Elizabeth's "best urraghs (vassals) have been driven to abandon their countries."[154] As the balance of power shifted, war loomed between the Gaelic lords and English officals. The Nine Years War began when Tyrone destroyed the Blackwater Fort in Armagh and worked to close Ulster from English control.

In the early months of 1595, Tyrone, O'Donnell, and other Ulster lords sent a list of demands to Elizabeth's Commissioners asking that "no garrison, sheriff, or other officer shall remain in Tyrconnell, Tyrone, or any of the inhabitants' countries before named, excepting the Newry and Carrigfergus."[155] The demands written by O'Neill, O'Donnell, and others meant to preserve Gaelic independence through the maintenance of their territories. Landholdings bolstered the way Gaelic lords ruled in Ulster and underpinned the complex power dynamics that lead to the Nine Years War. These demands took an international dimension as the lords contacted Philip II for support against Elizabeth.[156] Yet, followed Tyrone's previous involvement with Spain, as in 1588 he dispatched foster brothers Richard and Henry Hovenden to Inishowen, Donegal to put

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[152] We do not know the first name of this woman.
[153] Sir John Perrot to the Queen, September 26, 1587, in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honorable, The Marquess of Salisbury,* Vol. 3 (London: Eyre and Spottiwoode, 1889), 285-86.
[154] Lord Deputy William Russell and Council to the Privy Council, December 5, 1594, in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* Vol. 5: Oct. 1592-June 1596, ed. Hans Claude Hamilton. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1890), 284. Definition added in parentheses.
[155] Hugh Tirone, Hugh O'Donnell, McGuire, McMahon, Hu. O'Neale, and Shane O'Neal to Commissioners, January 19, 1595, in *Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts, Preserved in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth: 1589-1600,* Vol. 3, eds. J.S. Brewer and William Bullen (London: Public Record Office, 1869), 132-134.
[156] G.A. Hayes-McCoy, "The completion of the Tudor conquest, and the advance of the counter-reformation, 1571-1603" in *A New History of Ireland: III Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691,* eds. T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin, and F. J. Byrne. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 121-23.

shipwrecked men from the Spanish Armada to the sword.[157] While Ulster's lords contact with Spain amounted to little, continuing interest in their assistance revealed how fosterage bonds functioned through fluidity of loyalty and clan alliances.

Henry Hovenden penned Tyrone in March 1596 informing that a Spanish agent would "pass as a man of Galway" in order to aid their war efforts.[158] He believed that if the crown feared foreign invasion, they would be less intense in their treatment of Tyrone's cause.[159] In the letter, Hovenden functioned as a messenger, informing Tyrone about O'Donnell's willingness to meet in Strabane. The bonds of kinship from youth transformed into mutual assistance, where Tyrone used his status to elevate Hovenden's role in the ongoing war. Hovenden advised Tyrone on the status of affairs in Connaught and political affairs as Tyrone worked to reach a compromise with the English.[160] The Lord Deputy and his council viewed Hovenden as Tyrone's servant, "a person most secret and of great trust with him."[161] These observations revealed that the bonds of fosterage, formed in youth, appeared in the continuation of earlier relationships and persisted despite the influx of English rule. Women navigated fosterage through using their familial bonds to create a network of relationships that aligned with masculine political aims.

Amidst the Nine Years War, Ulster's lords fought to preserve a way of life entrenched in kinship networks that both brought them together and cast them apart. As alliances shifted during the war, the MacDonnell-O'Neill-O'Donnell alliance solidified once more and won the Battle of

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[157] Morgan, 106.

[158] Henry Hovenden to the Earl of Tyrone, March 20, 1596, in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* Vol. 6: July 1596-Dec. 1597, ed. Ernest John Atkinson. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1893), 247.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Henry Hovenden to the Earl of Tyrone, 1596, in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* Vol. 6: July 1596-Dec. 1597, ed. Ernest John Atkinson. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1893), 42.

[161] Lord Deputy William Russell and Council to the Privy Council, July 16, 1596, in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* Vol. 6: July 1596-Dec. 1597, ed. Ernest John Atkinson. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1893), 34.

the Yellow Ford, the greatest victory Gaelic Ulster ever won over the crown.[162] Their victory

placed Ulster back in Gaelic hands, a feat that Tyrone used to sweep into Cork and Munster. The

English, realizing the threat posed by the conglomerate of O'Neill and O'Donnell powers, sent a

new Lord Deputy, Lord Mountjoy to head military operations in Ulster in 1600. Mountjoy,

instructed to "take heed that we be not be anymore abused", planned to carry out war in winter

when Gaelic forces could be defeated more easily.[163] His tactics left Ulster broken by war and

decimation, an intention exacerbated by Sir Arthur Chichester's scorched earth policy. Chichester,

a commander of royal troops, claimed "the queene wyll never reape what is expected until the

'nation' be wholly destroyed or so subjected as to take a neewe impression of lawes."[164] War in

Ulster eventually lead to the implementation of plantation, bringing in English and Scottish

Protestant, loyal colonists throughout the seventeenth century.

While Gaelic political rule in Ulster irrevocably changed by the turn of the seventeenth

century, its structure remained bolstered by kinship networks. Marriage alliances, such as those

between Agnes Campbell and Turlough Luineach O'Neill, transferred regional power from one

familial group to another to strengthen claims and ambitions. Elite women functioned as political

beacons in these matches, embodying the prowess of their families in two ways. Firstly, hierarchies

of importance and obligation prescribed gendered meaning through a woman's status. In addition

to biological roles, elite women imbued the political leanings of their kin through education,

observation, and intelligence. Elite women in the Gaelic world exercised their political power

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[162] Bardon, 100-102.

[163] "Instructions for the Lord Mountjoy", January 1600, in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* Vol. 8: Apr. 1599-Feb. 1600 ed. Ernest John Atkinson. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1899), 440.

[164] Sir Arthur Chichester to Secretary Cecil, October 8, 1601, in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elisabeth,* Vol. 11: 1601-1603 (with addenda 1565-1654) ed. Robert Pentland Mahaffy. (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912), 110.

within the kingroup, often fitting in prescribed parameters to serve an expected role. In these roles, they opened fissures in the status quo. Their status under patriarchal rule, encircled by religion and class, deemed them as figures influential in the lives of their biological and marital families. Levels of influence varied from woman to woman and often appeared under localized circumstances. When an elite woman acted in Ulster, for instance, it was likely on behalf of her kingroup in the region they held power. While these actions may appear to diminish some agency attributed to elite women, it was their way of exercising their power in a patriarchal society that prescribed roles to them.

Secondly, power dynamics enmeshed in the kingroup reveals that elite women utilized familial status to build prominence within marriage. As women transitioned from singlehood to marriage, their identities often underwent a shift on multiple levels. In a new kingroup, married women formed hybrid identities based on familial status. In Agnes Campbell's case, her Scottish identity persisted as she married men from Ulster. Both a Campbell and a MacDonnell, and later O'Neill, Agnes embodied a regional, amorphous identity. In the complex power dynamics linking Ulster and Scotland in the sixteenth century, a regional imagined community blended political strength with kinship networks. The bonds of kin, established on biological, marital, or fosterage levels, mutually reinforced one another in the web of Gaelic power. It also negotiated Ulster's relationship to England, shown by Hugh O'Neill's familiarity with English society. She also became a target of criticism, as she was an example of the Othered nature of Ulster and its Irish women.

More specifically, these connections followed down generations. In Turlough Luineach O'Neill's case, fosterage served to create an additional identity that assigned familial bonds to his exertion of power in Ulster. When men identified their foster family through their names, it

reinforced the mutually supportive kingroup in a world where familial ties differentiated between success and failure. Hugh O'Neill's unique fosterage by both Gaelic and English families demonstrated how kinship impacted an individual's world view. His keen observation of English customs served him well as he straddled the barrier between English and Gaelic Ulster, two worlds on a collision course by the late sixteenth century. The mutual aid built into fosterage allowed O'Neill to call on his English foster brothers during the chaos leading to the Nine Years War.

The kinship bonds examined in this chapter demonstrate how Gaelic Ulster's gender dynamics functioned within the world of the elite. Politics and power relied on the societal framework underpinned by gender, where familial connections relied on men and women to serve roles essential to the kingroup. Agnes Campbell and Finola MacDonnell stepped beyond the boundaries to fulfil these roles seemingly differentiated by gender. Agnes' advocacy for her sons in Ulster isolated her as a figure maintaining gender roles *and* using her position for political means. The juxtaposition of feminity and power meant that Agnes used political strength to create a role for herself that did not exist previously. Finola MacDonnell continued the generational pattern started by Agnes, asserting herself in a time ravaged by war and chaos. These ties defined the Gaelic world across the elite class as English encroachment intensified. These issues also differentiated Ulster and its Gaelic society as inferior or problematic. The English used these perceptions to justify conquest.

The beginning of the seventeenth century found Ulster's lords struggling against English forces sent to subdue them and bring the region fully under the crown's control. Mountjoy, Chichester, and other English forces sought to erode Gaelic control to begin the next scheme of control over Ulster. Plantation drastically changed Ulster's population, culture, and laws under the name of progress. Colonizing schemes marked a new era in Ireland's history, where subduing the

population took place through reform, reduction, and replacement. As Ulster's cultural, class, and religious fabric changed, new power dynamics supplanted the centuries-old Gaelic ones. This change, essential to understanding the history of the Four Kingdoms, started as the first Scottish king took the English throne in 1603.

Chapter 2: Colonization, Imperial Differences, and Imagined Communities, 1600-1641

As the seventeenth century dawned in Ulster, seeds of change embedded themselves in the earth and would bear fruit by 1641. The Crown's involvement in the province grew throughout the late sixteenth century, its military combatting Gaelic forces for control and power in the Nine Years' War. Shifting circumstances led to the mobilization of troops, weapons, and English officials often covered in traditional historiography of the Ulster Project.[165] English commentary from figures like Edmund Spenser proposed schemes for England's growing control over Ireland, isolating Irish law, customs, and society to colonize the region. Through these cultural and societal critiques, commentators manufactured difference between imagined communities that impacted the conquest of Ulster by creating a new set of societal guidelines applied to settlers and natives alike. Imagined communities of Old English Catholics, New English Protestant settlers, Scottish Presbyterian settlers, and Gaelic Catholic Irish constructed new cultural ideologies and imposed them on Ulster's political landscape upon James VI & I's succession to the English throne.[166]

James' Scottish ties defined a new era in Ulster as Scottish undertakers built foundational settlements in Antrim and Down.[167] Shifting socioeconomic, religious, and cultural groups discursively redefined Ulster to suit their own communal needs. To English officials, Ulster became fertile testing grounds for colonial ambitions later realized in the American colonies. To the remaining Gaelic Irish, Ulster was both home and battle ground to maintain Gaelic power

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[165] Historians such as Nicholas Canny refer to settlement and colonization schemes in Ulster as the Ulster Project, a nod to one of the terms used in the seventeenth century. For more, see Canny's *Making Ireland British, 1580-1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 59-120.

[166] Community-contained character refers to the ways 'creole communities' in the periphery used their own experiences in tandem with attributes from the metropole. For more, see "Creole Pioneers" in Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* 2nd. ed (London: Verso, 2016), 47-65.

[167] Undertakers refers to wealthy English and Scottish Protestant men who agreed to plant settlers on the estates they received.

networks. The violence embroiled in the Nine Years War drastically reshaped Ulster through scorched earth tactics, instituting the Tudor strategy of reform, reduce, and replace.[168] English commentary and travel accounts presented Ireland's cultural shortcomings as the justification for conquest after Elizabethan schemes used militaristic means to weaken Ulster. English common law and customs sought to reform Ulster by supplanting Gaelic brehon law and culture after its population suffered the ravaging impacts of warfare and famine.[169] The English found victory in staggered phases, the true culmination of their efforts following the 1607 Flight of the Earls. Upon the onset of the crown's plantation schemes in 1609, Ulster became home to groups with diverse class, religious, and cultural backgrounds. As Scottish and English undertakers, planters, and settlers made their homes in Ulster's counties, they became the ambivalent neighbors to the remaining Gaelic Irish. Varying imagined communities, enveloping a complex world divided on cultural lines, foreshadowed the struggles to come with the 1641 Irish Rebellion.

Before English colonization took place, Ulster consisted of Gaelic Irish Catholics living beneath their own system of laws, cultures, and customs. Brehon law, discussed in Chapter One, allowed multiple tanists to vie for chieftainships under various claims. Unlike the English system of primogeniture, where inheritance passed from father to eldest son, Gaelic tanistry's flexibility placed extended family members as potential heirs. English commentary identified Brehon law as "the true cause of such Desolation & Barbarism in this land" due to tanistry and its treatment of crimes, often resolved through paying a fine called an *éiric*.[170] As the Crown's colonizing ambitions unfolded under Elizabeth, English observers used these differences to position

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[168] Gerard Farrell, *The 'Mere Irish' and the Colonisation of Ulster, 1570-1641* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017), 96-137.
[169] Ibid, 98.
[170] Davies in *Strangers to that Land*, 78.

themselves as superior to the Gaelic Irish and Old English.[171] By emphasizing the sociocultural differences between themselves and Irish populations, commentators pinned negative meanings on the Catholic Gaelic Irish family unit. Unlike the cohesive, patriarchal structure supported by English common law, Gaelic Irish families were seen as loose and self-destructive due to marriage practices, givers of lackluster parental affection because of fosterage, and left a haphazard system of inheritance to their children.[172]

By emphasizing the ways transformation needed to occur along cultural lines, late sixteenth-century commentators envisioned the influence of English settlers at work reforming the native Irish. Ulster's future settlers should function as potential instructors, where they influenced their Gaelic neighbors "by word and example, in ways of civil living, and acquaint them with manufacturing skills and improved agricultural methods."[173] If the Gaelic Irish could receive the social infusion offered by the New English, they would be proof of successful reformation and new commonwealth envisioned by the crown's colonial project. This optimistic view differed from commentators' view of "English degenerates," the Old English Catholics, who were corrupted by their proximity to the Irish.[174] Instead of being helpmates to the Crown's colonization schemes, they embodied the decay of English customs because they conformed to Irish customs, laws, and Catholicism.

