The biographies presented here cover a range of figures in the Gaelic world of early 17th-century Ulster. They cannot be regarded as fully representative of the Irish community for inevitably those dealt with come for the most part from the upper tiers of society. Generally, those from humbler backgrounds have left little trace in the written record. Nonetheless, the individuals highlighted here provide an indication of the range of experiences of the Irish in Ulster in the early 1600s.

1. Walter Brady COUNTY CAVAN

The most prominent family in the town of Cavan at the beginning of the 1600s, both in terms of public life and commerce, was that of Brady. In December 1584 Walter Brady was appointed constable and jailer at Cavan. In 1600, during the Nine Years' War, he was accused of having aided the insurgents, though it was acknowledged that he had built a castle at Cavan, and after the war he received a pension from the Crown. In Cavan's charter of incorporation of 1610 he was named as the town's first sovereign (mayor) and the area of the borough was deemed to be within a one-mile circumference of his house. In 1613 he was elected one of Cavan town's first two MPs. However, this was not recognised by the authorities leading to a long legal battle which was eventually settled in Brady's favour.

2. Sir Arthur Magennis (d. 1629) COUNTY DOWN

Succeeding his father Hugh – described as 'the civilest of all the Irish in those parts' – in 1596, Arthur (or Art) Magennis, of the Rathfriland branch of the family, was the most influential Irish landowner in County Down in the early 1600s. When, in the latter part of the 1610s, there was a reorganisation of the Magennis territories, Arthur received the largest single allocation — some 134 townlands in freehold, in addition to other lands. From the government's point of view, this process was a way of breaking up the Magennis lordship and bringing the various branches of the family under English law. In 1623 Arthur was ennobled as Viscount Magennis of Iveagh. He remained an influential figure within Irish society and was a patron of the bardic poets. His wife was Sarah, daughter of Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone, who was described as 'a truly beautiful woman'.

3. Brian Maguire (d. 1655) COUNTY FERMANAGH

The son of Cuchonnacht Maguire (d. 1589), a former head of the family, Brian Maguire received a grant of 2,000 acres in 1610, with his younger brother Tirlagh receiving 500 acres. When the latter died his lands transferred to Brian. This Maguire estate was based at Tempo. In 1618–19, it was recorded that 'Upon this Proportion there is a large Bawne of Sodds, and a good House of Lime and Stone'. In 1622 it was reported that Brian Maguire of Tempo 'lives very civil after the English manner, and in order to avoid the customary hospitality expected by 'his kinsmen and others of his house', he lived privately in the Pale. With some difficulty, he avoided being actively drawn into the fighting of the 1640s, and when he died his estate was intact, the only Irish-owned property of any consequence in Fermanagh of which this could be said.

4. Connor Roe Maguire (d. 1625) COUNTY FERMANAGH

The head of the Lisnaskea branch of the family, Connor Roe Maguire took the side of the government during the latter stages of the Nine Years' War and in 1601 received a Crown grant of Fermanagh. However, in 1604, following the conclusion of the war, Fermanagh was divided between Connor Roe and his rival Cuchonnacht Maguire, each receiving three baronies. In 1607 the latter took part in the Flight of the Earls. In the course of the planning for the Plantation, Connor Roe was persuaded, reluctantly, to accept the greater part of one barony — Magherastephana — as his allocation, though without being allowed to retain his castle at Lisnaskea. In recompense for what had been taken from him he was offered a pension of £200 a year. He was succeeded by his son Brian, who was created Baron Enniskillen in 1628 and sat in the Irish House of Lords.

5. Lady Mary McMahon (d. post 1631) COUNTY MONAGHAN A daughter of Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone, and his wife Joan O'Donnell, Mary was married successively to three of the leading men of Ulster. Her first husband, whom she married in 1593, was her father's cousin, Hugh Maguire, lord of Fermanagh. He died of injuries sustained in 1600 during the Nine Years' War. Not long afterwards Mary married Sir James MacDonnell, another of her father's cousins and the most important figure in north Antrim. He died in 1601 and by September 1603 Mary had married Brian MacMahon, the last man to be inaugurated as 'The MacMahon' (in 1594). Knighted in 1604, MacMahon was one of the most powerful Irishmen in early 17th-century Ulster. He and Mary probably lived near Rooskey Lough, Dartrey. In an Irish poem of c. 1613 Lady Mary's beauty was praised and it was acknowledged that in her veins flowed the blood of O'Donnell, Maguire and O'Neill.

