Although the Plantation was English in character at the beginning, existing trade links between the city and Scotland’s western seaboard meant Londonderry was very attractive to Scottish settlers anxious to escape the harsh economic conditions there. Within a decade of the Plantation the large number of Scottish settlers in the city and in the wider Laggan Valley was becoming an issue of concern for the Crown.

English attitudes toward the native Irish were inconsistent from the outset. Sir John Davies considered that the creation of a secure Ulster Irish population alongside the new planters was vital to its success. A major flaw in previous plantation attempts was the decision to remove all the Irish from planted lands; this only served to force them into the mountains and forests to live as dangerous outlaws. Nevertheless, the new English structure of society reduced even the ‘deserving’ Irish to ‘half-subjects’ and by 1641 it was undeniably evident that no section of native Irish society had benefited under the new system.

For many individual undertakers it was more profitable to retain Irish tenants on their land, which went against the interests of the Crown. Many undertakers such as John Rowley were extravagant characters, more interested in lining their own pockets. Even the Irish Society, which was an independent body legally accountable only to James I, adopted a very pragmatic approach to its role and displayed a strong independence which did not always please the Crown.

For James I, the Plantation was an opportunity to establish a strong military presence in Ireland which would help quell rebellion and crucially prevent the island being used as a staging point for an invasion by its enemies. However, James was also a deeply religious man and wanted to ‘establish the true religion of Christ among men almost lost in superstition’.

The Plantation Scheme brought a number of distinctive and disparate groups together which led to a rich interplay between individual cultural identities. However, as the native Irish were not anglicised to any real degree, and the religious strategy of converting Irish Catholics to Protestantism effectively failed, a two cultured society emerged.
King James I (VI of Scotland)  
(1566-1625)

James I, son of Mary Queen of Scots, was born in Edinburgh and raised as a Protestant. He inherited the throne from his cousin Elizabeth I in 1603. As James I he united the kingdoms of Scotland and England.

The Nine Years War in Ireland had almost bankrupt the English crown. The union of the English, Irish and Scottish crowns under James both facilitated and heralded a monumental shift in ‘English’ crown policy. Elizabeth’s defeat of O’Neill, the Flight of the Earls and the rebellion by Sir Cathair O’Doherty paved the way for the crown’s seizure of nearly 3.8 million acres of land for a comprehensive project.

James saw colonisation as a way of restoring the financial fortunes of the Crown. During his reign plantations were undertaken in Virginia, America (1607), Ulster (1609) and Plymouth, America (1620).

He had a strong faith and was responsible for the first English translation of the bible, known as the King James Bible in 1611.

His second son Charles I succeeded him to the throne in 1625. He inherited many of his father’s unresolved problems, including financial problems, a disgruntled parliament and growing religious divisions.
James 1

Document 1

A drawing of James by Sean O’Brogain

1. What other title did James I have?
2. Describe the scene shown in the drawing by Sean O’Brogain. What is your impression of James I?
3. Find out more about the plans James had for the Plantation of Ulster and his reasons for it.
Sir Cathair O’Doherty (1587 – 1608)
Dispossessed Nobleman

Cathair O’Doherty was born in 1587 of noble birth and became Lord of Inishowen in 1601. His lineage could be traced to Conall Gulban, son of the 5th century High King of Ireland, Niall of the Nine Hostages. The O’Dohertys, had ruled Inishowen from the early 1400s and loyalty to family and Inishowen was all-important. They had to be mindful of the rivalry between the two most powerful families in Ulster, the O’Neills of Tyrone and the O’Donnells of Donegal.

Sir Henry Docwra’s military campaign in northwest Ulster (1600-1603) aimed to end the Nine Years War but he needed Irish allies. Docwra actively secured the support of Cathair O’Doherty. With Niall Garbh O’Donnell pledging allegiance to Elizabeth I the decision of Cathair O’Doherty to become a supporter of Sir Henry Docwra seemed a very practical one. Cathair became a trusted supporter of Docwra and was knighted for his bravery in fighting against the O’Neills in 1602.

If Docwra had decided to stay in Derry it is possible that Sir Cathair’s rebellion might not have occurred. However his departure led to a sequence of events which resulted in the enlargement of the Ulster Plantation. In July 1606 Docwra left Derry and was replaced by Sir George Paulet, an arrogant and argumentative man.