Old English settlers in Ireland partially found themselves excluded from the vision of cultural reform because they married and fostered children with the Irish.[175] As Ann Stoler asserts, these differences connected to sexual prescriptions of class, race, and gender that became central

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[171] The Old English were descendants of Anglo-Norman populations that first settled in Ireland during the medieval period.
[172] Hadfield and McVeagh, *Strangers to that Land,* 73.
[173] Ibid, 51.
[174] Gerard in *Strangers to that Land,* 40.
[175] Ibid.

to politics of empire.[176] While Ulster's Old English and Catholic Gaelic Irish populations experienced uneven effects of warfare, the Crown's budding empire-building ambitions impacted them both. As commentators attached meaning to Ireland's populations prior to plantation, their focus on family structure revealed the interplay of gender and sexuality in their understandings of Othered populations and colonial rule. Comparisons between family structures reflected the influence of the Protestant Reformation, as it strengthened the patriarchy and created new roles for women within the family.[177] While the metropole of English power was Protestant in the seventeenth century, the Old English and Gaelic Irish were Catholic. Religious dynamics contributed to views on Irish families and sexual prescriptions of class and gender, forming another divide inherent to constructing imagined communities. Print culture helped to impose colonial views and prescriptions essential to creating a colonial society in Ulster.

Ties between print culture, English commentary on Irish society, and gendered dynamics of colonization are apparent in John Speed's "The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine." As Benedict Anderson argues, maps used the "grammar of the imagining of the colonial state" to shape the world view of their readers.[178] Mapping was vital in the imperial process as it put space, and the inhabitants occupying it, under surveillance. Speed first presented this atlas and maps of the British Isles to Elizabeth I in 1598 and published it by 1606.[179] The work's social commentary appeared in "The Kingdome of Irland," where three Irish couples represented varying class statuses. The first couple, deemed the Gentleman and Gentlewoman, dressed in fine fabrics and

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[176] Ann Laura Stoler, "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia" in *Theorizing Feminisms: A Reader,* eds. Elizabeth Hackett and Sally Haslanger (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 482.

[177] Mary O'Dowd, *A History of Women in Ireland, 1500-1800* (Harlow, UK: Pearson Longman, 2005), 165.

[178] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd. ed. (London: Verso, 2016), 162-163, 170-171.

[179] "John Speed (1552-1629): The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain," Royal Collection Trust, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.rct.uk/collection/1140798/the-theatre-of-the-empire-of-great-britain-presenting-an-exact-geography-of-the.

elegant fashion represented the highest social class in Ireland. Their genteel appearance represented the Irish most accepted by English authority, their fashions mirroring those from the metropole. The middle couple, the Civill Irish woman and man, represented inhabitants that stood somewhere between complete assimilation and rejection of English influence. Their garb, similar to those of the Gentleman and Gentlewoman, represented their middling status through similar fabrics and cuts yet lacked the extra refinery. Represented at the bottom of the illustration, the Wilde Irish man and woman characterized the 'barbarous' Gaelic inhabitants of the country.

Figure 1: John Speed's depiction of three Irish couples in "The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine."[180]

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[180] John Speed, "The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine", 1606, 138. Illustration from the same, accessed from The British Museum, Prints and Drawings collection.
https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/image/1613529426.

The deviation from clothes worn by the other men represented the incivility of the Wilde Irish man, his traditional yellow mantle with red fringe a hallmark of Gaelic society.[181] The mantle, accompanied by the man's hairstyle of "long gilbs" concealing part of his face, believed to be "monstrously disguising" and a convenience to commit bad deeds by poet Edmund Spenser.[182] This style of dress symbolized mischief or villainy and associated the wearer with outlaws or rebels in English perspectives. The threat of the unknown was easy to equate with the Gaelic Irish, particularly on gendered lines. The Wilde Irish woman on Speed's map mirrors her female counterparts, wearing a similar garment. Her body concealed by a loose-fitting cloak, likely a mantle, displayed how Gaelic Irish women were often viewed as lewd in a colonial context. Rather than representing the extent of patriarchal control in Gaelic society, their dress implied their own lewdness and the effeminacy of Gaelic men. Gaelic women's dress also linked them to a weakened sense of morality, as their clothing was "a coverlet for her lewd exercise, and when she hath filled her vessel, under it she can hide both her burden and her blame."[183] Dress, grooming, and sexual behaviors acted as the boundaries between the various communities of Ireland, as well as signifiers of the civilizing mission.

As Jane Ohlmeyer asserts, the depictions of varying socioeconomic classes of Irish peoples "reinforced ethnocentric attitudes, confirming the racial superiority of the English over the Irish."[184] Colonial authorities often reinforced ethnocentric ideas to construct a "natural" community of common class interests, political affinities, and superior culture that defined their

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[181] The mantle was a loose, wool garment similar to a cloak worn by both men and women in Gaelic society.

[182] Edmund Spenser, *A View of the Present State of Irelande*, 1596, in *Strangers to that Land*, 83-84. Spenser wrote this work and *The Faerie Queene* as ways to support England's colonial agenda in Ireland.

[183] Ibid, 84.

[184] Jane Ohlmeyer, *Political Thought in Seventeenth Century Ireland: Kingdom or Colony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 10.

politics of cultural exclusion.[185] In Ulster, where the Gaelic Irish served as the 'primitive' native population in need of civilizing to suit English domination, these perceptions solidified during and after the Nine Years War. Ulster was no longer simply disobedient but dangerous after the turn of the seventeenth century, as Gaelic forces "possessed every part of the country" and "made a riddance of the English pale."[186] The combination of violence and print culture's sociocultural prescriptions constructed an opening for England's full-scale colonial aims in Ireland to be realized in the seventeenth century. Ireland, feminized as a "wench (or whore) ready to be fertilized by the potent colonial settlers," found itself as the focus of English colonial ambitions in the first two decades of the seventeenth century.[187] The sexualized terms wench, fertilized, and potent positioned Ireland as a land ripe for the taking, one that awaited the 'gift' of English colonization. These words represented Ireland as a feminized land of malleable potential. When settlers consumed and planted there, they would sew their seeds in a fertile land misused by her native inhabitants. This language reflected a demographic reality in Ulster as the Crown's single, male soldiers and administrators populated the region with growing frequency until James VI & I instituted private colonization schemes in 1603.

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[185] Stoler, 481-482.
[186] "The Supplication of the Blood of English most lamentably murdered in Ireland, crying out of the yearth for revenge", 1599, in *Strangers to that Land,* 94-95.
[187] Hadfield and McVeagh, *Strangers to that Land,* 65-66.

1603 ushered in the end of the Nine Years War and the death of Elizabeth I. The Nine Years War came to a close after the English effectively destroyed Gaelic rule in Ulster. By then, James VI of Scotland appeared as the successor to Elizabeth after her death on March 24, 1603. Although Scots, James was "proclaimed King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland" by royal decree.[188] The Union of the Crowns merged Scotland and England under one monarch, a feat that changed relations between communities in the British Isles. This event constructed imaginations of Britishness as English and Scottish Protestants took moral and social precedent over the Catholic Irish. James' identity as a Scottish king on the English throne changed Ireland's status, as it was styled as a kingdom but remained under English dependency and domination.[189] The passing of the Tudor dynasty and emergence of the Stewart line embodied the political intricacies of what Steven G. Ellis calls a "multiple monarchy", a concept that would grow increasingly complex as colonization schemes grew throughout the seventeenth century.[190]

This turning point put Ulster under greater scrutiny as Mountjoy, Lord Deputy, arrived in London with Hugh O'Neill and Rory O'Donnell.[191] Like Shane O'Neill's 1562 court visit, the Gaelic lords represented the collision of the metropole and the periphery. It may have increased tensions as the Crown's position towards Ulster grew more hostile. James VI & I came under scrutiny for his pardon of the Ulster Lords, one English servitor in Ulster commenting that "damnable rebel Tyrone brought to England…all brought to quell that man, who smileth in peace at those who did hazard their lives to destroy him."[192] The tensions embedded in English

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[188] "Proclamation by the Lord Mayor of London and Privy Council, declaring the undoubted right of Our Sovereign Lord King James to the Crown of the Realms of England and Ireland," March 24, 1603, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, 1603-1606*, eds. C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (London: Longman and Co, 1872), 1-2.

[189] Steven G. Ellis, "Tudor state formation and the shaping of the British Isles" in *Conquest & Union: Fashioning a British State, 1485-1725,* eds. Steven G. Ellis and Sarah Barber (London: Longman, 1995), 56-57.

[190] Ibid, 57.

[191] Hugh O'Neill's rebellion against the crown, explained in Chapter 1, had an uneven impact on Gaelic power. He united forces but eventually represented its decline in changing circumstances after 1600.

[192] Jonathan Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, updated ed. (Belfast: The Blackstaff Press Ltd., 2001), 115.

commentary about the new king's decisions mirrored an emerging regional view of the British Isles. It was no longer possible to speak of England, Scotland, Ireland, or Wales as isolated from one another.[193] Instead, James' pardon of the Gaelic men appeared as a symptom of his perception of an increasingly connected world. His lived experience, as a Scottish king that suddenly became an English king, contributed to his policies and particularly impacted the colonization of Ulster before 1610.

James VI & I's vision for Ulster incorporated his fellow lowland Scots as colonizers, particularly as they were loyal subjects that stood to secure lands "wasted by rebellion."[194] This rapid transformation of Scots' status was best shown through James' land allotments to Sir Ranald MacDonnell in Antrim and James Hamilton and Hugh Montgomery in Down. James' experience on the Scottish throne was particularly useful in this endeavor as he was keenly aware of Clan MacDonnell's bridge to Ulster during the mid-to-late sixteenth century.[195] By placing Scottish undertakers, willing to undertake the task of bringing in and supporting new settlers, in Antrim and Down, James created new approaches for transforming Gaelic Ulster under English control.

The allotment of lands to Sir Ranald MacDonnell, son of Sorley Boy MacDonnell, displayed the Crown's willingness to renegotiate with former Gaelic Irish antagonists.[196] Instead, MacDonnell received 300,000 acres in the Route and the Glens on May 28, 1603.[197] This grant

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[193] This thinking emerged at a time when England's status in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales was rooted in centuries of Anglo-Scottish, Anglo-Irish, or Anglo-Welsh relations. As the crown expressed a heightened regional identity, it becomes increasingly important to evaluate these ties. The argument against fixed, nationalistic histories in favor a regional view emerges in Hugh Kearney's *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[194] *A repertory of the involvements on the patent rolls of chancery in Ireland; commencing with the reign of King James I*, Vol 1. (Dublin: J. M'Glashan, 1846), 137.

[195] M. Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish Migration to Ulster in the Reign of James I*, 3rd ed. (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1999), 11.

[196] MacDonnell joined Hugh O'Neill and Rory O'Donnell in rebellion in 1601, taking up the claim to protect familial claims in Antrim against the Dunyvaig MacDonnells. Akin to O'Neill and O'Donnell's treatment, MacDonnell received no retribution from the crown for his acts.

[197] Ibid, 48.

symbolized the Crown's efforts to transform Ulster by entrusting lands to those deemed more trustworthy through their willingness to submit to royal aims. Part of the success in allotting lands came from Lord Deputy Mountjoy's decision to set aside prior agreements made with leaders in Ulster as "the kingdom is now made capable of what form it shall please the King to give it."[198] Mountjoy's decision to make one final arrangement with Ulster's leaders paved the way for new agreements to shape the region's status as a colonial entity.

James Hamilton and Hugh Montgomery presented a different case in 1605 as they received lands in Down. Hugh Montgomery, the sixth Laird of Braidstane, came into James VI's favor while he was King of Scotland.[199] He received one-third of Down's lands after he helped Con O'Neill, the largest landholder in Down, secure a pardon for his involvement in the 1601 rebellion.[200] James Hamilton, a Scottish agent in Ireland, received another third of lands in Down after helping to negotiate the pardon. Montgomery and Hamilton formally received the lands on the condition that the "lands should be planted with British Protestants, and that no grant of fee farm should be made to any person of meer Irish extraction."[201] The promise of bringing English and Scottish Protestants to settle Ulster set the stage for colonial ambitions, placing middling and lower Gaelic Irish populations under subjugation.

In order to make lands inhabitable for settlers, Montgomery, MacDonnell, and Hamilton had to improve lands broken by war. Patent records often spoke of the "depopulated and wasted" landscape, seemingly perfect for settlers to repopulate and cultivate.[202] Undertakers had a

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[198] Lord Deputy Mountjoy to Sir William Cecil, April 15, 1603, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, 1603-1606*, eds. C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (London: Longman and Co, 1872), 38.
[199] Montgomery, 10. Braidstane is located in Northern Ayrshire, Lowlands, Scotland.
[200] Perceval-Maxwell, 50-51.
[201] Hamilton, 29.
[202] Letters Patent of 3rd James I to James Hamilton, Esq., 1605, in *The Hamilton Manuscripts: containing some account of the settlement of the territories of the upper Clandeboye, Great Ardes, and Dufferin, in the county of Down,* ed. T.K. Lowry (Belfast: Archer & Sons, 1867), Appendix 1, i.

responsibility to "inhabit the territory and lands with English and Scotchmen" and "transport men, cattle, grain, and all other commodities out of our kingdoms of England and Scotland into the aforesaid territories and lands."[203] This process, often slow and arduous, established estates as central localities of the imagined community and provided a semblance of safety against potential resistance from the Gaelic Irish.[204] Estate improvement was often the responsibility of the primary undertaker yet in Hugh Montgomery's case, these tasks were partially completed by his wife, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth Montgomery migrated to Ulster with Hugh in the spring of 1606.[205] Upon arrival, they set their sights on developing the land to be "profitable for plough and good pasture" despite the "great woods to be felled and grubbed."[206] The venture of plantation required considerable manpower to clear woods, prepare land for agriculture, and build homes. As more people trickled into Down, Elizabeth asserted herself at the center of the settlement community by organizing the construction of watermills to process grain. Her status in the newly established Scottish community in Down reinforced the local economy, as she employed servants to work "about her gardens, carriages, &c."[207] On a regional level, Elizabeth organized British laborers on the Montgomery farms at Greyabbey, Comer, and Newtown, collected rents, and gave Protestant newcomers grass, grain, and land for flax and potato production.[208] In this new community, where Scottish identity

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[203] Ibid. Undertakers were named such because they "undertook" the process of planting and establishing new settlers in Ulster.