6. Rory Oge McQuillan (d. pre-1636) COUNTY ANTRIM

In the course of the 16th century the McQuillans of the Route in north Antrim found themselves under increasing pressure from the MacDonnells and were squeezed out of their ancestral lands. In the early 1600s Rory Oge McQuillan, the head of this family, was granted the entire barony of Inishowen in County Donegal as compensation for his claim to the lands that had once belonged to his ancestors. However, McQuillan gave up Inishowen to Sir Arthur Chichester and instead received the 'tuogh' of Clanagherty in mid-Antrim. In 1619 Rorie transferred this estate to an Englishman, Sir Faithful Fortescue (a nephew of Sir Arthur Chichester). Rorie, whose wife was Mary O'Neill, seems to have then lived out his days on a royal pension and some loans from Robert Adair of Ballymena, a Scottish settler, with whom he was on good terms. His son Teague emigrated to Virginia in 1635.

7. Sir Mulmurry McSweeney COUNTY DONEGAL

Succeeding his uncle as the last lord of Na Tuatha (Doe) in 1596, the next few years of Mulmurry McSweeney's life were to be eventful. For a time he fought with the English against Hugh Roe O'Donnell and was knighted for his services in 1600. However, he later went over to O'Donnell (after a dramatic escape in which he jumped overboard from a ship moored in Lough Foyle). In 1604 he was pardoned and in 1610 he was granted 2,000 acres in north Donegal, though this did not include his former stronghold of Doe Castle. In 1618–19 it was noted that he had 'built a Bawne of Lyme and Stone, and a good Stone House, in which he dwelleth with his Family'. In 1630 he was granted a patent for a Monday market and two annual fairs at Dunfanaghy. According to tradition, he died in poverty having 'drank out his estate'.

the MacMahon lordship in

Monaghan among some

300 native freeholders

in Ulster between the

of the English Crown

Gaelic lords and the forces

8. Lady Honora O'Cahan COUNTY LONDONDERRY

The third wife of Sir Donnell O'Cahan, Honora's family background is not known, but she was born into an O'Cahan family in the late 16th century. After her husband was imprisoned in 1608, she unsuccessfully sought his release, even travelling to London on his behalf. Their son Daniel Geimhleach (i.e. the fettered or imprisoned) seems to have been conceived while Donnell was in captivity. In 1611 she and Daniel along with her stepson Rory were granted 1,000 plantation acres to the east of the River Roe. Rory was executed for treason in 1615, Sir Donnell died c. 1617 and in the early 1620s Daniel left for Europe. The subject of much local folklore, according to one account, in her old age she was visited by an English noblewoman who found her living in a crumbling edifice and 'sitting on her bent hams in the smoak and wrapt in a blanket'.

9. Patrick Groome O'Devin COUNTY TYRONE

Patrick Groome O'Devin was undoubtedly the most prominent Irishman in north Tyrone in the early 1600s. In November 1611 he was part of a jury assembled at Strabane, indicating that even at this stage he was of some standing in the area. In 1613 and 1614 O'Devin rented an area extending to nearly 3,500 acres in the Eden-Killeny estate first granted to the Scottish undertaker Sir Claud Hamilton. In 1615, following the death of Sir Claud, the entire Eden-Killeny estate was leased to him for £220. Though this arrangement was not to last, the fact that a Gaelic Irishman should have held such power in what was supposed to be a British plantation is remarkable. Patrick may have been the father of Risteard O Duibhin (O'Devin), also known as Fr Michael a Sancta Maria, who was to make a name for himself as a leading scholar in Italy.