After the Flight of the Earls, in 1607, Paulet suspected that Sir Cathair was involved in plotting against the Crown. However his departure led to a sequence of events, O’Doherty was instructed to visit Paulet in Derry early in April 1608; a quarrel broke out and Paulet assaulted O’Doherty. This provocation resulted in Sir Cathair seizing and burning Derry on 19 April 1608.

Some historians believe that O’Doherty had already begun to plan an uprising as he was now concerned about English interference in the affairs of his territory and gambled, wrongly, on support from Niall Garbh O’Donnell. Sir Cathair’s uprising was quickly crushed and he was killed in a skirmish at Kilmacrennan in Donegal on 5 July 1608.
Sir Cathair O’Doherty

Document 2a

A drawing of Sir Cathair O’Doherty by Sean O’Brogain

Document 2b

Extract from 17th century pamphlet
Drawing of Newgate Gaol
Derry City Council, Archive collection

1. What might have been Cathair’s motives for the 1608 rebellion?
2. What impact did the rebellion have on the plans for Plantation?
3. What is Sean O’Brogain’s impression of Cathair O’Doherty?
4. Why was the head of Sir Cathair sent to Newgate gaol in Dublin?
Ouer-throw of an Irish rebell, in a late bataile:

Or

The death of Sir Casey Adougherstic, who murdred Sir George Paulet in Ireland; and for his rebellion hath his head now standing over Newgate in Dublin.

Imprinted at London for I. Wright, and now to be sold at his shop near Christ Church gate. 1603.

'Derry', c. 1601, by Griffin Crockett (Trinity College Dublin).
John Rowley (c1560 – 1617)  
Disloyal Company Servant

John Rowley was the eldest son of Hugh Rowley of Lawton, Cheshire. He was an experienced businessman, a freeman of the Drapers’ Company and a merchant draper of London, who had trading connections with Ireland. In November 1612 The Honourable The Irish Society appointed John Rowley as its chief agent. The Society was anxious to keep a tighter rein on its agents.

In June 1613, amid concern that their agents, John Rowley and Tristram Beresford, were pursuing their own fortunes rather than look after the Irish Society’s interests, the Irish Society appointed George Smithes and Matthias Springham to travel to Ulster to establish the current state of the Plantation. The commissioners soon discovered, for example, that Rowley and Beresford had spoiled the woods of Loughinsholin for personal gain. They also found widespread corruption amongst the city officials, in Londonderry, including non-payment of workers and overcharging on building contracts.

The commissioners, although they uncovered Rowley’s and Beresford’s corruption, were under instruction from London to install them as mayors of Londonderry and Coleraine respectively. John Rowley was appointed as the first Mayor of the newly incorporated city of Londonderry in March 1613 and he lost no time in requesting new Arms for the infant city. In 1613, Ulster King of Arms (with authority since 1552 to grant and confirm coats of arms in Ireland) combined the earlier Arms granted to Docwra’s settlement (i.e. castle and skeleton seated on a rock) with the Arms of London (i.e. Cross of St. George, sword and motto).

George Smithes returned to London in November 1613 with his report. Rowley was then dismissed from the City of London’s service and Springham was appointed to take charge of all money and resources in Rowley’s hands.

Although dismissed in disgrace from the City of London’s service in November 1613 and, despite his desire to return to his home at Castleroe, Coleraine, John Rowley was obliged to continue serving as Mayor of Londonderry until May 1615. He died at Castleroe in July 1617.
John Rowley

Document 3

Typescript ‘Instructions given to Mr. John Rowley, Agent, Receavour and Treasurer for the affairs of the City of London’s Plantation in Ireland’, 1629
London Metropolitan Archives CLA 049/AD/16/284

1. Who did John Rowley need to report to when he arrived in Ireland?
2. Where was he told to reside and what did he need to establish there?
3. What did the workmen or labourers require before they got paid?
4. What type of tools are mentioned and how much did they cost?
5. What was he told to do about Thomas Phillips’ kitchen?
INSTRUCTIONS

given

to Mr. JOHN ROWLEY, Agent, Receavour and
Treasurer for the affairs of the City of
London's Plantation in Ireland.