[204] This was crucial to upholding English power in Ulster. London's metropolitan status extended the far-reaching grip of England's rule in the region but, as with any colonial venture, remained untouchable. The crown's representatives and local officials in Dublin Castle were not readily available in the case of danger, unlike the localized nexus of colonial settlement that rested in the hands of undertakers.

[205] Montgomery, 58-59.

[206] Ibid, 55-58.

[207] Ibid, 62-63.

[208] Ibid, 64-65.

linked the Montgomeries to Catholic tenants and Protestant settlers, the binds of old and new came together to alter the once-Gaelic fabric of Ulster.

In her own words, Elizabeth expressed that Down was a suitable home, saying "I like yet [it] indiffereraunt well this fare [thus far], and I am made beleve that we shall like yet every daye better then the other."[209] Her integral place in Down's settler community found her interacting with "manye of our countrye folks both of gentellmen and gentellwomen, and as brave they goo in ther apparell as in Indgland."[210] Her letter revealed the economic impacts her efforts had on the community, as the "cuntrye flixe [flax] and threed" was "verye good and the price not dear."[211] As Ulster's settler community grew, the tensions between Protestant and Presbyterian settlers and Gaelic Irish Catholics also increased. Elizabeth's own experience with them, where "the Iresh doth often troubell our house", reflected the continuous disestablishment and suspicion of the Gaelic Irish still inhabiting Ulster.[212]

While inroads to control Ulster successfully took place through colonizing Down and Antrim, other counties stayed resistant to English colonial ambitions. As New English and Scottish settlers moved into Ulster, Lord Deputy Arthur Chichester believed that "all the seaside on the eastern parts of the River Bann to this city [Dublin], would be civilly planted."[213] By positioning English and Scottish settlers as agents of reformation, reduction, and replacement, the Crown aimed to solidify its control over Ulster. Tudor policy already dissolved land holdings through scorched earth warfare and the Stewart king prioritized cultural reformation. The aim was to

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[209] Elizabeth Montgomery to John Willoughby, October 8, 1606, in *Trevelyan Papers, Part III,* eds. Sir Walter Calverley and Sir Charles Edward Trevelyan (London: Camden Society, 1872), 99.
[210] Ibid, 100.
[211] Ibid, 100-101.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Sir Arthur Chichester to the Earl of Salisbury, June 14, 1606 in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, 1603-1606,* eds. C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (London: Longman and Co, 1872), 502.

recenter Gaelic culture's focus on hospitality, gift-giving, and tribute to one suited for the English

sale and consumption of material goods and services.[214] The 1607 Flight of the Earls accelerated

these circumstances, irrevocably altering Ulster's Gaelic fabric and set the path for total English

control.

On September 4, 1607, the Earls of Tyrone and Tír Conaill, accompanied by between thirty

and forty Gaelic Irish nobles, relatives, and servants, left Ulster and sailed into exile on the

Continent.[215] Their departure, as told by Gaelic chronicler Tadhg Ó Cianáin, took place on a

"bright, quiet and calm" night when they "hoisted their sails, went out a great distance in the sea"

and lead them to Rome, where Catholic leaders "received them with honour and respect."[216] In

contrast, English commentators described the event as an occasion for the Crown to "banish all

those generations of vipers out of it, and make it…a right fortunate island."[217] With the Gaelic

Irish elites gone, England's colonization schemes for Ulster accelerated and set the course for

Ireland's full integration into the English orbit as a plantation.[218] At this point, control over Ulster

equated to the extension of the crown's power throughout the Three Kingdoms. Like his English

predecessors, James VI & I had experience with colonization and put it to practice in Ireland.[219]

As the Crown's officials arrived in Ulster after 1607, they aimed to transform the remaining

Gaelic Irish into "amenable subjects of the crown and would be available to be integrated as

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[214] Farrell, 134.

[215] Sir Arthur Chichester to the Privy Council, September 7, 1607, in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, 1606-1608*, eds. C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (London: Longman and Co, 1874), 259-262.

[216] Tadhg Ó Cianáin, "Irish Account of the Flight of the Earls," 1608, in *Irish History from Contemporary Sources: 1509-1610*, ed. Constantia Maxwell (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1923), 205-208. The use of this Gaelic source is important to note due to the paucity of texts written by Gaelic sources in the early modern period.

[217] Sir John Davies, "English Account of the Flight of the Earls," 1607, *Irish History from Contemporary Sources: 1509-1610*, ed. Constantia Maxwell (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1923), 203-204. John Davies was one of the engineers of Ulster's plantation schemes, implementing English common law in Ulster.

[218] In this context, plantation does not mean estates. Instead, it is a form of the verb plant, where England "planted" loyal Protestant English and Scottish settlers in Ulster.

[219] As the King of Scotland, James VI aimed to civilize the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. James' ambitions to colonize and plant the Isle of Lewis is one example of this.

workers within a plantation community."[220] The most prominent agent of civilizing Ulster's Gaelic population was the imposition of English common law by the Crown, ushered in by Attorney General John Davies. Davies believed that Brehon law would breed rebels against "all good Government, destroy the commonwealth wherein they live, and bring Barbarisme and desolation upon the richest and most fruitful Land of the world."[221] Supplanting Brehon law with English common law targeted a perceived weakness in Gaelic Ireland, where their colonial project could find success "so long as the Englishe kepte [them] under the government of Englishe lawes".[222] Distaste for Brehon law fueled the strategy for cultural reformation that, if successful, would ignite "a generational interval of transformation" that positioned settlers as instructors and representatives of English civility over the Gaelic Irish.[223]

Davies' outspoken views against Brehon law accelerated the Crown's actions and by 1608, Dublin's government placed Ulster under effective martial law.[224] By supplanting Brehon law with English common law and imposing martial law, the English unraveled Gaelic Ulster's societal ties to kinship and regional power networks. After the Flight of the Earls, the influence of the elite Gaelic Irish decreased as powerful figures died or left Ulster. Without kinship networks to reinforce their exertion of power, remaining Gaelic leaders had fewer alliances to uphold their claims. Brehon law, a major structural component of Ulster's Gaelic society, provided flexibility needed to uphold Gaelic power. When it was supplanted by English common law, Gaelic Irish

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[220] Canny, 49.
[221] Davies in *Strangers to that Land,* 77.
[222] Ibid.
[223] Canny, 52.
[224] Sir Arthur Chichester, "Certain notes and remembrances touching the plantation and settlement of the escheated lands in Ulster," September 1608, in *Calendar of State Papers, Relating to Ireland, of the Reign of James I, 1608-1610,* Vol. 3, eds. C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (London: Longman and Co, 1874), 54-65.

leaders retained little influence. However, the imposition of English common law did increase their authority over their wives.

Marriage alliances and fosterage, discouraged between settlers and the Gaelic Irish, no longer bolstered this system. Gaelic regional power networks, discussed in Chapter One, lost strength in this process as James VI & I sought to reform the Scottish Isles. Gaelic power was less effective without the flow of mercenaries, weapons, and goods from the Islands to Ulster. James' aims, "rooting out or transporting the barbarous or stubborne sorte, and planting ciuility in their roomes," meant to prevent Scottish mercenaries from giving aid to Ulster.[225] Agnes Campbell and her daughter Finola MacDonnell demonstrated why this moving network of people and goods was crucial to Gaelic control. Without the influx of men and weapons to bolster territorial claims and militaristic ventures, lords like Turlough O'Neill lost the physical support of dowry mercenaries underpinning their power moves. As Ulster's Gaelic culture weakened, the Crown's ambitions focused on allotting lands to undertakers and settlers.

Chichester and Davies' 1608 survey of Ulster collected evidence on escheated Gaelic Irish lands and, in turn, gave English and Scottish undertakers portions of land upwards of one thousand acres.[226] As the Crown invited wealthy participants to partake in their plantation schemes, they created parameters to separate English and Scottish undertakers. On March 28, 1609, the Scottish Privy Council invited James' "ancient and native subjects to become partners with the English with the proposed plantation of the north part of the kingdom of Ireland designed for establishing justice and religion…"[227] The inclusion of Scots in plantation schemes revealed the ways Lowland

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[225] Canny, 198.

[226] Escheated lands were taken from many Gaelic lords under the belief that they committed acts justifiable by seizure of property under English common law. For more, see Philip Robinson's *The Plantation of Ulster: British Settlement in an Irish Landscape, 1600-1670* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 55-90.

[227] Proclamation, March 28, 1609, in *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland,* Vol. 8, ed. David Masson (Edinburgh: H.M. General Register House, 1887), 267-8.

Scotland and England collaborated in Ulster, defining the Union of the Crowns as a chance to reconfigure the boundaries of the imagined community. This was a reversal of earlier patterns, where Scotland and England's forces combatted in Ulster. As with any community, the allotments to one group were not the same as those given to another. This became clear when the Scottish Privy Council compiled a list of seventy-seven individuals to claim land in Ulster and shrunk to fifty-nine when the English crown decided to approve land grants on a composite 'British' list.[228]

When the Crown instituted official plantation schemes in 1609, parameters laid out to encourage settlement began from the top-down. Undertakers, wealthy individuals serving as hosts of sorts for tenants, received proportions ranging from one thousand to two thousand acres.[229] Ulster's precincts were split into areas allotted to the English and Scots separately, where they were responsible for taking twenty-four English or 'Inland Scottish' adult men to Ulster and reducing them into ten or more families.[230] Single, adult British men would marry women in the settler communities in order to stabilize Ulster's new communities. They often married English Protestant or Scottish Presbyterian women, upending the previous trend of Ulster's marriages happening between heterogeneous groups.[231] As families, women, and children arrived in Ulster, they altered the demographical fabric of the region through religion, class, language, and customs. They also transformed Ulster through upsetting the predominately masculine British presence there by reducing the number of single men through marriage. Class differences were central to Ulster's colonial society, where hierarchy separated populations through land status, ethnic origin, and religion. James VI & I's countrymen, the Protestant Lowland Scots, settled in Ulster while

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[228] Canny, 197.
[229] *Conditions to be obseruved by the British vndertakers of the escheated lands in Vlster,* 1610 (Robert Barker: London, 1610), 1-2.
[230] Ibid, 5.
[231] This can be seen in how Gaelic lords married Scottish and English women to increase their prominence. Single men serving the Crown in Ulster also followed this trend by marrying into the local Irish population.

Catholic Highland Scots experienced exclusion from these schemes. Their religion and tendency to provide aid to Ulster drew a sharp boundary between which Scots settled across the Irish Sea.

The anxieties of allowing the 'right' sort of settlers move to Ulster surfaced as official plantation schemes solidified. Andrew Stewart, a Protestant minister in County Down, made the concerns clear. Stewart wrote about the influx of settlers as "all of them generally the scum of both nations, who for debt, or breaking and fleeing justice in a land where there was nothing, or but little, as yet, of fear of God…yet most of the people, as I said before, made up a body (and, it's strange, of different names, nations, dialects, tempers, breeding, and in word, all void of godliness)."[232] By posing the settlers, of a lesser socioeconomic class than undertakers, Stewart implied that they went to Ulster to evade the vices in their native countries. Even if these settlers were Protestant, they could still threaten the established colonial order. Stewart's focus on the "body" made up by settlers in Ulster symbolized the uneven and ambiguous lines drawn between imagined and real communities. While the Crown may have wanted to portray the Ulster plantation as a purely British and Protestant community, the realities on the ground showed how that was wishful thinking.

At the top of Ulster's colonial hierarchy, undertakers with one thousand or more acres divided their lands up into portions and tasked their tenants to build houses for themselves, "neere the principal house or bawne, as well for their mutual defence and strength, as for the making of Villages and Towneships."[233] Native 'meere' Irish tenants were beneath English and Scottish ones, maintained with distinction based on their ethnicity.[234] The mere Irish were essential to supplying

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[232] *The Montgomery Family Manuscripts: (1603-1706)*, 61.
[233] Ibid, 7.
[234] The mere Irish, of lower socioeconomic class than Gaelic Irish elites, were expected to fit into colonial society as a subjugated people. Their role was more complex than simply tenants beneath 'superior' English and Scottish settlers. This section will attempt to explain some of those differences.

and transporting food supplies to settlements, where it was "hard, if not impossible" for the undertakers to do the labor themselves. They provided supply routes to areas where "there will be neither victuals nor carriage within 20 miles of them."[235] Their subjugated status reinforced the cultural prescriptions built by plantation, where they were necessary but inferior in what Gerard Farrell argues is an example of the internal colonial model.[236]

Constructed distinctions between colonial elites and subordinate counterparts are essential to Michael Hechter's internal colonial model, where individuals "categorize themselves and others according to the range of roles each may be expected to play."[237] In Ulster's colonial society, where English and Scottish settlers lived in proximity to native Irish populations, tensions emerged as distinctions were established on religious, linguistic, cultural, and marital lines. One of the most telling examples came from settler's marriage trends as they often married within their own ethnic groups. English Protestants in Ireland tended to marry within their own population but considered matches with families of Old English or Gaelic descent when "conversion of the Catholic party to Protestantism would be certain."[238]

As more British settlers emigrated to Ulster in the mid-seventeenth century, they mostly kept themselves contained within their communities through marriage patterns. This reflected a similar trend to the founding of the American colonies. The differences between the communities were more pronounced by mid-century, as New English colonists were less likely to adopt Gaelic practices than Old English ones.[239] This included marriage, as there was less tolerance for crossing

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[235] "Instructions delivered to Sir John Bouchier by the Lord Deputy," May 1611, in *Calendar of State Papers, Relating to Ireland: 1611-1614*, eds. C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (London: Longman & Co., 1877), 66.
[236] Farrell, 112-113.
[237] Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: the Celtic fringe in British national development, 1536-1966*, 2nd. ed. (London: Routledge, 1998), 7-8.
[238] Canny, 7.
[239] Farrell, 117.

the cultural divide. This contrasted with the sixteenth century pattern of Gaelic lords marriage to English or Scottish brides to elevate their status.[240] As plantation took root in Ulster throughout the mid-seventeenth century, the constructed differences between its populations showed through marriage and familial trends. Sir Arthur Chichester believed in forbidding the native Irish from marrying and fostering their children with British populations so English "language and customs [would remain] pure and neat into posteritie."[241] Print culture's narrative of exclusion meant to distinguish 'civil' British settlers from the native Irish incorporated fluid notions of gender while constructing the imagined community. This narrative, written in English and dispensed through print culture, was a way of spreading the ideas of Irish colonization out from the periphery to the core. Identity formation and its impact on masculinities/feminities generated different degrees of acceptance in Ulster's colonial society by constructing differences between community groups. Native, Catholic Irish men and women experienced more scrutiny than Protestant British settlers, especially when evaluated through societal gender roles.