10. Fionnuala O'Donnell (d. c. 1611) COUNTY DONEGAL

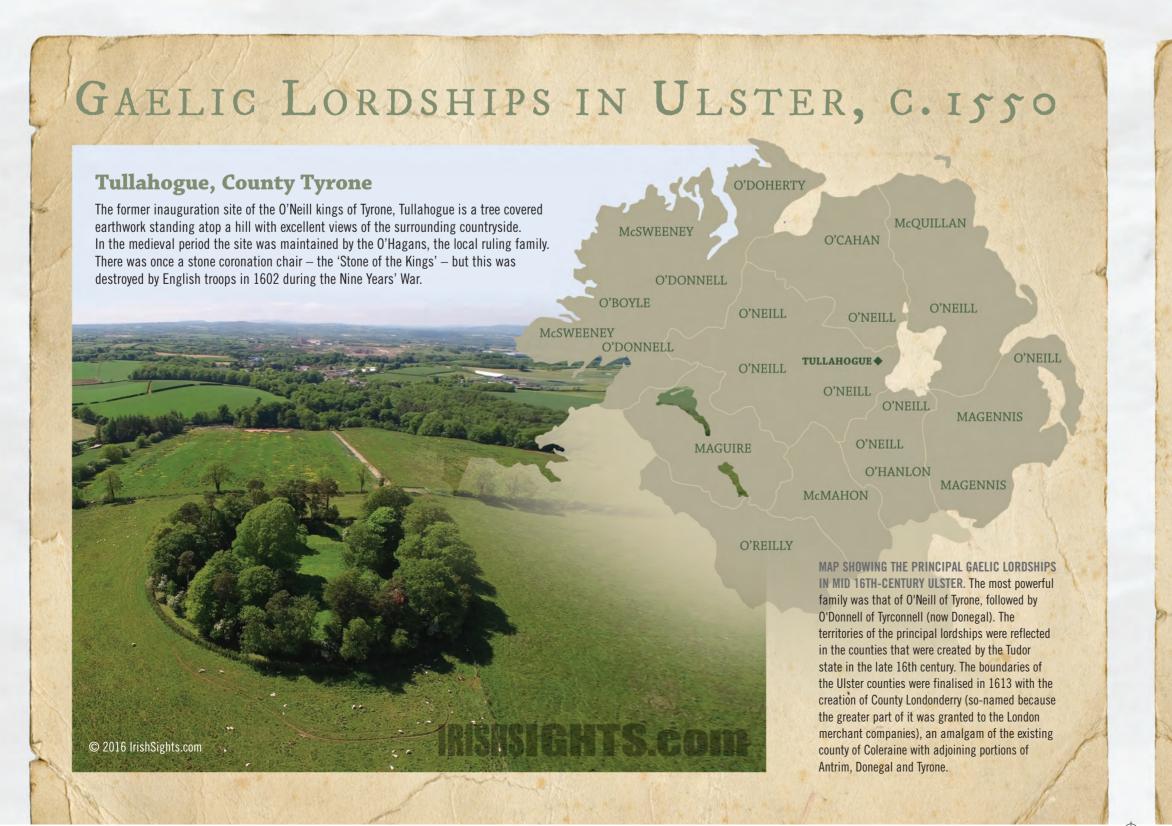
Although born in Scotland, Fionnuala O'Donnell – known as Iníon Dubh ('Dark Daughter') – was part of the Gaelic world that connected the Highlands and Islands of Scotland to the north of Ireland. She was a daughter of James MacDonnell, the 'lord of the Isles', and has been described as 'one of the most remarkable Gaelic women thrown up by the turmoil of the 16th century'. In 1569 she married Hugh O'Donnell, lord of Tyrconnell. During the Nine Years' War, Fionnuala actively supported her son Hugh Roe. She was captured by the English in the autumn of 1601 and not released until her younger son Rory had submitted to the Crown in late 1602. In the preparations for the Plantation, it was recognised that Fionnuala should be allocated lands and in 1611 she was granted 596 acres in north Donegal for

11. Hugh McHugh Dubh O'Donnell (d. 1618) COUNTY DONEGAL The grantee of 1,000 acres at Ramelton in 1610, Hugh McHugh Dubh O'Donnell had been at the centre of events in Donegal for half a century. He was the youngest son of Hugh Dubh O'Donnell, lord of Tyrconnell. During the Nine Years' War he fought alongside Hugh Roe O'Donnell and on one occasion severely wounded the commander of the English garrison at Lough Foyle, Sir Henry Docwra. After the war, he avoided participation in further conspiracies and did not take part in Sir Cahir O'Doherty's revolt in 1608. The 1610 grant of Ramelton, where he had actually been in possession of the castle

since 1566, was for his lifetime only. O'Donnell was also a poet of some distinction and shortly before

his death in 1618, he took part in a contest that has been called 'the contention of the bards'.