ITEM You shall depart from home with as much convenience
as you may to West Chester whence you shall embarque yourself
for Dublin or Colraine as you shall find best commodity having
a care to such charges as you carry with you and to make entry
thereof at West Chester in the Custome House that it may appear
there by the Register what shall be transported from time to
time.

ITEM That as well in your journey to Chester as at your
arrivall in Ireland you do nothing in the affairs of the
Company in matter of payment taking up of moneys directions
or anything of moment without the acquainting Mr. Berris-
ford as soon as conveniently you may and to keep books of
what passeth and the accounts to be sent us to Dublin within
the space of three months and all such Letters as shall come
from us to be communicated according to the directions and
to be dilligent in answering our letters directing yours to
the Right Worshipfull the Governour Deputy and Assistants
for the time being for the managing the affairs of the
Plantation in Ulster.

ITEM That you keep yourself continually in our affairs
and your residence at Derry or Coleraine as occasion of
business requireth during the time of our works there and
that you provide a Storehouse for the laying up of our
provisions and to appoint and continue Robinson Wray or
any other Clarkes of your Store so long time as to you shall
be thought fitt and so that he may cleare his old acct. of
store and every 14 days give up a just and true acct. of that
which hereafter may happen to come to his or their charge or
custody.

ITEM That you take care for the receiving of our rents and
old debts for the time past and for the Free Lands at Coleraine
and Derry you are to lett them for this year coming according
to your best discretion and for the most advantage of the City.
we resolving to give you hereafter full directions touching
that business and for the houses in the towns to lett them to
the best advantage of the City in this manner, visit. For the
first houses built in the New Row of 16 feet in front towards
the Street and 21 feet backwards with the backsides we have
ordered here that they be let for 21 years paying a fine of
£5 and 40s. yearly rent and for the houses over against them
being also 18 foot in front and 23 foot backwards as aforesaid
to let them for 50 shillings rent yearly and £6 fine for the
terms of 21 years, the like conditions to be observed in
letting other 12 houses near the Southgate wch are built of
stone and much about the same proportions both in height and
breadth but for the better houses in the High Street contain-
ing about 18 foot in front and 23 foot backwards 6 rooms
and three stories high our will and order is that you lett
them for each a fine of £6 and £5 yearly rent for 21 years.
All which sev'l. rents and fines are to be duly collected if
you make leases for the aforesaid. times endeavouring by the
best means you can to advance the fines and rents of our
houses as much as you may specially at the lerry where we
conceive the building wou'd yeild more profit than at
Coleraine and to make a proviso in every tenants Lease that none o
none of them lett or alienate his estate without the consent
of yourself or such chief officers as shall reside there by
our order and that they do suite and service to the Citys
Mills &c. where they have any and to keep their houses in
sufficient reparations.

ITEM For the Houses that are to be built in Coleraine
hereafter for such as will build them at their own cost you
may lett them by Lease for 60 years for a quitt rent of Six
shillings eight pence according to the former proportion of
ground assigned for the building of small houses and if the
backsides be great lett their rent be accordingly.

ITEM That no workmen or labourers have wages untill they
have tooles and to pay for their tooles out of their wages
at the prices they cost us the Iron tooles at five pence p.
 pound but for our great master tooles as great crow's Slides
and great Hammers they are to lye on our charge for them to
work with. and our Clarke to take care for the safe keeping
of them and to auct. for the same and for other tooles lett
them have them as they cost us here with. the charges
according to the sev'l. invoice.

ITEM That you cause all the Clarks of our Works to keep
their books in one fashion with. the names of all the workmen
and what days they are in work and what out of work and they
to give you aoc't. weekly.
ITEM  You shall find that the houses wch. are ordered to be pulled downe and carryed away by the owners of them as by theIds. letters may appear will serve to any purpose either for materials or lodgings of our workmen to agree wth. them as in your discretion you shall esteem worthy wch. may fall out to be repaired for the meanest of our Labourers for a time.

ITEM  For as much as Peter Cobb the Mr. Carpenter hath obtained of the Company the favour that his wife might receive of the Treasurer here in his absence out of his allowance in Ireland the sum of three pounds monthly you are also to take care that from time to time you see the said moneys duly defaulked out of his entertainment.