Fynes Moryson's tract "On childbirth" did just this, detailing the cultural prescriptions of birth in Ireland. Moryson was a travel writer who detailed social conditions in Ireland during the time of colonization. In his writing, he criticized women for their reproductive roles, as some did not "talk of a month's lying-in or solemn churching at the end of the month, as with us in England."[242] By allegedly experiencing "strange ability of body presently after it", child-bearing women drew questions of their biological capacities post-birth. These observations criticized the colonial facets of reproduction, and more specifically, women *and* men's decisions in wet nursing. While women purveyed their ability to breastfeed their biological and foster children, he portrayed

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[240] Ohlmeyer, 190-192.
[241] Sir Arthur Chichester, The National Archives, SP 63/228/15, fo. 36r, cited in *Society and administration in Ulster's plantation towns,* ed. Brendan Scott (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2019), 121.
[242] Fynes Moryson, "On childbirth," 1617, in *Strangers to that Land, 74.*

men as effeminate for allowing it. Men willingly chose to "forbear their wives' bed for the good of the children they nurse or foster, but not nursing their own." This statement scrutinized fosterage, as mentioned in Chapter One, and its presence in Ireland's colonial society. While fixating on the exchange of nourishment, Moryson condemned fosterage as foreign to English practices. It was a dangerous feat, where the women "with their extreme indulgence corrupt the children they foster, nourishing and heartening the boys in all villainy, and the girls in obscenity." This placed Irish customs in a gendered binary, where their influence could lead boys to rebel against governmental forces and risk the perceived innocence of female children. These observations were largely pinned on the 'mere Irish' and the English-Irish in his work, illuminating the perceived corrupting influence of Gaelic Irish culture. By acknowledging these changing patterns, it becomes possible to trace changing social relations in Ulster's colonial society.

As Mary McAuliffe asserts, acknowledging social and power relations and constructs of masculinities and femininities in early modern Ulster "broadens our understanding the histories of all Irish men and women."[243] Ulster's intricate and complex colonial society created identities and communities set apart from experiences in the metropoles of London and Dublin.[244] As hinted at above, this society brokered power in societal roles and social hierarchies through gendered terms. Women such as Elizabeth Montgomery performed gender and starkly deviated from the print culture prescriptions attached to the Wilde Irish woman on John Speed's atlas. Elizabeth's status as a Protestant, Scottish settler aligned her with a vision of loyalty to the Crown. In contrast, the Wilde Irish woman embodied the disobedient, lewd, and unmanaged Catholic natives. This process

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[243] Mary McAuliffe, "Irish Histories: Gender, Women, and Sexualities," in *Palgrave Advances in Irish History*, eds. Mary McAuliffe, Katherine O'Donnell, and Leeann Lane (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 195.
[244] Views on Ulster varied in London and Dublin. London, the colonial center of the entire British Isles, were more removed yet had considerable influence over legal rule in Ulster. Dublin was closer to Ulster and served as a tangible center of colonial ambitions. Dublin's role in Ulster's events will appear in more detail in Chapter 3.

of cultural subscription to the metropole's values embedded itself in daily realities of language use, social settings, and familial dynamics. The grey ambiguity between Protestant settlers and Catholic natives revealed how imagined and real communities were not entirely separate as plantation schemes took hold. As a colonial society, Ulster continued to be viewed as tainted by these experiences in comparison to England.

The ambiguity of Ulster's colonial society became visible in social interactions between natives and settlers. An alehouse built in Londonderry represented a change from Gaelic Ireland's vision of hospitality to an Anglicized one, where the commodification of hospitality symbolized changing European economic practices.[245] The public status of the alehouse brought Irish, English, and Scottish settlers together in Ulster's cities and gained the scrutiny of the Crown's officials. In 1611, Sir John Davies advocated for *An act for erecting common inns and suppressing the multitude of alehouses* to curb the intoxicating impact of the public meeting space.[246] The civilizing mission applied to the alehouse through this act, where settlers may have confronted natives through social policing, particularly if women were present. Gaelic women presided over feasts and drinking ale before conquest and may have contributed to the anxieties felt by settlers in the plantation's urban spaces. In England, alehouses were primarily masculine spaces and women's involvement within them faced scrutiny in Ulster. Women's presence in alehouses in Ulster deemed them as participants in seditious and disorderly behaviors, their 'drunkenness' the grounds for sparking discontent from an English perspective.[247]

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[245] Audrey Horning, "'The root of all vice and bestiality': exploring the cultural role of the alehouse in the Ulster plantation" in *Plantation Ireland: Settlement and material culture, c.1550-c.1700*, eds. James Lyttleton and Colin Rynne (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009), 118.

[246] Propositions for the King's Service in Ireland, February 1611, in *Calendar of the State Papers relating to Ireland, of the reign of James I, 1611-1614,* ed. Charles W. Russell (London: Longman & Co., 1877), 19.

[247] William Palmer, "Gender, Violence, and Rebellion in Tudor Stewart Ireland" in *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 23, No. 4 (Winter 1992), 699-703.

Women's public presence in Ulster also intertwined with their use of language. As Gerard Farrell asserts, the native Irish were more likely to learn English due to their subordinate economic position in colonial society.[248] Despite this tendency, native Irish speakers used language to carve out space for themselves amongst the British settlers. In County Cavan, where native Irish tenants were less dependent on their counterparts, language granted access to parts of society obscured by cultural divide. The role of Honora O'Gilligan, an Irishwoman, in a 1615 testimony revealed how language brokered power and altered societal dynamics. Honora was a British settler's "gossip" and transferred knowledge imperceivable by her acquaintance. By speaking Irish, she offered an avenue into a world accessible through the native tongue. The value in her status as a native Irishwoman revealed that the ambiguity between settlers and natives often grew when one, or both, parties gained something from the other. Unable to receive this knowledge directly, Anthony Mahue brought his Irish maidservant into the exchange to interpret Honora's words. In court, Mahue explained that she "desired him to talk to Sir Thomas Phillip on the behalf of her husband" and threatened him into keeping their counsel.[249] By offering a service unobtainable within settler society, Honora and Mahue's maidservant corrupted a solely British view of plantation. Through this, they showed that work in the household brought people speaking different languages, as well as religious denominations, in close contact with one another.[250]

The public space of the courts also revealed Ulster's colonial ambiguities. In 1629, Sir Ranald MacDonnell, Earl of Antrim, wrote to Charles I's Secretary of State asking if the county's quarter sessions could be held at Oldstone. He asked to allow sessions to be held there, in the

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[248] Farrell, 120.

[249] Examination of Anthony Mahue, April 24, 1615, in *Calendar of the State Papers relating to Ireland, of the reign of James I, 1615-1625,* ed. Charles W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (London: Longman & Co., 1880), 48.

[250] Anne Laurence, "Real and Imagined Communities in the Lives of Women in Seventeenth Century Ireland: Identity and Gender," in *Women, Identities, and Communities in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Stephanie Tarbin and Susan Broomhall (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2008), 20.

middle of the county, on account that his "tenants are much troubled by having to go five times a year to Carrickfergus."[251] While court proceedings took place in Carrickfergus, along the Irish Sea, MacDonnell's was thirty-six miles away. The letter revealed the necessity to accommodate his tenants who were, in some part, native Irish. His identity as a Scots-Irishman likely influenced his decision, as in 1627 he held court sessions partially in Irish.[252] While local court sessions meant to carry out justice through English common law, there was a semblance of cooperation with the native Irish.[253] Language served as a confluence for settlers and the native Irish, particularly when surveying colonial society from the bottom-up. By allowing cases to proceed partially in Irish, the courts became a public institution that represented the ambiguity of the barriers between natives and settlers, Protestants and Catholics.

Perhaps the most illuminating example of differences between communities appeared in the religious dynamics in Ulster. Protestants stood at odds with Catholics as one social commentator claimed "Protestant truth will erase national distinctions" in Ireland.[254] The reforming mission in Ulster aimed to reduce Catholic presence, especially as Protestantism stood as a marker of cultural difference. It stood as a way to acknowledge the settlers's privileged status, where religion made them "civil, placid, sedentary, and loyal" in contrast to Catholic's "uncivil, warlike, transient, and disloyal" population.[255] Catholic Irish men and women were more likely to be viewed as corrupt, effeminate/lewd, or deceitful. These cultural constructs did not simply exist

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[251] The Earl of Antrim to Lord Dorchester, October 20, 1629, in *Calendar of the State Papers relating to Ireland, of the reign of Charles I, 1625-1632,* ed. Robert Pentland Mahaffy (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1900), 490.
[252] Colin Breen, "Randal McDonnell and early seventeenth-century settlement in north-east Ulster, 1603-1630," in *The plantation of Ulster: Ideology and practice*, eds. Éamonn Ó Ciardha and Micheál Ó Siochrú (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 154.
[253] We do not know MacDonnell's intentions in doing this. The inclusion could point to the desire to bring "barbarous" Irish to justice under the court sessions. However, his willingness to have the Irish language acknowledged and his concern for his tenants complicates this notion.
[254] Barnaby Rich, *A New Description of Ireland*, in *Strangers to that Land,* 45.
[255] Farrell, 111.

on religious lines, but incorporated insights from judgements on societal and gender roles. The total incorporation of the native Irish into these differences embedded tensions in Ulster's colonial society.

In the 1620s, the Earl of Antrim was adamant that his daughter's prospective husband could practice his own religion once married, saying "Your Lordship need not to doubt that any will attempt to alter your opinion and religion, and I hope your Lordship will not seek to force whoever shall be your wife from hers."[256] While an elite marriage held more privilege to cross religious and ethnic barriers, this example revealed a small trend of intermarriage in seventeenth century Ireland. Ohlmeyer's study of Irish wives before 1649 shows that Catholic marriages were mostly between Irish individuals and Protestant marriages were split between Irish and English individuals.[257] Scottish individuals surfaced as smaller populations in these marriages, giving evidence that they likely married amongst their Protestant of Presbyterian peers. Population studies on Ulster's settler societies contextualized these assertions and set the stage for interactions between its diverse populations as the seventeenth century progressed.

Percival-Maxwell's study on Scottish populations in Ulster estimated that there were roughly one and a half Scottish women for every two Scottish men in Antrim and Down by 1622.[258] Further population studies in Ulster estimate there were three women to every four men in Ulster by this time.[259] If there were roughly 6,402 adult British men in Ulster by 1622, there were likely 12,079 British adults in total. Women, scarcely included in the plantation's archival records, served as the entryway to the patriarchal family unit "socially by marriage and psychologically by sexual

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[256] Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English: The Irish Aristocracy in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 188.
[257] Ibid, 180.
[258] Perceval-Maxwell, 126.
[259] Canny, 211.

relations."[260] Ulster's colonial society, its culture, and customs contained gender dynamics determined by and reflected the patriarchal family unit. The intersection of colonial society, patriarchal family units, and feminine roles within both will be examined in Chapter Three.

In the years leading up to the 1641 Irish Rebellion, Gaelic Ulster underwent a dramatic transformation. The loss of the Nine Years War, private colonization schemes in Antrim and Down, and the Flight of the Earls defined a new Ulster where it was not simply an English, but British venture. The opening of official plantation schemes in 1609 solidified this new era in Ulster's past. As identities and communities grew more complex, the differences between religious, cultural, and linguistic groups were used to construct the embodied experiences that defined life in Ulster. More studies are needed to truly survey this transitionary time and the inclusion of sources on average women's experiences can deepen what is already known about this community dynamics.

As this chapter discusses, English and Scottish settlers made a contested land home during the early-to-mid decades of the seventeenth century. Unlike other plantations in Ireland, Ulster's settlements drew the attention of families rather than single men. As settlers inhabited the region's confiscated lands, they inscribed cultural differences upon the landscape. No longer was Ulster the home of traitorous rebels, but instead loyal subjects that would nurture the Crown's ambitions of control to fruition. The remaining native Irish, subjugated but not erased, found themselves slotted into new categories of identities that both erased and bolstered their status. They were no longer living under Brehon law and found themselves increasingly subject to English customs of dress, language, and culture. However, they did function as a working class in Ulster's colonial system and provided services only generated by their own status. While the native Irish were the most

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[260] Ohlmeyer, 173.

disenfranchised, English and Scottish settlers also found barriers to their success there. Irish women often found themselves working in the homes of settlers as laborers and maidservants where they could also translate Irish for their English-speaking employers. Men, on the other hand, were reduced to tenants beneath British landholders and held little autonomy compared to before colonization. Evidence of this is found in the fact that property tended to pass hands frequently as British settlers left their ambitions behind to return to England or Scotland. The movement of peoples signified reverse-emigration, where the promises of plantation and its hard work were not as sustainable in reality. The native Irish likely lacked the resources to make such a move, yet studies have not been conducted on their movements due to the imposition of plantation schemes.[261]

By the mid-seventeenth century, Ulster's society was one that both offered opportunity and suppressed the ambitions of its inhabitants. The complex intersection of these communities proved that the crown's ambitions were somewhat, but not evenly, successful. It seemed that by 1641, Ulster was a powder keg set to explode in another effort to establish Gaelic control and prevent further subjugation. The Crown's colonial venture came under fire in 1641, yet, as Chapter Three will show, was not completely overtaken by the Irish rebels. Perceptions of men and women's complex identities continued to change throughout the 1641 Irish Rebellion. While many print culture narratives insisted that Catholicism was to blame for the uprising, contemporary writers did not take into account the dynamic society built in Ulster over the course of plantation. The confluences, interactions, and parallels revealed in the 1641 Irish Uprising speak to the process of colonization discussed in this chapter.

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[261] There is some evidence for a trend like this in the 1641 Depositions as Irish women and children fled to Dublin, London, and other places for refuge from the ongoing conflict.

