

Ireland 1652-1688

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Cromwellian Ireland, 1652-60

Like many places in 17th century Europe, religion was a major factor in determining political reliability. Within the Cromwellian government and army there was an ongoing struggle between the Independent religious sect, the Presbyterians and the smaller more radical and less tolerant Anabaptist and Fifth Monarchist sects. Cromwellian England rid itself, in part, of the Anabaptists and Fifth Monarchists by sending them to rule Ireland. Government policy in Ireland represents a deliberate effort to isolate in western Ireland or transport overseas the entire Irish Catholic population.

Toleration of Catholics existed to some degree in England but was completely nonexistent in Ireland. The Cromwellians seemed to believe there was collective guilt shared by the Catholics in Ireland for the events of 1642. Catholic Priests were viewed as instigators of revolt were subject to particularly harsh measures. Many were forced to go underground, sent into exile in the colonies or the Continent and many were executed. In 1657 internment camps were established on Arran and Inishbofin for Priests. Hiding a Priest could result in the same punishment suffered by the Priests. Catholics were forbidden arms and were subject to capital punishment if found with them.

The Cromwellians used any means possible to depopulate Ireland of Catholics. Transportation of Irish Catholics to the colonies, particularly Jamaica and Barbados, was common. It is estimated that perhaps as many as fifty thousand were sent to the colonies. Those transported were referred to as “*engages*” and forced to serve of a period of indenture of between five and nine years to repay the cost of transportation.

There are accounts of the indentured servants being transferred from one “master” to another, thus restarting the period of indenture. These servants were seen as a cheaper and therefore more expendable resource than slaves and so were, in many cases subject, to far worse treatment. All too often, indentured servants did not survive the period of their indenture.

Much of the population was displaced as a result in the transfer of property and economic hardship. Urban areas tended to be subject to the influx of these displaced persons and there are accounts of Dublin being virtually overrun by large numbers of women and children reduced to begging. During this time many women and children were stolen and transported against their will for profit.

The Cromwellian Government were also willing to provide soldiers to the armies of their enemies in order to remove Irish Catholics from Ireland. Upwards of forty thousand Irish Catholic soldiers and their families went into the armies of France and

Spain. Many of those Catholics exiled to the Continent found their way into the service of Spain and France, and later into the service of the exiled King Charles II.

Other religious groups were subject to suppression but none to the degree of the Catholics. Quakers were not tolerated and in some cases subject to the same punishment as Catholics. Presbyterian Scots received limited toleration, depending on perceived political reliability, but in some cases were transported to the colonies and all were taxed heavily.

Ireland was subject to considerable unrest during the Cromwellian period as a result of the oppression of the Catholic populace. There tended to be an increase in unrest when the Government was attempting to increase the numbers of those to be transported. Irregular armed groups known as Tories, from the Gaelic "*Toiridhe*", a pursued person, were a presence throughout Ireland and, despite brutal measures, were never suppressed.

Ireland's economic productivity suffered during the Cromwellian Period. Agriculture was shifting towards subsistence farming of potatoes and away from grains because the potato vines were harder to detect by soldiers executing a deliberate policy of crop destruction. Efforts to eliminate the wandering Irish cattle herds were made, as they represented a source of logistical support for the tories. Export of Irish cattle suffered as well from the imposition of the Navigation Acts, which virtually eliminated trade with the continent due to the requirement that all trade be done using English ships.

Deforestation was occurring at a rapid rate as well. Forests were removed to clear land for farming, eliminate tory hiding places, charcoal production and domestic ship building. Exportation of wood to support ship building on the continent came to a virtual halt.

The disbandment of Cromwellian soldiers who were promised land was slowed by the presence of tories and the ineffectual manner in which the settlement was conducted. By 1655 fifteen thousand soldiers had been disbanded in Ireland. Some of the soldiers were seizing property whether it was occupied or not and many who had been given land were dissatisfied with it. Many of the disbanded soldiers intermarried with the Irish Catholics and were accused of becoming Catholics themselves.