County Down are divided

between Con O'Neill, Hugh

Montgomery and James Hamilton

sees the earls of

leave Ireland

Tyrone and Tyconnell

of Inishowen leads

a revolt, but is

defeated

Mellifont brings

the Nine Years'

War to an end

SOME PLACES OF INTEREST

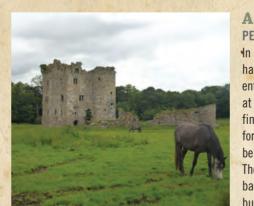
by some of the

disaffected Ulster

Irish is discovered

that significant numbers of

Irish remain on nearly all



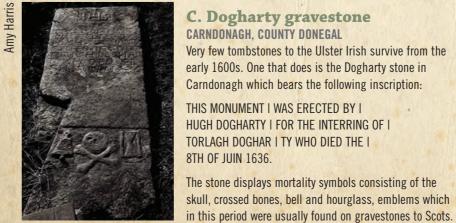
having Irish on their estates of the undertakers' estates

Ulster Plantation forbid the

A. Termon Magrath Castle PETTIGO, COUNTY DONEGAL In 1611 it was recorded that 'The Archbishop of Cashill hath begune a prittie castle at Termon Magragh w'ch he entends speedily to finish, havinge his materialls ready at the place wher he meanes to buyld a bawne and inish the castle.' The archbishop was Miler Magrath, a ormer Catholic bishop turned Protestant who proved to be one of the most unscruplous of clerics in Irish history. The now-ruined castle, comprising a tower house and pawn, was the most substantial structure to have been uilt by an Irishman in early 17th-century Ulster.



B. Faugher **DUNFANAGHY, COUNTY DONEGAL** Faugher was part of the estate granted to Tirlagh Roe O'Boyle in 1611. By 1619 he had 'built a good bawn and a house of lime and stone in which he with his family dweleth'. It is likely that the present ruins of the bawn represent the structure erected by O'Boyle. The present shell of a house is probably later, however, and may date rom the late 17th century by which time the O'Boyles ad lost possession of the property.



. Dogharty gravestone

NDONAGH, COUNTY DONEGAL Very few tombstones to the Ulster Irish survive from the early 1600s. One that does is the Dogharty stone in Carndonagh which bears the following inscription: HIS MONUMENT I WAS ERECTED BY I HUGH DOGHARTY I FOR THE INTERRING OF TORLAGH DOGHAR I TY WHO DIED THE I 3TH OF JUIN 1636. The stone displays mortality symbols consisting of the

F. Creggan **COUNTY ARMAGH**

Hugh O'Neill,

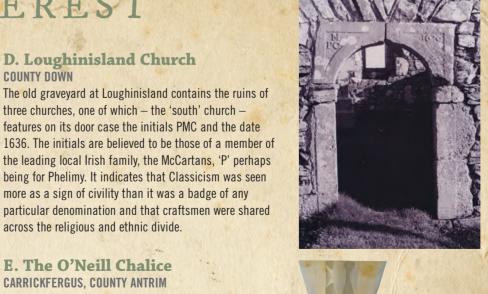
earl of Tyrone

COUNTY DOWN

D. Loughinisland Church

across the religious and ethnic divide.

The present Church of Ireland church dates from the 18th century, but stands on the site of a medieval parish church. From the mid 15th century through to the early 1800s the O'Neills of the Fews were interred in a burial vault here. In the 1820s the entrance to the vault was sealed and the burial place was gradually forgotten until it was rediscovered in the 1970s. A stone in vault features the Red Hand of Ulster, the badge of the O'Nei



An uprising begins in

Ulster led by some of

the leading Irishmen

in the province

E. The O'Neill Chalice CARRICKFERGUS, COUNTY ANTRIM In terms of Catholic worship, a remarkable survival from this period is the chalice of gilt-silver in St Nicholas's Catholic Church in Carrickfergus. It bears an inscription in Latin that records that Brother O'Neill made the chalice for the monastery at Carrickfergus in 1632. The Franciscan friary at Carrickfergus was suppressed in the mid 1500s, but the religious community was re-established in 1626. The O'Neill who made the chalice was almost certainly Fr Paul O'Neill who was elected the guardian (or superior) of the Franciscans at Carrickfergus in 1629.

allowed to lease up

to one-quarter of

their lands to Irish

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12. Fearflatha Ó Gnímh COUNTY ANTRIM

The Ó Gnímh family (whose surname has been anglicized to Agnew) of Larne were hereditary poets to the O'Neills of Clandeboye. By the late 16th century the family was aligned with the MacDonnells and in 1602 Fearflatha was pardoned along with other members of the family as a follower of Randal MacDonnell (later 1st earl of Antrim). He continued to write poems for the Clandeboye O'Neills which appear in the *Leabhar Cloinne Aodha Buidh* ('Book of Clandeboye'). Others for whom he composed poems include the Magennises of County Down. He has been described as one of the few poets of this period who were 'politically aware'. In some of his poems he laments the decline in status of the professional poet. He seems to have still been alive in 1640 and though he appears to have assumed the headship of the Ó Gnímhs, no information is known about his own family.