Chapter 3: "*Whole natives in those parts be out in Rebellion*": The 1641 Irish Uprising in Counties Antrim and Down, 1641-1653

By 1641, Ulster's remaining native Irish population remained subjugated by English and Scottish settlers that served as physical proof of their new status under English common law. As Chapter 2 shows, the erosion of Gaelic culture, law, and agriculture was a gradual process that weakened Ulster's native Irish population. Despite their transformed status, the native Irish served colonial society as interpreters, laborers, and other community figures that upheld the functions of conquered Ulster. The spaces created for English and Scottish settlers erased the claims, positions, and physical spaces once occupied by Ulster's Gaelic Irish lords and their clans. While the 1607 Flight of the Earls largely erased most Gaelic power through land seizure and regrants, a few key figures remained. These Gaelic Irish lords, including Sir Ranald MacDonnell, found themselves in financial trouble as they struggled to adapt to England's methods of estate management.[262] With cultural institutions weakened and ways of life all but eradicated from colonization, Ulster's Gaelic lords sought some way to remedy the situation defining their lives. Conspiracy and plots for rebellion soon took hold, plunging Ulster into chaos once more on October 22, 1641.

Ulster's Gaelic lords planned on revolting in Ireland as early as February 1641. The plots of rebellion served to free them, and the rest of the native Irish, from a colonial society that Othered them. Originally, the lords planned for dual revolts to take place in Dublin and Ulster. The first planned action of rebellion, the seizure of Dublin Castle, failed to take place in October 1641. With the Duplin plot spoiled, Ulster became the metaphorical powder keg meant to ignite rebellion. When the 1641 Irish Uprising began on October 22, Sir Phelim O'Neill and his men seized the

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[262] Jonathan Bardon, *A History of Ulster* (Belfast: The Blackstaff Press, 2001), 134-6

fort at Charlemont, County Armagh.[263] O'Neill's men ignited rebellion as they swiftly moved to Dungannon, County Tyrone, and other attacks took place in County Down and County Antrim. By October 24, 1641, O'Neill held a chain of strategic positions that "prevented any conjunction of the British in the north with any that might survive the actions of the conspirators in Dublin."[264] The rebellion started by O'Neill and other Gaelic Irish elites lasted until 1653, embroiling Ulster in turmoil for nearly twelve years.

Ulster's placement in the 1641 Irish Uprising was built on decades of colonial and imperial ambitions. As the previous two chapters demonstrate, the English crown imposed plantation schemes in Ireland during the sixteenth century, aiming to subdue Ireland by replacing Irishmen with English colonists. The first effective plantation schemes took place beneath Mary I in County Laois, County Offaly, and Munster. Ulster remained an outlier in this process as Gaelic systems of law, governance, and culture persisted into the seventeenth century. After the Flight of the Earls destabilized Gaelic leadership, Ulster became more susceptible to conquest. It became clear that the Gaelic province would no longer remain an outlier as Englishmen traveled to Ulster to survey the land for settlement and plantation. By 1603, James I granted land in County Antrim to members of the Scottish peerage, crofters, and Londoners. The crown's allotment of lands to the peerage and eventual broad settlement in Ulster under official plantation schemes irrevocably transformed the character of relations between the Gaelic Irish, English, and Scots.

The 1641 Irish Uprising presents an opportunity to see the impacts of the colonization process at work. By 1641, generations of English and Scottish settlers established Ulster as their home. The Tudor strategy of "reform, reduce, and replace" blossomed into fruition as the

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[263] Sir Phelim O'Neill was the great grandson of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone. This family legacy of resistance against English colonial ambitions is a fascinating subject of research and merely touched on in this thesis.
[264] M. Perceval-Maxwell, *The Outbreak of the Irish Rebellion of 1641* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 214.

colonization process took place from the formative years of the seventeenth century.[265] The impacts of this strategy transformed Ulster's cultural and economic fabric, providing opportunities for English and Scottish settlers while simultaneously destabilizing Gaelic ways of life. By looking at the events of 1641 through this lens, it becomes apparent that the Uprising rooted itself in the struggle between two societies, each embedded with its own societal, cultural, and gendered constructs. This chapter's regionalized approach focuses on Counties Antrim and Down, two counties with predominately Scottish settler populations.

After thirty-eight years of settlement, Antrim and Down's populations consisted of a mix of Scottish, English, and Gaelic Irish inhabitants. M. Perceval-Maxwell's study on Scottish migration to Ulster figures that by 1630, there between 2,000 to 3,000 Scottish men and women lived in Antrim.[266] In Down, population figures were harder to determine. Perceval-Maxwell asserts that between 1,900 to 2,000 Scottish men lived in Down by 1630.[267] While this study is helpful in determining the Scottish population in Antrim and Down, it reveals a large gap. Perceval-Maxwell's use of muster rolls and other plantation archival sources are inherently fixed on Ulster's male population, speaking to the paucity of women's presence in official accounts. His studies on Antrim and Down attempt to count how many Scottish families settled in each county, his logic resting on a formulaic ratio of women to men that figures there were one and a half women to every two men.[268] If there were women mentioned in plantation records, such as population surveys, they were marked as part of a family.[269] Women embedded in the colonization

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[265] Gerard Farrell, *The 'Mere' Irish and the Colonisation of Ulster, 1570-1641* (Cambridge: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017): 96-99.

[266] Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish Migration to Ulster in the Reign of James I*, 234.

[267] Ibid, 244.

[268] Ibid, 234.

[269] Surveys were conducted in Ulster from the late sixteenth century until the mid-seventeenth century. Surveys, such as Pynnars Survey, were not inclusive of all Ulster's counties. Even then, they only took account of landholders, undertakers, and families.

process represented a realm of life often hidden in seventeenth century records. They were often listed in relation to a patriarchal figure, obscuring their given and maiden names unless they were unmarried. Their presence in settlements, as laborers and domestic figures, and their role on the colonization process needs to be addressed in order to fully understand life in Antrim and Down in the wake of the 1641 Irish Uprising.

This chapter argues that the process of colonization in Ulster directly impacted the events of the 1641 Irish Uprising. It maintains that while the 1641 Depositions, a collection of primary sources consisting of witness testimonies speaking to the violence and calamity of rebellion, serve as evidence to the twelve years of upheaval in Ireland, they are inherently biased and silence testimonies from the Gaelic Irish and women.[270] This essay proves that untrue. It focuses on depositions and examinations taken from County Antrim and County Down, counties with predominately Scottish settler populations. Additionally, it strives to peel back layers of history fixed within the 'bias grain' in order to draw conclusions about seventeenth century implications about gender and Othered populations. It asserts that women's presence in the formal, legal realm of Ulster's courts during the 1641 Rebellion disrupted the social order of the patriarchy. When women testified about violence, theft, and other misfortunes, they used their positions to speak out against men that embodied societal definitions of masculine power and authority. This is significant as Ulster's colonial society was built upon differences created between English, Scottish, and Irish masculinities. These gender roles rippled outward to include feminine gender roles and the behavior expected of women. As the 1641 Depositions show, women used their voices to carve out new spaces for themselves within the turmoil of rebellion.

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[270] For examples of this bias and to see how women surfaced in the Depositions, see Andrea Knox's "Testimonies to history: reassessing women's involvement in 1641" in *Irish Women and Nationalism* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2019) and Joseph Cope's *England and the 1641 Rebellion.*

In a proclamation delivered in Dungannon on October 24, 1641, Sir Phelim O'Neill claimed that the Gaelic Irish rebellion was "in no way intended against the King, or to hurt his subjects either of the English or Scottish nation" and sought "only the defense and liberty of ourselves and the natives of the Irish nation."[271] O'Neill's statement placed Gaelic Irish interests independent of the ongoing English colonization of Ulster, seeking an unobtainable goal. The militaristic conflict that took place over the next twelve years proved the remaining Gaelic Irish elites' willingness to establish themselves as the rightful leaders of Ulster. There was no indication of how the Gaelic leaders would incorporate the existing Scottish and English populations into their vision for Ulster. The poorly planned coup quickly transformed into an uprising against the subjects of the crown, providing fodder for massacres and widespread violence. The uprising prompted military action as the crown sent English and Scottish troops meant to subdue the rebellion. This intensified the conflict, magnifying Ulster's place in the War of the Three Kingdoms as political turmoil descended upon England, Scotland, and Ireland.[272]

Within a month of the uprising's start, localized impacts of rebellion sparked moral outrage as Gaelic Irish rebels attacked English and Scottish settlers in Portadown, County Armagh. The violence of this event was constructed on religious lines, as Catholic rebels attacked Protestant settlers. The massacre drew stark lines between settler and native communities more than ever before, using the deaths of Protestant settlers to spark moral outrage within and outside of Ulster. The witnesses of these traumatic events gave testimonies to the Commission for the Despoiled Subject, forming the archival record that later formed the 1641 Depositions collection. Outside of

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[271] Proclamation of Sir Phelimy (Phelim) O'Neall and others, October 24, 1641, in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reign of Charles I, 1633-1647*, ed. Robert Pentland Mahaffy (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1900), 342.

[272] Charles I's disastrous reign was partially defined by his status as monarch over Ireland, England, and Scotland. The Three Kingdoms all had their own religious, political, and social strife during the seventeenth century, only complicating matters as violence erupted in localized contexts in Ulster.

Ulster, the news of the Uprising spread through print capitalism. Pamphlets published in 1642 bore titles like *The teares of IRELAND* and *An Exact RELATION of All such Occurrences as have happened in the severall of Donegall, London Derry, Tyrone, and Fermanagh, in the North of IRELAND* and circulated throughout the British Isles.[273] These pamphlets often found their way to Protestant ministers in England, where they shared them with their congregations.[274]

On December 23, 1641, the Lord Justices of Ireland formed the Commission for the Despoiled Subject to gather testimony from British Protestant subjects forcibly removed from "their settled habitations and scattered in a most lamentable matter."[275] The commission sought explanations for the actions and violence perpetrated against British subjects of Charles I. In the coded language of "The First Commission," there was no differentiation between English, Scottish, or Irish inhabitants of Ulster. Instead, the Commission elevated British Protestants as innocent victims and translated their experiences to characterize who lost the most during 1641. Irish Catholics were often demonized in the Depositions, illuminating how the conflict was constructed as an event posing Protestants against Catholics.

Following the Lord Justices' prescribed orders, the commissioners were to use their positions to truthfully and diligently examine "such persons as have been so robbed and spoiled as all the witnesses that can give testimony…"[276] Their investigation of survivors and suspected participants in the rebellion first started in Dublin.[277] The Dublin Commission collected depositions throughout the 1640s, requiring witnesses to travel to the city to give testimony. In the

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[273] The rise of newsbooks and pamphlets was a product of print-capitalism, a ripple effect of the Protestant Reformation. Print culture allowed propagandized narratives of the Uprising to reach Protestant audiences in England, influencing their sympathies for their imagined religious community.

[274] Joseph Cope, *England and the 1641 Irish Rebellion* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2009), 45.

[275] "First Commission," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, December 23, 1641. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=812001r002.

[276] "The First Commission."

[277] "When were the 1641 Depositions collected?", 1641 Depositions, Trinity College Library Dublin. Accessed November 30, 2020. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/about-when/.

1650s, more than seventy commissioners, comprising of army officers and local officials, traveled throughout Ireland to take accounts in high courts of justice.[278] These depositions and examinations, taken at the local level in Ireland's counties, include testimonies from individuals in Antrim and Down in Ulster. The localized investigations of the 1650s were more likely to be judicial interrogations, illuminating how the legal process changed as it moved from the metropole to the fringes of colonial society.[279]

Down's depositions primarily focused on local events to determine who was involved and to construct who was innocent or guilty. Depositions, mostly given by Protestant settlers, were used to create an official version of events. The Commission's intent was to find who robbed and spoiled during the Uprising, when and where they committed such crimes, and their actions and words during the event.[280] When the purpose of the depositions is separated from the accounts given, different realities emerge. The Commission's intent to reveal the nature of crimes drew stark, immoveable lines meant to be superimposed over reality.[281] The events recorded in the depositions appear differently when analyzed for inferred meanings through a gendered lens. By placing women's testimonies at the center of this narrative, the complex nuances of Ulster's colonial society become apparent.

Testimonies found in the 1641 Depositions often involved women, yet few of them were taken from the mouths of women. In Down, women gave thirteen out of one hundred and thirty-

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[278] This explains the dichotomy between number of accounts taken in the 1640s and 1650s. Accounts taken in the 1640s were likely to be given by individuals that managed to reach Dublin. Individuals that gave testimony during this initial period were most likely of good financial standings or refugees located in Dublin.

[279] "When were the 1641 Depositions collected?" This assertion rests on how the depositions often involve multiple accounts of one incident to get to the perceived truth.

[280] First Commission," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, December 23, 1641. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=812001r002.

[281] This version of events was bolstered by the newsbooks and pamphlets that came out during the Uprising by drawing differences on religious lines. Many of these publications posed Protestant settlers in a sense of absolute victimhood while villainizing Gaelic Irish Catholic 'papists'. The religious tensions were underpinned by the fact that ministers in England, where print culture was strongest, had their sermons on the Uprising published.

five depositions. Their voices in Down's depositions make up less than ten percent of accounts taken. Out of the thirteen women, two were single, five were married, and six were widowed at the time of depositions. The single women, Margerett Magwire and Katherine McGilleigh, shared testimonies after their fathers were killed.[282][283] Margerett and Katherine's voices constructed their identities through these documents based on their status as single, English or Scottish, and Protestant women. Their identities, complicated by their fathers' deaths, illuminate what Benedict Anderson deems 'sexual politics.'[284] Sexual politics intensified in Ulster's colonial society as identity was seemingly fixed to uncertain, ambiguous settler identities. As Ann Stoler asserts, women in colonial societies often experienced sexual control, "a fundamental class and racial marker implicated in a wider set of relations of power."[285] The sexual politics and control in the depositions surface through the coded language embedded in statements about women. Women were often expected to give details pertaining to the patriarchal figures they lost during the rebellion. Little surfaces on their own experiences, which could point to self, or legal, censorship. In contrast, men's testimonies on women demonstrate how unacceptable behaviors cast them out from the sexual and social norms of patriarchal expectations.

Women's roles as settlers or Others were intensified based on their marital, and sexual political, status. As Margerett and Katherine were not married, seventeenth century society bracketed them within the patriarchal umbrella of their fathers' authority. They were not

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[282] "Examination of Margerett Nee Magwire," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, May 25, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=837146r115.

[283] "Examination of Katherine mc Gillegh," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, June 9, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=837088r058.