Cromwell died on 3 September 1658 while suffering from a relapse of the malaria he contracted during his genocidal campaign in Ireland. By 1659, the Commonwealth Army in Ireland consisted of three regiments of horse (Lord Lieutenant's, Wallis', Redman's) Abbot's Dragoons and four regiments of foot (Lord Lieutenants, Axtel's, Brayfield's and Barrow's) distributed across Ireland. These units were purged by Coote of those unwilling to support the calling of a Parliament that would support a monarchy. The Convention Parliament met in April 1660 and Charles II was asked to become King on 14 May 1660.

The Cromwellian Settlement

The Cromwellian Settlement of 1652 established eight “qualifications” for those Catholics living in Ireland with five calling for the punishment of death. Those falling in the other four categories or qualifications who were property owners were subject to transportation to Connaught or Claire and there to be given a fraction of the quantity of land they owned. Landless persons were not mentioned, but were to be dealt with by wholesale transportation to the North American and Caribbean colonies. The land belonging to dispossessed landholders was to be divided between Parliamentary soldiers and “Adventurers.” The Adventurers were those who lent money to the Crown in 1642 to support an army for Ireland with the understanding that the repayment would be in Irish land taken from those landowners in rebellion. Some land was to be taken from Protestant Royalists and those that kept their land were forced to pay fines.

In May of 1654 the Commonwealth Government ordered that the move of the dispossessed Irish be expedited, calling for the death penalty for non-compliance. Numerous temporary stays of transportation were granted and subsequent surveys made it clear that there was not enough land to distribute in Connaught or Clare, resulting in changes in “qualifications” for transportation being changed to landowners and active combatants. Emphasis was also placed on an aggressive colonial transportation effort.

There was a second, “move or die” order in 1656 that had little or no effect, after that little effort was made to effect the failed settlement plan.

Ireland 1660-1685

Prosperity began a slow return to the Irish economy after 1660. Spinning wool and line yarn had been a cottage industry in Ireland for centuries. The Earl of Ormond encouraged a marked increase in linen production, to the point that experts in linen manufacture were brought over from the Continent to assist in the development of the industry. Women began to play a more active role as heads of households and in the marketplace if for no other reason, a shortage of men lost to death, transportation overseas or overseas military service. The Navigation Acts remained in place and new restrictions on the importation of mutton, lamb, butter and cheese as well as exportation of beef, mutton and pork to England was halted, so trade continued to suffer. Brandy and wine was imported but very little beer was exported, which had an apparently large domestic market. Some insight into the domestic consumption of beer is evident in that there were as many as four thousand families residing in Dublin in the 1660's with over a thousand ale houses in the city. A national postal system was established in Dublin in 1670 and the first Irish newspaper was started in 1685.

Even with increasing prosperity Ireland was an unstable place with large segments of the population in poverty and dissatisfied by Government Policy, the greatest source of dissatisfaction being the Settlement. Lawlessness was rampant, the threat of revolt by Cromwellians or dispossessed Catholics was always a threat and all of this hindered any economic and social progress that might otherwise be possible.

The Restoration Settlement

With the Restoration Charles attempted to delay any changes in landholding with a Proclamation in May of 1660 that left the Cromwellian Settlement in place until Parliament could resolve the impending crisis in land ownership. On 30 November 1660 the King signed a Declaration for the Settlement of Ireland and appointed a commission to execute it. The Kings Declaration established four classes of “restorable” Irish, Innocents, Ensignment who followed the King in exile, Article men or those pardoned in 1648 and the Kings Nominees. Acceptance of land in Connaught resulted in “postponement,” which was, in effect, dismissal of the claim. There was a deliberate effort to make a claim of Innocence difficult, if not impossible.

The Commissioners began work in March of 1661 and heard few if any claims in the year they were in session. A second Court of Claims was established to hear the claims of Innocence made by Irish Catholics in September of 1662. The Court of Claims was to be in session a year and in that year only heard a fraction of the four thousand claimants. One third of the plaintiffs were women and half of those were making petitions for return of their own property. The Court of Claims was reopened in 1666 to hear Protestant claims and once again found itself overwhelmed.