ITEM  For hides and tallow we ithink it not fitt that you suffer any to be transported if they may be used in the countrey and no hides to be shipp'd untanned if they may be done there according to our Article passed in that behalf.

ITEM  For the Yarne we desire to know what quantity is transported yearly out of the five Countys adjoyning to the Derry and County of Coleraine that thereby we may think of a course to have the same wrought in that countrey to sett out people a work.

ITEM W  We would have you to do your indeavour by all possible care to bring Artizans into our towne that people may be sett on work wth. all the means that you can make wch. we hold will be a special cause to enrich our Plantation.

ITEM  For the bettering of the Trade of that Plantation we hold it fitt that there be no towne bargaines plotted as they are in other incorporate Townes in Ireland for the more freer that the Merchants are dealt wth. all the more willingly they will resort.

ITEM  For the more encouragmt. of trade we are content for two years that no custom be taken upon goods in or out at all onely a Register kept wch. is shipp'd in and out exactly and truly yet we wou'd have no goods to be shipp'd in nor out without quite cokkets upon paine of forfeiture and for these cokkets we wou'd you see that a reasonable rate be sett upon them and for those that shall execute these places for the Custom houses we refer you there to appoint them untill we give you further order from hence to appoint others in their places and to inform us in the meantime the names of such as you appoint,
ITEM For a custom House we wou'd you to reserve a small room out of some convenient house near the water side which you shall build for the City and this do both at Derry and Coleraine and have care that no goods be laden or unladen but at the Townes of Derry and Coleraine except at Portrush for Coleraine and before they lade or unlade to enter the Ships and goods in the Custom House.

ITEM For the settling a course for the division of the Citys Lands in these parts we wou'd have you to send us a particular of all the lands in the four Baronys divided first into four parts then every 4th part to be divided in three parts for the better satisfying of the Company's in London to assign every one their proportion for whereby they will be willinger to disburse the severall pts. and to pforne their buildings &c. which we are injoynd by our Articles to pforne having a respect to the goodness or barrenness of the soile to the nearness of the Towns and to the largeness of the Ballibes.

ITEM Whereas we understand that the roofe of Sr.Tho. Phillips his kitchen is burnt down by the negligence of himself or some of his servants or officers we will you to importune him to reparaie sufficiently as of right, every tenant ought to do in that case.

ITEM We wou'd have you to send home your accts. pected every three months with the copy of the vouchers or acquittance under written by you both and at the end of 6 months we will take order here that Auditors shall be appointed by Common Council every 6 months for auditing thereof.

ITEM Whereas we hear there is great want of Corne Mills at Londerry wherefore if ye find any that will build upon our Lands in convenient places either water or wind mills at their own charges lett them have the ground by Lease for 60 years at a good a quitt rent as you can procure provided that it prejudice not the Salmon fishings.

ITEM For that Coleraine is a bar'd haven dangerous at all times and hardly passible in winter we hold for the bettering of the grade of that place that if you can find any that will make a sufficient Pier or Jetty for the safety of shipping at Port Bush at their own charges inform us what they will demand for the same or that sum of monys may content them and before you do proceed therein inform us in particular thereof.
Dr George Montgomery
Land Hungry Church
(Bishop of Clogher, Derry and Raphoe 1605-1610).

With the Plantation, lands that previously belonged to the Irish Church were to be transferred to the new Protestant Church. In June 1605 the dean of Norwich, Dr George Montgomery was appointed first Protestant bishop of the united dioceses of Clogher, Derry and Raphoe. Dr Montgomery carried out an extensive survey of Derry diocese on his arrival here in 1606/7.

This detailed survey recorded the structure and resources of the Catholic Church in Derry. There were 45 parishes in the Derry diocese before the plantation with the Bishop of Derry owning extensive lands. The greatest of the bishop's mensal lands, i.e. those lands directly under his control, were situated in the extensive parish of Templemore. There were lesser mensal lands in the parishes of Aghadowey, Clonleigh and Dunboe.

However the bulk of the Bishop's lands were scattered in smaller parcels throughout the diocese. These lands were leased to 'erenagh' families. Erenaghs were hereditary tenants of pre-plantation church lands who managed the Church lands. The revenue from this paid for the upkeep of church buildings and the income of the clergy.