[284] Anderson, 20. While Anderson argues that sexual politics were used by monarchial leaders to expand their control over geographical areas through marriage and concubinage. This non-elite form of sexual politics was directly tied to women's identity, where they were subject to scrutiny if they did not marry and were expected to fulfill feminine roles of childbearing and domestic labor.

[285] Ann Laura Stoler, "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia" in *Theorizing Feminisms: A Reader,* eds. Elizabeth Hackett and Sally Haslanger (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 483.

'transferred' to the jurisdiction of a husband and therefore, could be perceived as falling outside of societal expectations for their class and gender. The loss of their fathers illuminated this 'crisis', as their societal position changed without patriarchal guidance. They were at risk of straying from patriarchal control, which threatened the established order of society, the courts, and the church. To expand on these thoughts about identity and sexual politics, we must turn to the women's voices themselves.

Margerett Magwire's voice breaks through historical silence by lamenting the loss of her father in 1643. In her deposition, she recounted her father's death in front of commissioners ten years later in 1653. Her father, Cormick Magwire, sought protection from Captain John Woll after he "came in from the Irish." [286] This arrangement provided security for Cormick and his family, including Margerett, until one of Woll's men demanded money from him. When he refused, the man attacked him and Cormick fled towards the Castle of Ardglass to save his life. Woll was not there to offer him protection, and he was left for dead after they stole his "breeches, shoes, stockings, Casock shirt, and doublet" as well as money. Sometime later, Margerett went to her father's side and witnessed his death as the men returned to "cut his head into four parts and run him into the belly" as she "she stood neere hand beemoaneing her sayd fathers death."

The violence integral to the Uprising constructed a seemingly fixed category for Margerett to fall into after her father's death. As a single, unmarried, and mourning daughter, societal protections provided by the patriarchy lessened. While we do not know Margerett's fate after she appears in the depositions, her testimony spoke out against Captain John Woll and his troops after her father's death. This elevated Margerett's status to become an integral part in the Lord Justices' construction of victims and perpetrators in the Uprising. The trauma of her father's death placed

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[286] "Examination of Margerett Nee Magwire."

her as an agent of justice, testifying against the men that wrongfully ended his life. Margerett granted herself historical agency in a legal setting, defying English common law's prescriptions of feminine societal status through giving her testimony. As Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker argue, women's roles in judicial processes took form as they "appropriating certain concerns of their own", they wielded a considerable amount of power through using "their sex and knowledge to claim authoritative expertise in important public matters."[287] The women in the Depositions displayed a muted degree of this power.

Katherine McGilleigh's testimony echoes the experience revealed in Margerett's deposition. Patrick McGilleigh's, Katherine's father, died after being placed under the protection of Captain John Woll in 1646 or 1647.[288] Before he worked for Woll harvesting sea wrack, washed up kelp, for fertilizer, he was "out with the Irish in rebellyon."[289] Like Magwire, his protection was withdrawn, and he was killed when four of Captain Woll's men came into his home and slaid him in his bed. His wife, Katherine Bretnogh, laid in bed with him when he was killed. It is unknown what circumstances made Patrick leave the rebel forces. By seeking protection from Captain Woll, Patrick revealed the danger in remaining in the grey areas between facets of Ulster's colonial society.[290] By treading these boundaries, individuals like Patrick McGilleigh and Cormick Magwire put themselves at risk of violence and death through defying what was expected for them. Statements regarding Captain John Woll, who failed to provide paid protection and ultimately caused his death, proved that Ulster's colonial society was morally ambiguous.[291] Katherine

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[287] Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker, "Introduction" in *Women, Crime, and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London: University College London Press, 1994), 14.

[288] "Examination of Katherine mc Gillegh."

[289] "Examination of Katherine Bretnogh," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, June 9, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=837091r060.

[290] It is mostly revealed through masculine ties to the violence of the over-arching chaos during this time.

[291] Katherine McGilleigh claimed that Captain Woll took her father under protection for twenty-six shillings.

McGilleigh's deposition revealed how women yielded power under similar circumstances, using it to grab for justice through her familial status. While unmarried, Katherine utilized the advantages presented by the commission to bring her own concerns to an officially sanctioned space. This was significant as women's involvement in early modern British courts often did so by claiming an authority "derived from their own intimate knowledge."[292] Patrick's wife, Katherine Bretnogh, gave a deposition on the same event and relayed similar details to the commission.[293] Bretnogh's testimony reveals a multi-layered picture of settler women's lives in colonial Ulster. This reveals the close entanglement of Down's women to the events of the rebellion, their responses revealing the ongoing construction of identities during this tumultuous time. Women were central actors entangled in the conflict and had to adjust their societal presence accordingly. Their testimonies constructed a web of events embedded with cultural and social consequences of the Uprising entangled within judicial process.

Captain John Woll appeared in nine of Down's depositions and gave his own testimony on May 27, 1653.[294] In these cases, Woll's habit of offering protection for a fee later lead to the removal of protection and orders given to kill innocent men. Anny Mackelynen, a widow, also spoke to Woll's actions in Down.[295] Her testimony reveals the power widows had in legal settings in early modern Britain, where their voices held more power due to their status. Widows held greater authority partially because they were representative of their late husbands' affairs. Mackelynen's husband was among seven men that died because of Woll. Other depositions about Woll's actions corroborated his betrayal and revealed a web of violence surrounding him. While

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[292] Kermode and Walker, 7.
[293] "Examination of Katherine Bretnogh."
[294] "Deposition of John Woll," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, May 27, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=837135r102.
[295] "Deposition of Anny Mackelynen," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, May 7, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=837133r100.

the men died under different circumstances, the depositions reveal a pattern. While Woll's motives for killing these men remains opaque, women's testimonies hold him accountable through their personal losses. Their voices in the depositions revealed how the Uprising's events impacted them directly and created a space for them to bring their concerts to formal, legal spaces. The status quo, often anchored in religious, gendered, and socioeconomic markers, changed as individuals testified to the violence they witnessed.

On March 15, 1643, Elizabeth Crooker gave her deposition detailing the traumatic journey she and her young son made because of Gaelic Irish rebel leader Sir Conn Magennis.[296] Around the start of the Uprising, rebels beneath Magennis forced a group of Protestant settlers from their homes in Newry for transport to Newcastle where they would be exchanged for Irish prisoners. Crooker's experience revealed she was "stripped and had taken from her in leather and other household goods and clothes at the Newry to the value of 10 pounds and upwards."[297] The loss of material things was minor compared to how she and her son were "carried out to the sea to be drowned and by the extremity of the weather were cast upon a rock where she and her child there almost naked and starved."[298] This treatment of being stripped and robbed by Irish rebels was a common occurrence among Protestant settlers, both men and women. Crooker and her son witnessed the massacre of Protestant settlers, during an event later deemed the 'Bloody Bridge', and managed to escape. While Elizabeth's deposition does not reveal how she escaped, one possible reason why it is unclear is because depositions taken in the 1640s were "more or less spontaneous reports" rather than the detailed interrogations conducted in the 1650s.[299]

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[296] "Deposition of Elizabeth Crooker," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, March 15, 1643. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=837004r004.
[297] Ibid.
[298] Ibid.
[299] "When were the 1641 Depositions collected?"

Depositions about the 'Bloody Bridge' detailed Protestant settler captivity and forced transport under Gaelic Irish rebels. Elizabeth Crooker's experience, doubly impactful through material loss and escape, revealed the destabilizing impacts of violence on settler communities in Ulster. The 'Bloody Bridge' massacre left anywhere from twenty-four to one hundred and twenty Protestant settlers dead, including women and children.[300] In discourses about the Uprising's violence, English commentators often used the crimes to attack the civility of the Gaelic Irish. By using terms such as "bloody Papists", pamphlets targeted the Gaelic Irish as barbaric because of the violence perpetrated in Ulster. Their actions provoked greater outrage when the deaths of women and children were involved, further cementing the Othered status of the Gaelic Irish.

Mary Goodman, a widow, was also one of the settlers taken captive. Her concerns revealed economic losses brought by the violence, revealing how women's experiences in the judicial process tied to familial dynamics. Her claim of being despoiled of the "wardship and marriage" of sixteen-year-old Edmund Barrett, a boy who she believed to be in actual rebellion with Gaelic Irish forces revealed women's economic positions in Ulster.[301] While Mary's concerns with Barrett's involvement in rebellion could be interpreted as a form of social policing, her deposition clearly favors the financial benefits at risk if she lost him as a charge. Barrett was "His Majesty's ward" and caused Mary's loss of over three hundred pounds for "procuring and prosecuting" him.[302] Her finances and property were jeopardized by Barrett's actions, upsetting the balance of taking him in as a ward.[303] Mary's financial concerns revealed the ways women manufactured their own notions of power in colonial Ulster, taking the lead in managing the household after spousal death.

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[300] The large discrepancy in numbers is collected from the depositions themselves.
[301] "Deposition of Mary Goodman," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, September 6, 1642. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=837006r005.
[302] Ibid.
[303] It is unclear whether or not Goodman and her deceased husband were fostering Barrett in a similar manner of fosterage as discussed in Chapter 1.

Her argument was exclusionary of single women in the depositions, as their status did not grant them the same privileges. This was not an uncommon occurrence during the Uprising, as women were thrust into the role of primary caregivers in the "confusion that marked the first weeks of the rising."[304]

Depositions taken from women revealed their integral place in shaping the judicial processes, experiences of survival, and management of financial and other affairs during the Uprising. While these depositions reveal a great deal about Protestant women's experiences from 1641 onwards, they do not reveal views on Gaelic Catholic Irish women. A dichotomy between Protestant settlers and Gaelic Catholic natives was constructed in the beginning of the colonizing process in the early seventeenth century. The differences intensified on religious lines, especially as English responses to 1641 fixated on the papist threat posed by the remnants of Gaelic Ireland's Catholic elites. England printed Protestant sermons to shape congregations' responses to the Uprising, resembling the crown and Parliament's construction of the event.[305] These religious nuances further justified the seizure of Gaelic Irish lands and to show how barbaric the rebels were. This trend fell in line with England's continuous colonization of Ulster and echoed the deposition's depictions of Gaelic Catholic Irish women. The depositions revealed the unfavorable construction of identity imposed upon Gaelic Irish women because of their Catholicism and use of power through femininity.

Accounts of Gaelic Irish women in the depositions touch on their cruel nature, derived from their betrayal of honor-infused gender roles.[306] Elizabeth Crooker Othered these women as a

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[304] Cope, 39-40.
[305] Ibid, 12-13.
[306] Honor and gender merged together in early modern societal constructs, assigning appropriate behaviors and spaced assigned to each sex. For more, see Kermode & Walker, 8-9.

threat in her deposition, singling them out as "more scornful and cruel than the men."[307] This logic is not surprising in Ulster's colonial society, especially as communities functioned on the basis of exclusion and rejection of the Other. She also criticized Irish Viscountess Ivaghe for her cruelty against Protestant settlers, claiming she did so because "she was very angry with the soldiers because they did not put them all to death."[308] The Viscountess was angry with her own soldiers for not executing all Protestant settlers, allowing Crooker to place an Othered label on Gaelic Irish women that deemed them as crueler and more barbaric. Elizabeth's survival intensified this judgement, as the death of her fellow Protestants fractured any positive views she held of the native Irish. This account, grounded in personal experience, does not share the same animosity found in Peter Hill's deposition. Hill, the late high sheriff and provost marshal of Downpatrick, gave accounts of two 1641 massacres of Protestants.[309] He used colonial politics of exclusion to construct the native Irish as inhuman and barbarous.

Hill told the commission about an Irish woman brought to his house for attempting to kill another Irish woman and her child. His claim was that the first, offending Irish woman confessed to the threat, her motive being that she could "have eaten the [other woman's] child."[310] His language constructed a barrier between Protestant, British settlers like himself and the "diverse barbarous Irish women that lay in the woods" that often devoured the English soldiers they killed, their bones left behind cleaned, picked, and flesh eaten off.[311] These atrocious claims constructed native Irish women as the opposite of 'good' British settler women. This became particularly evident as Hill claimed Irish women took "sucking children from their parents and…carried them

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[307] "Deposition of Elizabeth Crooker."
[308] Ibid.
[309] "Deposition of Peter Hill," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, May 29, 1645. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=837030r020.
[310] Ibid.
[311] Ibid.

& threw them…where the ice was weak and thin in Lugh Kerne, Co. Armagh." This tale of violence, barbarity, and cannibalism cannot be corroborated against credible sources. While Hill's depiction of Irish women may border on theatrical, it demonstrated the continuity found in constructing the native Irish as barbarous, a trend originating with the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland.[312] Women were more damned by these stereotypes, as colonial narratives placed Othered women as markers of civility and allowed 'good' women to benefit from the colonial process. British settler women giving testimonies gave accounts of victimhood and loss, while Othered Irish women were regarded with suspicion when giving theirs. This demonstrated how the colonial process upheld the cultural differences that the Crown, government, and settlers put into place as a facet of conquested Ulster.

Other men in authoritative roles, such as Sergeant Major William Burley, gave accounts that also portrayed the 'crude' and 'rebellious' nature of Gaelic Irish women. When Irish rebels went into Burley's house and robbed it, he decried the behavior of rebel Hugh ô Lary's wife.[313] As the group went into Burley's house, his servants witnessed her "taking upon her to order and dispose of the household goods, furniture, apparel, and provisions." This action, shocking in a general context but more so because an Otherized woman did it, preceded the woman's visit to his wife's chamber "and seasing on his wife's apparel, attired and dressed herself in the best of that apparel." Taking full advantage of the situation, the woman "drank a confusion to the English dogs", sitting at the head of the table and asked if the "chair, apparel, and place did not become her as well as Mrs. Burley." This apparent merriment went on for some time until she and "her base rebellious crew continued their reveling, carousing, and drinking until all or most of them

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[312] Gerald of Wales, a twelfth century writer, first used terms like these in his works *The Topography of Ireland* and *The Conquest of Ireland.*

[313] "Deposition of William Burley," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, August 10, 1644. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=837029r019.

were drunk." When the alcohol ran out, the woman found Burley's hogsheads of beer, and upon seeing mold growing around the seal, she "concluded that that was ratsbane."[314] In order to expel the threat, she and her "savage or brute people" burst open the barrels, "devoured and spoiled the provisions of viands and spoiled and defaced the house." The use of *savage* to denounce the Gaelic Irish rebels took on a deeper dimension when Burley's account fixated on a woman as the perpetrator of the action. She was clearly the leader in the scenario, dressing in an English woman's clothing and pretending to be lady of the house. This transcended the barriers constructed by Ulster's colonial society and imposed offense on top of horror. It also revealed how an Othered woman experienced critiques in positions of authority, much like the treatment of Agnes Campbell in Chapter One. The critiques against Irish women were as much of a critique of Irish masculinity, where their behavior seemingly justified the need for the civilizing influence and force of the Crown.