Those who had received land as a result of the Cromwellian Settlement who were not implicated for crimes against the Restoration regime, (i.e., Regicides of Charles I) who were subject to losing land as a result of the new settlement were to be reimbursed for the loss of that land. This was unacceptable to many of these land owners, who referred the Government to the Proclamation of May 1660. There was considerable confusion and essentially no one was satisfied with the Restoration Settlement because there was not enough land and not enough money available to satisfy everyone.

The Irish Military Establishment, 1660-1688

The post restoration Military Establishment of Ireland dates from February 1661 and consisted of thirty troops of independent horse organized into six county based regiments (Lord Lieutenant's, Munster, Connaught, Ormond's until 1662, Ossery's and the Marshals Regiments of Horse) and sixty six companies of independent foot, mostly under the command of former Parliamentarians with lifetime commissions. This was found to be inadequate, given the dispersed nature of the units and their lack of direct responsibility to the Viceroy.

"His majesty having thought fit to raise in England a Regiment of twelve hundred foot to be his Guards in Ireland"

Charles II, 23 April 1662

With this royal warrant, the first foot regiment in the post restoration Irish Military Establishment came into being.

The King's Regiment of Guards in the Kingdom of Ireland finds its origins in a Regiment raised out of Connaught by George Cusack in 1653. George Cusack held the garrison of Inishbofin against Parliament, with the support of the Duke of Lorraine, until 1653. Cusack based on his relationship with the Duke of Lorraine was able to take a regiment out of Ireland into French Service at the conclusion of the siege. After a Commonwealth-French Alliance was established in 1656, Cusack took his regiment into Charles Stuart's army in Spanish Flanders where it was merged into the Marquis of Ormond's Regiment, consisting of 700 hundred men and commanded by Colonel George Grace. The regiment fought at the Battle of the Dunes in 1658, an abortive Spanish attempt to relieve the French-English siege of Dunkirk.

Some of the men of the regiment and many of the officers were transferred to England for service in Ireland in 1662. Those that remained in the Spanish Netherlands were sent to Tangier. The Marquis, now First Duke of Ormond, the Viceroy of Ireland while in exile, and now the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, recruited additional soldiers for the regiment in England and granted additional commissions as he saw fit. The Regiment was commanded by his son, the Earl of Arran, later the Second Duke of Ormond, who led the Regiment until 1688. The rolls included a Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel, a Major, nine Captains, twelve Lieutenants, twelve Ensigns, forty sergeants, thirty six corporals, a drum major with twenty four drummers, a piper in the Kings Company and twelve hundred men. The Regiment was organized into twenty troops of horse and eight companies of foot. Clothing and equipment was the same as Colonel Russell's Regiment of Guards. One wonders if the cross on the "taffey" yellow background was the Cross of St George or the Cross of St Patrick, used by the Viceroys of Ireland. The regimental colors remain a mystery, but some clues exist in the following warrant:

"Yellow Taffey and Crimson for 12 Coulours for a Regiment of Foot and that you cause Our badges to be painted and gilded thereon, and that you deliver the same parcels of taffey at the same rate they were furnished for Our Regiment of Foot....and that you deliver the same to Our right and trusty, &c., James Duke of Ormond, Lieutenant of Our Kingdom of Ireland"