13. Cahill O'Hara (d. 1640) COUNTY ANTRIM

The most prominent of the Irish families in mid-Antrim in the 1600s was the O'Hara family of Crebilly, said to be a branch of the O'Haras of Leyny, County Sligo. In 1606 Cahill O'Hara received a grant from the Crown of the territory of 'Tuogh-Kearte', at the annual rent of £4. In 1612, he was permitted to hold a weekly market at Crebilly. Subsequently, O'Hara was granted a patent to hold two annual fairs at Crebilly. He also held property at Loughguile and leased land at Kells from the Chichesters. Four of his daughters married into the leading Irish families in County Antrim. O'Hara was succeeded by his grandson (or great-grandson) Teague. Of him it was said, 'This Teague seems to have steered wonderfully clear of the rocks and shoals, that beset his course on all sides during those stormy times'. One of his sons was named Oliver, supposedly after Cromwell.

14. Art McBaron O'Neill (d. 1618) COUNTY ARMAGH

An illegitimate half-brother of Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone, Art McBaron's territory lay in Oneilland in north Armagh. In 1610 he and his wife Rose were described as 'both exceeding old'. Because he had 'three or four sons beyond the seas, stirring men, two of them captains with the Archduke, and a lusty knave at home', it was felt that he had to be provided with an estate. However, in the Plantation scheme his lands in north Armagh were allocated to English planters and instead he and his wife received an estate of inferior quality in the south of the county. The estate in question extended to some 7,000 statute acres, but he and Rose were only given a life interest in it – on their deaths it was to pass to Lord Audley. His youngest son was the famous Owen Roe O'Neill who led the Irish forces during the wars of the 1640s.

15. Brian Crossagh O'Neill COUNTY TYRONE

Brian Crossagh O'Neill was the illegitimate son of Cormac McBaron O'Neill, brother of Hugh, earl of Tyrone. In 1611 he was the recipient of 1,000 acres in north-east County Tyrone. In the older dispensation he would not have risen so quickly for he had two older brothers. He did little to develop his lands and even tried to sell his property to the Londoners in 1612 after mistakenly believing that his lands had been transferred into the newly created County Londonderry. His new found status did not bring with it social acceptance and growing discontented was involved in a conspiracy for which he was executed in 1615. His sister was married to a William Stewart and O'Neill had been confident that he and other Scots would support their planned uprising.

16. Catherine O'Neill COUNTY TYRONE

A daughter of Henry O'Neill of the Fews, Catherine was married to Turlough oge O'Neill and they were the parents of Phelim, one of the principal instigators of the 1641 uprising. In 1608 Turlough and his father Sir Henry O'Neill were killed fighting with the English during the revolt of Sir Cahir O'Doherty. In 1613 Catherine received a grant of lands on either side of the Armagh-Tyrone border. The grant also included the right to hold a market and annual fair at Kinaird (later Caledon). By this time she had remarried, her second husband being Robert Hovenden, a member of a family that was closely associated with the O'Neills. During the 1641 uprising, Catherine sheltered 24 English and Scots in her own house. She is said to have been distressed at the actions of her son and often claimed that 'she had never offended the English, except in being [Phelim's] mother'.

17. Ellis O'Neill COUNTY DOWN

Ellis O'Neill, who was a namesake and probable relative of the wife of Randal MacDonnell, 1st earl of Antrim, was the wife of Con O'Neill of Castle Reagh. The Rev. Andrew Stewart, who became minister of Donaghadee c. 1645, described her as 'a sharp nimble woman', unlike her husband whom he felt was a 'drunken sluggish man'. When Con was imprisoned in Carrickfergus Castle and facing possible execution, she went to Hugh Montgomery in Scotland and together they came up with an escape plan. Con was sprung from prison successfully and as a result of a tripartite agreement with Montgomery and James Hamilton was able to retain one third of his estate. In 1616 Con leased to Ellis and their five-year-old son Hugh the lands of Ballycarngannon and Crevy (in Drumbo parish) and Bressage (in Saintfield parish). After Con died in 1619, Ellis married Henry Savage of Ardkeen.