The woman's blatant disregard for Burley's possessions and presence of his servants illuminated how defying feminine societal roles pinned native Irish women as more outrageous, attractive, and brutish than masculine historical actors. In this context, Irish women were viewed as forbidden and at the mercy of English depictions. This displayed how they were Othered as England placed their undesirable qualities on Irish men and women. Her actions possessed power, strength, and defiance in light of the chaos happening in Down. This deposition constructed one possibility for Irish women's roles in the Uprising, where they had the ability act against the imperial force of the English. As Mary O'Dowd asserts, the Uprising was "the first Irish rebellion that involved spontaneous risings from below, a phenomenon that widened the potential for women to become involved."[315] While not all women involved in the uprising acted as rebels,

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[314] Ratsbane is rat poison.
[315] Mary O'Dowd, *A History of Women in Ireland, 1500-1800* (Harlow, UK: Pearson Longman, 2005), 33.

native Irish, English, and Scottish women were all impacted in some way by the rebellion as a political, colonial, and militaristic event with dynamic societal consequences.

County Antrim provided more opportunities to see how women spoke and constructed themselves in the 1641 Depositions. Forty women gave depositions in Antrim, roughly thirteen percent of the total three hundred and fourteen testimonies. This percentage, admittedly lower than Down's fifteen percent reveals that English and Scottish settlers in Antrim experienced more extensive contact with their Gaelic Irish neighbors. Antrim's women participated in a colonial society through interactions between subordinated Catholic and relatively elite Protestant neighbors, their perceptions of each other complicated by the 1641 Uprising. Elite women, such as Alice O'Neill MacDonnell, Countess Dowager of Antrim, impacted Ulster's societal framework through their roles as feminine community figures and as Presbyterian victims of the Uprising.

Alice O'Neill MacDonnell lived in the house at Ballycastle at the beginning of the Uprising and held the elite status of Countess Dowager of Antrim. She received a jointure of lands after her husband, Sir Ranald MacDonnell's death. Ranald received these lands from James I in the early seventeenth century.[316] During the rebellion, Alice fled from Ballycastle as the Scottish army marched into the Roote to disband the Irish forces. She claimed she did this to save her life as the "Scotts Army coming on one side by Land, and McCallin's Army by Sea" would surely persecute her as the McCallins were always "Enemies to the mcDonnells." The precarious situation left Alice at the mercy of armies and revealed how women in the Uprising made choices to survive that also altered their status in the community. Alice's own status as a widow granted her considerable protections because of her late husband's land holdings. Commissioners Thomas Coote and Richard Braiser were in charge of examining Alice, apparently interrogating her to the point of

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[316] "Examination of Alice McDonnell, Countess Dowager of Antrim," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, February 9, 1652. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838022r017.

frustration where she said "if she were to be hanged, she could not answer the said question any otherwise." This statement revealed the tensions fueled by the Uprising that threatened Alice's identity and community status as well as her life.

Alice's examination shows that the commissioners did not interrogate her simply because of her elite status or how she fled Ballycastle to go 'over the Bann.' These components revealed the Countess' crucial role in the Protestant settler community, where localized violence took shape through a settler woman's death on the grounds of her home. It is likely Alice converted to Protestantism from Catholicism, another reality that could have made her suspicious. Jennet Speir, the victim, was an English or Scottish woman as the Countess was asked if she "refused not to suffer any British Inhabitants of the Towne of Ballycastle or Countrey thereabouts to enter into the house of Ballycastle for safety of their Lives." Jennet Speir sought shelter in Ballycastle and stayed in the Countess' residence for some time. While there, someone took money from her and she was cast out of the house's safety before her death. Six depositions speaking of her death do not situate the theft of her money until *after* her death and the commissioners believed the Countess took it from her. They demanded to know if the Countess owed Jennett money, and while she denied this, she admitted that "Jennett did owe her 15 li."[317]. If she did owe the Countess money, Alice's servants took it from her and then cast her from the house. The commissioners' question about Jennett's actions before her death makes sense in this context, explaining why she possibly held "her Ladyship by the skirt of her gowne" as she pleaded for her life.[318] The Countess called her a *carlin*, Scots for old woman, and demanded servants to take her away. After this, knowledge of Jennet's death spread amongst settlers and the Gaelic Irish and later surfaced in individual testimonies. Her death formed a connection to other instances of violence in Ulster during this

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[317] "Examination of Alice McDonnell, Countess Dowager of Antrim."
[318] Ibid.

time, including the Murder at Portnaw, as one account claimed she was buried in "one grave or hole" with another settler.[319]

This story about Jennet Spier's death was likely used to fear monger settlers and undermine the Countess' elite status. She was one of the few that could offer shelter to the settlers, yet the deaths of two Protestants proved she was untrustworthy. By admitting she nor her servants "never refused any to enter for shelter," the Countess revealed information about her status in the community. As a landed widow, she appeared as a resource to ensure safety of the neighboring settlers as the "Irish Murderers" came to Ballycastle. Alice claimed she allowed Irish, Scots, and English into her house for shelter, listing four or five individuals by name in her examination.[320] The commissioners did not believe Alice took individuals in for benevolent reasons, stating she and her servants did so "not soe much out of any good intention in preserving their lives as out of particular respects" for the relatives of people she knew personally.

The thorough interrogation of the Countess reveals the ways gendered assumptions were placed on individuals in the Deposition process itself. Alice was regarded with suspicion during her examination and the language used in her deposition reveals this trend on a broader level. In the depositions, interviewers described women thought to be involved in rebellious activities as 'cruel', 'brute', 'savage', or 'barbarous.'[321] These terms, mostly assigned to Gaelic Irish women, revealed tensions about religious factions in Ulster. Alice's status as a widow of a Scottish lord likely Othered her. While the Gaelic Irish women in the depositions were not called papists, their

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[319] "Examination of James Allen," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, March 1, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838050r065.

[320] Alice, like many others in the Depositions, only claimed to know the name of a few people that entered her house for safety. She listed a man, John Hunter, his wife, and children, showing the generational impact these events had on Ulster's population. Jennett Speir was not named in this list.

[321] Alice is also treated this way but in less descriptive terms, instead being the subject of speculation in the commissioners' written record of her examination.

religion served to measure the civility of their collective identity. The treatment of settler women contrasts sharply with these depictions, showing how the commissioners displayed bias against the Gaelic Irish Catholics. These differences, constructed through gender, culture, and class, were underpinned by religion. As these events took place after the Protestant Reformation, debates on the fate of Christian denominations were commonplace. Catholics, deemed papists by their critics, were seen in opposition to the English crown's position on Protestantism.[322] The intermixing of Catholic, Protestant, and Presbyterian populations in Ulster only complicated this, as the Lord Justices of Dublin Castle appointed clergymen from the Anglican Church of Ireland to serve as commissioners. The role of women situated in these tensions illustrate how religion and ethnicity constructed multiple identities in Ulster's complex colonial society.

The treatment of Jennett Speir in the Countess of Antrim's deposition illustrates how settler women were often constructed as victims. Commissioners interrogated the Countess on her treatment of British settlers seeking refuge and isolated the events through bringing Jeannette Speir up by name. The Countess claimed she had no knowledge of settlers being murdered within the walls of her home and revealed that she knew of Jennett. Another deposition gave evidence that Jennett "came into the Castle and prayed her Ladyship to save her life", took ahold of the Countess' skirt, and was carried out of the castle by one of the servants after the Countess commanded "that she be taken away from her."[323] While the Countess denied this, she admitted to hearing about Jennett's murder much later. The Countess's account revealed only one perspective of Jennett's death, an event mentioned by seven other people in their examinations or depositions. Numerous

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[322] Charles I further complicated the crown's responses to religion as each of the Three Kingdoms had their own views on religion.
[323] "Examination of Alice McDonnell, Countess Dowager of Antrim."

accounts of Jennett's death illuminated multiple perspectives surrounding the violence of the Uprising and the ways it was constructed through the judicial process.

Accounts of Jennett Speir's death came from one woman and six men, either associated with the Countess through servitude or those who sought shelter in the house of Ballycastle. The testimonies mention Speir's death in some way; they heard about it from other settlers or Gaelic Irish men or witnessed her removal from the house. Jennett Service's version of events places Speir at the house, only highlighting that she was "slaine on the backe of the stable neere the Castlewall."[324] Service's presence there is corroborated by the Countess' testimony, as she mentioned Service's husband as one settler she took in after the Murder at Portnaw.[325] This account of Speir's death became more intriguing as Dwaltagh McAlester, the man that killed her, took a "eleaven Marke piece out of her Stockins."[326] While other depositions testify to how goods and clothes were removed from corpses during the Uprising, accounts of Speir's death fixate on the money taken from her stockings. Thomas Giffen's testimony revealed another version of this tale, as he heard that "her money was taken from her by those in the house" and afterwards, she was thrust out of the house and killed.[327] If the Countess acted upon greed and took Jennet's money, it likely only diminished her status within the community.

Violence impacted settlers and Gaelic Irish alike in the Uprising, demonstrating how massacres like the Murder at Portnaw shaped their perceptions of events. Following what Joseph Cope calls "the experience of survival", the testimonies demonstrated the trauma of witnessing or

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[324] "Examination of Jennett Service," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, February 28, 1652. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838046r044.

[325] "Examination of Alice McDonnell, Countess Dowager of Antrim." Service's husband was John Hunter, mentioned by the Countess in her statement that she "allowed Irish, Scots, and English enter her house for safety, including John Hunter, a carpenter, and his wife and children."

[326] "Examination of Jennett Service."

[327] "Examination of Thomas Giffen," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, March 1, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838050v067.

surviving massacres. Women like Jennett Speir and Margaret Moneypenny fled for safety after Murder of Portnaw, a massacre of English troops in early 1642.[328] The turmoil following the events at Portnaw expelled settlers from their homes to find safety, either seeking out the homes of the elite or arranging transport for elsewhere. Geiles Kellsoe, a widow, testified to the choices individuals and families made in the chaos as she went "along the Coast about Ballycastle in the County of Antrim to seeke transportacion into Scotland for the safety of their lives from the Irish rage."[329] Women, at the heart of familial dynamics, were central to these choices as settlers preserved their lives. Isabell Kerr's account showed how settler-native relations broke down the boundaries of the imagined communities through these conflicts, as "her owne & late husband James Kerr lifes were saved after the Murder at Portnaw" by three Scotsmen that provided them with safety for two months.[330]

The Murder at Portnaw reveals a different facet of the experience of survival. Rather than framing these accounts in religious terms, as Down's depositions had grounded themselves in the coded language of Protestant victimhood, these Antrim survivors explained how imagined communities became tangible and provided tangible benefits. These interactions defied identity categories imposed on Ulster's colonial society where a separation between Protestant settlers and Gaelic Irish natives grew increasingly opaque. This demonstrated a variation between Counties Down and Antrim, showing that Ulster itself was not a monolithic space.

Another massacre, the slaughter of Gaelic Irish on Island Magee by Scots soldiers, revealed how these ambiguous identities underwent transformation during the Uprising. Thirty-one of

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[328]Michael McCartan, "The Cromwellian High Courts of Justice in Ulster, 1653." *Seanchas Ardmhacha: Journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society* 23, No. 1 (2010), 98.

[329] "Examination of Geiles Kellsoe," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, February 28, 1652. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838045v042.

[330] "Examination of Isabell Kerr," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, March 1, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838051r069.

Antrim's depositions mention the slaughter at Island Magee, illuminating how the Gaelic Irish became victims of Scots troops. The change over fifty years demonstrated how changing politics in the Isles impacted any cultural alliance or similarities. Rather than viewing the Gaelic Irish as a kindred group, the Scots soldiers viewed them as threatening to the social order imposed by the Crown. This was contrary to how the Gaelic Irish surfaced as the sole perpetrators of violence in other depositions. James Michell's testimony detailed the movement of Scottish troops into both Island Magee and Ballycary, another site of slaughter, as "a great confluence of Scottishmen met togeither at the sayd village of Ballycary from the county of Tyrone…who gave out that they had a warrant from the king to murder all the Irish."[331] While the accounts do not reveal the orders given to the Scots troops, they do reveal the mass violence witnessed by those living on Island Magee. Anne Fitzsymons, living in Kilkleet, testified against Captain Alexander Adaire who quartered in her town during the Uprising. Adaire told Fitzsymons how he killed a young child on its mother's back, saying as she was "flying away from him, and he following and stricking at the woman his strocke light upon the child…the head of it hanging over the breachen that his blow did cause the head of the child to fall to the ground lyke a ball."[332] He told her this after being "putt in mynd of the sayd Act by looking upon" her own child. Bryan O'Kelly also heard of these violent actions when Adaire called his Lieutenant a fool for saying "it was not well donne to kill a child or any of those that were not gone out into Rebellion."[333] This was significant as it revealed a critique of each other within the Scots troops, where the judgment surfaced because of treatment of an innocent child. It is likely O'Kelly criticized Adaire as both a soldier and as a man. Adaire

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[331] "Examination of James Michell," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, June 1, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838223r270.

[332] "Examination of Anne Fitzsymons," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, June 6, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838189r235.

[333] "Examination of Bryan O'Kelly," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, June 6, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838190r236.

revealed his feelings about the Gaelic Irish as he spoke about his military service, believing that there was not one of them to be spared, that they would all goe into Rebellion, when they saue [saw] their opportunity." This was a clear example of Othering and a colonial attitude in the mind of one of the Crown's soldiers.