24 March 1662

The Regiment embarked for Dublin in May of 1662, where it was headquartered while companies assumed garrison duty throughout Ireland. The Viceroy had a personal bodyguard at the Castle in Dublin in the form of the Company of Battleaxes, comprised of a captain, two sergeants and sixty men. The unit existed from 1662 to 1665. A Troop of the King's Guard of Horse was created in 1662 that existed until 1684. The Regiment of Guards had both a ceremonial function but were called upon from time to time to quell disturbances and perform law enforcement functions throughout Ireland. In 1663 a Plot to capture Dublin Castle and the Lord Lieutenant led by Captain Blood and involving seventy "Presbyterians" was foiled. In 1663 the Regiment of Guards was augmented by an additional two hundred soldiers, some of whom were found to be unsuitable as they were cashiered soldiers from Ireland. The officers that came with this augmentation were, at the insistence of Ormond, Irish, and not English. By 1663

financing the military establishment of Ireland was already an issue and there were no disbandment of units because the Crown could not afford to pay the soldiers arrears in pay. In 1666, the garrison of Carrickfergus mutinied taking control of the castle and the town. The Earl of Arran and four companies of Guards sailed to Carrickfergus and put down the uprising in two days. The one hundred and ten mutineers were court-martialed and the two companies were disbanded.

The Establishment was reorganized in 1672 with the five existing regiments of Horse and the troop of Life Guards and five regiments of foot (Massie's, Howth's, Power's, Gore's and Lord Lieutenant's), and the Guards. Little or nothing changed in terms of the dispersed nature of the companies and troops and the consequent lack of affiliation. Powers Regiment served in France from 1672-74. Two companies of the Guards serves as marines in the abortive amphibious landing turned sea battle at Textel in 1673. There were additional twenty five companies of soldiers sent to join the Guards in 1674. Pay was always months if not years in arrears and most of the officers viewed military service as a part time position. Throughout the period, soldiers were punished for poaching even when it was the only way they could feed themselves. Soldiers were given to furtively taking up a trade to survive and by 1676 this was an accepted practice. Command of the Guards went to Lord Ossory in 1674.

In 1684, renewed interest in the Irish military situation led to a reestablishment and organization of the Irish Military Establishment under Arthur, Lord Forbes, Earl of Granard and the Marshal of Ireland. There were two regiments of horse (Ormond's and Arran's) and a Troop of Life Guards and seven regiments of foot (Ormond's, Granard's, Montjoy's, Newcomen's, King's and Fairfax's) were organized. The Guards continued as one of the Regiments of Foot. That same year, Granard's Regiment was sent to Ulster to disarm potential rebels. In 1685, Granard's Regiment was sent to England in response to Monmouth's Rebellion and returned to Ireland shortly thereafter.

As a result of the 1685 purging of Protestants from the Military Establishment of Ireland by the Earl of Tyrone, Arran's Regiment of Horse became Talbot's Regiment of Horse and Ormond's Regiment of Foot went to Justin Mac Carthy. Hamilton's Regiment of Dragoons was established in 1685. Lord Forbes was replaced by Tyrconnel as commander of the Military Establishment and gave command of his Regiment to his son, Arthur Forbes, the second Earl of Granard, who was able to keep a relatively high proportion of Protestants in his regiment. By 1686 of the 7,485 soldiers, 5,043 were Catholics and of the 406 officers, 166 were Catholics, with Protestant numbers declining steadily until 1688. MacElligot's Regiment of Foot was formed in 1688.

In 1688, King James II had MacElligot's Regiment of Foot, A Battalion of the Guards Regiment and Granard's Regiment of Foot transferred to England in preparation for a possible Dutch invasion. Tyrconnel stood up new regiments to replace those sent to England. Of those regiments sent to England, all were disbanded with the exception of Granard's which continued on the English establishment as the 18th regiment of Foot, the Royal Irish Regiment. Granard's Regiment wore red coats with blue facings and had a red Cross of St Patrick on a white field for their colors. The disbanded Catholic soldiers were to be sent to Austria but many found their way into the service of France.

Lord Ossory, by 1688 the 2nd Duke of Ormond, went over to William III and command of the Guards went to William Dorrington. Those Regiments that remained in Ireland in 1688 were effectively purged of Protestants and fought for King James II in the War of Three Kings. When given the chance after the siege of Limerick to stay in Ireland or go into British service, all but seven of the fourteen hundred soldiers of the Royal Regiment of Foot Guards followed General Dorrington into French Service.

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