18. Sir Henry O'Neill (d. 1637) COUNTY ANTRIM

One of the most important Irishmen in early 17th-century Ulster, Sir Henry O'Neill of Shanes Castle, or Edenduffcarrick, was the effective head of what remained of the lordship of the O'Neills of Clandeboye. He became a Protestant and adapted well to the changed political situation in Ulster. In referring to him, Lord Conway wrote, 'every one will say he is an honest Man'. Avoiding controversy, he ignored those who wanted him to reassert the power of the O'Neills. Sir Henry married Martha, daughter of Sir Francis Stafford, an officer in the English army in Ireland who served as governor of Ulster, and their daughter Rose married Randal MacDonnell, marquess of Antrim. Sir Henry continued to provide patronage to Gaelic poets, such as Fearflatha Ó Gnímh, as did his wife Martha. In one of his poems, Ó Gnímh praised Sir Henry as a man of great education and knowledge of English law.

19. Sir Phelim O'Neill (d. 1653) COUNTY TYRONE

The son and grandson of O'Neills who had died fighting for the English during O'Doherty's revolt in 1608, Phelim O'Neill was one of the leading Irish landowners in early 17th-century Ulster. He trained as a lawyer in London and on his return to Ireland was appointed a justice of the peace and a commissioner for army funds under the Dublin administration. He introduced British settlers to his estate straddling the Armagh-Tyrone border, removing Irish tenants in the process. In 1639 he was knighted and in the summer of 1641 he became MP for Dungannon. By this time he was in a financially difficult position which undoubtedly led him to consider an armed uprising. He is regarded as one of the principal leaders of the 1641 rising and was heavily involved in the events of the next decade. He was executed for treason by the Cromwellians in 1653.

20. Turlough McArt O'Neill COUNTY TYRONE

The grandson of Turlough Luineach O'Neill, lord of Tyrone in the late 16th century, Turlough McArt had fought on the side of the English in the closing stages of the Nine Years' War. He expected that he would retain his patrimonial lands at Strabane, a view initially endorsed by Sir Arthur Chichester, though in the end he and his brothers were relocated to the barony of Dungannon with Strabane going to the earl of Abercorn. Though receiving one of the largest grants (3,330 acres), O'Neill seems to have lacked any enthusiasm for developing his lands in Dungannon barony. He sold off much of his property and in 1618–19 it was noted that he had built a 'piece of a bawn' which was five feet high and 'hath been so a long time'. He was a prominent figure in the 1641 uprising, as a result of which his lands were confiscated.

21. Sir Turlough McHenry O'Neill (d. 1640) COUNTY ARMAGH

The son of Henry O'Neill, lord of the Fews, and his wife Siobhan Maguire, Turlough rose to prominence in the latter part of the 1500s and was closely associated with his half-brother Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone. During the Nine Years' War, he changed sides on a number of occasions, but was eventually pardoned by the English and received a grant of the Fews from the Crown in 1603; he was knighted the following year. He was involved in suppressing O'Doherty's revolt in 1608. Though there were proposals to transplant him to Cavan as part of the Plantation scheme, in the end he remained in south Armagh and had his grant of the Fews, extending to some 34,000 statute acres, confirmed in 1611. In 1613 he attempted to secure election as MP for County Armagh, but was barred by government officials. The remainder of his life was lived in relative anonymity.

22. Hugh O'Reilly (d. 1653) COUNTY CAVAN

Born into one of the leading families in Cavan, Hugh O'Reilly studied under the Franciscans and was ordained a priest before continuing his studies on the Continent, spending time in Rouen, Paris and Rome. He returned to Ireland and was consecrated bishop of Kilmore in 1626. In 1628 he became archbishop of Armagh and the most senior Catholic cleric in Ireland. His home was at Lough Oughter in Cavan. O'Reilly worked to reorganise and improve the position of the Church and maintained strong links with Rome. He was particularly well-disposed towards the Franciscans, supporting the research carried out at by the Franciscans at Louvain into the Irish saints: the first volume of the *Acta* Sanctorum Hiberniae (1645) was dedicated to him. In the wake of the 1641 rising he played a significant role among the Catholic leadership.

23. Philip McHugh O'Reilly COUNTY CAVAN

The son of Hugh O'Reilly of Ballynacargy, Philip McHugh O'Reilly spent part of the early 1600s as an officer in the French army. While on the Continent, he may have had legal training for he is referred to as a lawyer on occasion. Returning to Cavan by the mid 1620s, he took over the family estate and began to play an active part in public life, serving as high sheriff. In 1640 he was returned as MP for the county in the Irish House of Commons. On the eve of the 1641 rising he was the largest Irish landowner in Cavan with over 12,000 statute acres. He played an active part in the rising, though he was known for his humane treatment of the settler population which probably saved his life after surrendering to the Cromwellians in 1653. He left Ireland in that year, spending the rest of his life on the Continent.