Captain Adaire's actions and words seem particularly cruel yet complicated the social constructs used in colonial Ulster used to define the two communities. The fact that "the best-proven examples of large-scale massacres…were the atrocities perpetrated by the Scots on the native Irish of Islandmagee and Ballydavy" adds a layer to the complex notions of justice, military conflicts, and identities in colonial Ulster.[334] It would be erroneous to assume that all testimonies in the Depositions were entirely factual, yet these accounts shed light on the complicated construction of identities in Down and Antrim. It would also be incorrect to assume that there was a separate identity between Scots and English soldiers as well as sympathy between Irish and Scottish Gaels. The victims and individuals fleeing violence in the Murder at Portnaw and on Island Magee were innocent, not perpetrators against their attackers. These massacres, bound in the rhetoric of the War of the Three Kingdoms, expressed identity and ideological formation on a localized level. If the Gaelic Irish at Island Magee were truly as cruel, wild, or barbarous as the accounts claimed, we can assume there would be fewer efforts to account for the violence targeting them.[335] If there was not a sense of shared loss and acknowledgement of human dignity among the people that gave testimonies, there would have been no reason to attest to the massacre.

Identities portrayed in the depositions also shed light on how societal constructs influenced the gendered language of testimony. Allen McRee testified to the death of Jennett Dilliston als

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[334] McCartan, 98.

[335] The investigation of this massacre was also meant to hold Scottish soldiers accountable but that was not the sole meaning attributed to these depositions.

Wilson, an elderly Scots woman killed ten days after the Murder at Portnaw, blaming Irishmen that killed her because of her "witchcraft."[336] The men killed her because "so long as that old woman…is alive she would hinder us to get to Ballentoy with her Witchcraft." McRee's deposition rested on an exchange before Jennett's death, one echoed by John McCart's testimony. McCart protected Jennett because she was an "ancient tenant" of his, and Protestant, and was angry at the Irishmen who killed her. One Irishman, Gilduffe ô Cahan, bitterly rebuked him for his reaction, saying "Jennett was a Witch & deserved to be killed."[337] During this period, poor, elderly women living outside of the patriarchal protection of the male-headed household were the most likely to be accused of witchcraft.[338] Their position outside of the patriarchal community that would protect them created a realm of doubt surrounding their identities, where they were more likely to 'cast' harm on others through perceived magical means. When ô Cahan gave his own testimony, he made no mention of Jennett or the witchcraft accusation nor did the commissioners interrogate him about it.[339] Based on McRee and McCart's depositions, Jennett was potentially targeted because of her age and status as a widow.[340] The details of ô Cahan's animosity have been lost to history yet it corroborates how women falling outside of patriarchal societal expectations and norms could be targeted for their disobedience.

As discussed earlier, the Murder at Portnaw and the death of Jennett Speir revealed how the Commission painted Gaelic Irish rebels as barbaric by using Othered language in the depositions. This was meant to construct the conflict by placing the blame on the actions of the

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[336] "Examination of Allen McRee," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, March 9, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838073r131.

[337] "Examination of John McCart," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, March 15, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838079r147.

[338] James Sharpe, *The Bewitching of Anne Gunter* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 68.

[339] "Examination of Gilduffe O Cahan," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, March 10, 1654. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838024r018.

[340] McCart claimed Jennett was 90 years old in his examination.

Gaelic rebels. John Murghlan, a Protestant settler, recounted his time under the Countess of Antrim's protection after the Murder at Portnaw and also revealed how women could be targeted for straying from social expectations. Thomas Robinson, another settler, was killed and thought to be buried in the same hole as Jennett Speir. After Robinson's death, Murghlan witnessed an Irishman wearing the deceased man's doublet and claimed he "bestowed the said Thomas Robinson's breeches upon his whore."[341] Since the unnamed woman, deemed a whore accompanied an Irishman, Murghlan may have viewed her as a woman with licentious morals. It is more likely that she was the Irishman's companion and Murghlan called her this as a descriptor meant to demean both her feminity and her Irish identity. This deposition corroborated how judgements based on civility measured the colonizing process in Ulster, where women were the signposts for all things proper, or depraved.

Many of the depositions often polarized women as either innocent victims or wicked rebels. Magdalen Duckworth, a single woman, lived with her widowed grandmother when the rebellion broke out. As the violence unfolded, Magdalen witnessed "Mrs. Maxwell drowned in the Blackwater, being then in labour when was forced into the River, having nothing but on but her Smock & a paire of red stockings, & a little while after the Irish forced her in the child parted from her."[342] After the Irish forced her into the water, the woman gave birth to her infant. This graphic scene placed women's reproductive experiences in the center of the Uprising, where a woman in labor could not escape the Irishmen. There is no knowing how long the woman had been in labor, where she was in her pregnancy, if the stress of the event caused her to go into labor, or if the child survived. Her embodied experiences, revealed by Magdalen, placed her in additional peril as she

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[341] "Examination of John Murghlan," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, February 28, 1652. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838047v049.

[342] "Examination of Magdalen Duckworth," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, February 10, 1652. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=836121r066.

drowned in the Blackwater River. The exposure to the cold in her underclothes, uterine contractions, and other experiences associated with birth were only exacerbated by being forced into the water. While this scene was traumatic and atrocious to witness, it was also used to Other the rebels that actively upended life in Ulster with the rebellion.

George Shawe's pregnant wife is another indicator of women's roles as victims and symbols in the Uprising. During the beginning of the rebellion his home was plundered and his wife "big with child" was pushed to the ground by one of the Irish rebels.[343] Shawe stated she was never well afterwards, and a month later she "was delivered of her Child and then she died and sonne [soon] after the child also." Much like the pregnant woman in Magdalen's examination, Shawe's wife experienced stress that contributed to her death. The risks of pregnancy and childbirth, exacerbated by this rough treatment, left her body unable to survive the 'fiery trial' of birth. Her death, like her infant's, could have been caused by a number of factors, including hemorrhaging. These two cases merely hint that there was no honor between men toward women in this context, where they were often positioned as collateral damage during the Uprising. In order for these impacts to be fully understood, a study on midwives, pregnancy, and birth needs to be done in early modern Ulster.

Through approaching the 1641 Irish Uprising in this way, this chapter challenges assumptions about settler colonialism, the construction of gender, and discussions of sexuality in early modern British history. The analysis of four hundred and fifty depositions spread between Antrim and Down offer a rich opportunity to reconstruct how women impacted the colonizing process in seventeenth century Ulster.[344] Women's behavior played a critical role in how the

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[343] "Examination of George Shawe," The 1641 Depositions, MSS, Trinity College Dublin Library, May 21, 1653. https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838231r278.
[344] This figure comes from combining Antrim's 314 depositions and Down's 136 depositions.

Commissioners configured how colonial Ulster was viewed in the depositions, as testimonies used coded language to assign identities without being explicit. Women of English and Scottish origin, often constructed as the victims of the cruel native Irish, gave their testimonies to the commissioners to make their voices heard. Rather than simply being 'present' in the Depositions, women's voices reveal important insights that broaden the understanding of the Uprising's convoluted events. Lenses of women's, gender, and sexuality history, the Depositions create room to study identities often transmitted in coded language. This, complicated by the faint traces of women's voices in the depositions, welcomes a closer look at the intersection of courts, gender, and sexuality in the early modern period.

Coded language attributed to women's statuses illuminated the ways social control was enforced through the patriarchy. Women moved beyond these classifications, using their gender as a form of power and defiance in the Depositions, where they complicated societal views of their identities in a chaotic time. The Uprising, mostly analyzed through political, military, and elite history, reveals gaps in the historical narrative when viewed from women's perspectives. As the testimonies in this chapter show, women formed the basis of a colonial society and their roles changed over time. Rather than serving as the simple antithesis to Gaelic Irish women, English and Scottish women in Ulster were a point on a spectrum. This spectrum of feminine civility scrutinized women based on their religion, marital status and/or proximity to men, and actions. The voices speaking through Antrim and Down's depositions demonstrate how Ulster's colonial society grew more complex because of the 1641 Irish Uprising. Settler communities in Antrim and Down reconfigured their nested identities because of the trauma and violence that defined their lives. Protestant and British identities cost many settlers their lives or upended their familial, economic, and social dynamics. The somewhat impermeable barriers between settlers and natives

grew sharper and jagged during the Uprising. The need for self-preservation surfaced through travel within or outside of community groups, particularly as the residues of fear, anxiety, trauma, and death colored the living memory of the Uprising. As settlers fled from the violence, they made deliberate choices that navigated the rest of their lives. This thesis does not explain the complicated after effects of the Uprising, leaving that narrative to be built by future historians.

Conclusion: Ulster's Colonial Legacy

The story of Ulster's past is often tangled up in the assumptions regarding rigid binary division of Protestants and Catholics, and newcomers and natives, both then and now. The present view of Ulster, and more broadly Northern Ireland, is not borne out when we look at the province. This represents a complex view and legacy of Ulster's colonial society. This thesis argues that when women are at the heart of the narrative, early modern colonial Ulster's intricacies become visible. Using a gendered lens to examine the dialogue of power, colonization, and rebellion in Ulster, it reveals three things. Firstly, it demonstrates the methodologies that separate historical figures from the bias grain of the archive. Through approaching this topic as inquiries into the status of women, it becomes evident that fragmentary mentions can grant historians clarity. This thesis' first chapter focuses largely on Agnes Campbell as an example of bringing a woman out of the footnotes. More so, she and the other women mentioned in Chapter One grants a gendered perspective on a narrative often told through the eyes of men. Agnes Campbell represents a world connected through kinship, biological, and regional bonds. Rather than simply being a woman subjected to the will of elite relatives, she proved how elite Gaelic women manipulated their identities to the situations they encountered. Agnes manipulated her status as an Elite Scots woman to alter her position among Gaelic Ulster's clans and built upon that in her role as a mother. She used her sons' status as the means to justify her actions, particularly as the Crown got involved. While Agnes was an elite woman and had more access to the mechanisms of power, non-elite women in Ulster also reveal complex experiences in their lives in a changing, colonial Ulster. Much needs to be revealed about the everyday experiences of non-elite women in Ulster and how their lives contributed to Gaelic rule.

The experience of non-elite women in Ulster becomes clearer in the historical record as Gaelic rule withered away under the imposition of English common law. As women made their way to Ulster, they changed the fabric of the province through marriage, childbirth, and raising children. This was not unlike elite Gaelic women that transformed Ulster's demographics when they married chieftains or lords. Gaelic women's children often took up the helm of rule, a reality not mirrored in the lives of settler women. Instead, the narrative about settler populations in Ulster focused on the transformation of their new communities during the process of colonization. In this work's final chapter, women's presence in the 1641 Depositions demonstrates how they defied the patriarchal status quo to give testimony in the formal spaces of the courts. By examining their voices and accounts mentioning them, the archive reveals women's experiences in the wider context of the War of the Three Kingdoms.

The ongoing conflict of the War of the Three Kingdoms demonstrates how gender was an integral part in change and continuity from 1555-1653. As Agnes Campbell's life reveals, women were expected to fulfil changing gender roles to uphold shifts in Gaelic kinship-based power. Elite women manipulated this system of power to express autonomy and agency. In Agnes' case, she used the intricacies of the power system by turning on her husband, Turlough O'Neill, and used her maternal status to gain more control in Ulster. By marrying men in Ulster, Scottish women like Agnes changed the course of Ulster's history through conceiving and birthing children that later became elite leaders and married into influential families. Agnes' children Angus and Finola became leaders in Ulster through a multi-generational pattern. Angus demonstrated the kinship bonds in Scotland's Highlands and how masculine authority could cage in elite feminine power. While Angus was not one of Ulster's lords, he had the ability to keep Agnes from leaving Scotland under the authority from the Earl of Argyll. Conversely, Finola's marriage, thanks to the efforts of

the Earl of Argyll, into a Gaelic Irish family demonstrates the possibilities elite women used to extend their authority. Finola's acts of waging violence against English authorities demonstrated how feminine power was flexible during this era of change. This mirrored the changes of English and Scottish women's lives in Ulster during conquest, as their lives transitioned from 'traditional' feminine labor to performing new tasks as part of life in plantation.

Women such as Elizabeth Montgomery managed farms, crops, and regulated settlers in their new environments during the years of plantation. These responsibilities were later experienced by women in the American colonies as they took up tasks to support the family unit. Settler women in Ulster experienced life in communities that were often separated from their Gaelic Irish counterparts, yet Chapter Two demonstrates how those barriers were finite. Women worked in conjunction with their local, geographic neighbors to communicate and seek the things they needed for themselves. More work needs to be done to investigate how social networks, such as the social circle surrounding midwives, brought non-elite women together in Ulster. The bonds of women's lives can be found through investigating their social interactions, writings, and other sources of community support found in the archives. The history of sexuality can grant many understandings to this, as women's work in regulating their own fertility and reproductive health was beginning to surface during this time.

Finally, women reflected community relations in early modern Ulster. As each chapter demonstrates, the community surrounding individuals defined what gender expectations were pinned on them. Women were expected to uphold and articulate hospitality in Gaelic culture, yet Agnes Campbell used her gender to cross borders between the new and the unknown. Settler women in Ulster were held to different expectations because of religion, class, and legal codes. English common law and Protestantism transfigured the image of ideal womanhood in Ulster, and

settler women tread that line daily. The boundaries between natives and settlers were superimposed on the community as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries progressed. The power struggle that defined this era of British history revealed how women's roles in the community often shaped their world view but the status of groups as well. These women experienced nested identities, where their status as Protestant or British did not always rise above their status as a neighbor. These insights demonstrate how complex life was in early modern Britain through the lens of gender roles.

The primary goal of this work was to explain the events that lead to the 1641 Irish Uprising. While it has not gone into great depth to explain each moving part on a minute level, it has opened the conversation. It has placed women at the center of the narrative to demonstrate how early modern history can be seen in a different light based on the methods used and questions asked. More work needs to be done by future historians to incorporate the narratives of sexuality, reproduction, and community in early modern British history. Regionalized studies can contribute to this narrative, as the stories of women like Agnes Campbell and Finola MacDonnell reveal the insights that can come from conducting history in this way. The advantage of doing gender history is to incorporate insights often left out by the larger narrative. This thesis has attempted to do just that.

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Figure A.2: Map of Ulster and Scotland

Figure A.2: Map showing the distance and spatial proximity of Ulster and Scotland.

Figure A.3: Map of Ulster's Counties

Figure A.3: Map showing Ulster's counties. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons, license CC BY-SA 2.5.

Figure A.4: Agnes Campbell's Family Tree