Indeed most of the Catholic priests of the Derry diocese came from erenagh families. In return for tenancy of the bishop's land, the erenaghs of Derry diocese paid modest rents to the Bishop. The bishop of Derry received a third of all the tithes paid in the diocese with the most valuable sources of tithes being the fisheries of the Bann and Foyle.

The bishop of Derry before the plantation was clearly a man of considerable resources and Bishop Montgomery intended to maximise income from these resources. George Montgomery soon became involved in disputes about property. An Inquisition, for example, to distinguish between Crown and Church lands in O’Cahan's country took place in Limavady on 30 August 1609. The Bishop of Derry, always greedy for land, unsuccessfully attempted to gain possession of land possessed by erenagh families.

Although, with the Plantation, the Catholic Church buildings, lands and tithes were taken from the local clergy and transferred to British Protestant ministers, local Catholic priests succeeded in maintaining their congregations in the Catholic faith. George Downham, Church of Ireland bishop of Derry and Raphoe, in 1622, was incensed that there was a Catholic priest ministering in every parish of the diocese.
Bishop Montgomery

Document 4

Drawing of St Columb’s Cathedral
Derry City Council, Archive collection

1. What was the religious aim of the Plantation of Ulster?
2. Describe the cathedral. What architectural style was used?
3. What is unique about St Columb’s Cathedral?
4. Can you find out any more about Bishop Montgomery?
Sir Thomas Phillips described as ‘a pushing soldier of fortune and a protégé of Sir Robert Cecil’ first arrived in Ireland in 1599 and it was Phillips who took O’Neill’s fortress of Toome in 1602. By 1608 Phillips, who was knighted in 1607, was effectively the military commander of the County of Coleraine. He played a significant role in persuading the Livery Companies of the City of London to undertake the Plantation of Derry and the County of Coleraine (renamed Londonderry on 29th March 1613).

In 1610 Sir Thomas Phillips was granted 13,100 acres of land at Limavady which included an O’Cahan castle. He commenced the building of the ‘Newtown of Limavady’ which was laid out in a cruciform road pattern. By 1622, 18 one-storey houses and an inn had been built and they were centred on the crossroads which contained a flagpole, a cross and stocks. Newtown was incorporated, with the appointment of a Provost and 12 Burgesses, on 31 March 1613 with a charter granted by King James I.

From 1611, Sir Thomas Phillips became involved in a bitter controversy with the City of London’s agents and the Irish Society that was destined to last for 25 years.

In August 1611 Sir Thomas Phillips, governor of the county of Coleraine, was warned by the Irish Society to stop interfering with their jurisdiction. The Society accepted his lead role in military matters but not in civil matters. Phillips blamed the Society for the delay in granting him title to his lands at Limavady and Castledawson (confirmed by letter patent of 30 December 1612) which he claimed deprived him of land and rent for almost a year and a half.

In other words Phillips had acquired interests that conflicted with the City’s grant. The original ‘Project of Plantation’ had contemplated the establishment in the County of Coleraine of corporate boroughs at Limavady and Dungiven. But this was before the Londoners’ undertaking had been proposed and the county of Coleraine had been expanded into the county of Londonderry with corporate boroughs of Londonderry and Coleraine.

Sir Thomas Phillips spent a vast sum of money in his campaign to show that the Londoners’ had not carried out their obligations in Ireland. He died at his home in Hammersmith, London in August 1636. Sir Thomas’s eldest son Dudley inherited the Limavady freehold estate.
Thomas Phillips

Document 5a

‘Thomas Phillips Buildings at Limavadde’
Thomas Raven 1622
Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)

Document 5b

‘Thomas Phillips his Lands Belonginge to His Castle of Limavadde’
Thomas Raven 1622
Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)

Phillips was allocated extensive lands in Limavady.

1 Why did an individual such as Thomas Phillips receive lands as part of the Plantation?
2 Where were his lands located? Can you find out who this land had been confiscated from?
3 Why do you think Thomas Phillips commissioned Thomas Raven to create a series of maps in 1622?
4 Why did he later argue with the Irish Society?
5 Describe the map, what sort of buildings and structures does it show?