



LEAVING CERTIFICATE HISTORY CASE STUDY

The Lordship of Tír Eoghain

EARLY MODERN IRELAND: TOPIC 2
REBELLION AND CONQUEST IN ELIZABETHAN IRELAND, 1558-1603

A resource for teachers of Leaving Certificate History,
developed by the
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Contents

Introduction	3
Biographical Notes	5
Glossary	8
Documents included in case study	11
Documents	14

Introduction

The political structure of Gaelic Ireland was composed of layers of minor, middling and great lordships that were to varying degrees independent of English jurisdiction and law. The subordinate chieftains were bound to the larger overlords and had to render military service or pay a financial levy. In what was an intensely hierarchical society, the great lords such as the O’Neills and the O’Donnells of Ulster competed for control over the lesser lords. Later English governors vied with the O’Neills for control of chieftains located strategically around Tír Eoghain, such as the O’Reillys (Cavan), the Maguires (Fermanagh) and McMahons (Monaghan). Within Gaelic lordships, succession to the chieftainship was hereditary within a dominant sept or family group with a *tánaiste* designated a successor during the lord’s lifetime. Vassals or freeholders were prepared to pay exacting tributes or hand over cattle in return for support. In turn, chiefs were free to administer their own interpretation of Gaelic law, hold great feasts called *hostings at the vassal’s expense and generally rule as kings within the borders of their own lordships. What complicated matters greatly throughout the period, however, was the adoption by the O’Neills of English titles. The desire for royal recognition and the demand for feudal titles (the earldom of Tyrone) from English monarchs marked the careers of all the O’Neills cited in these documents. Some of the selected sources indicate how an O’Neill lord believed his own power and status could be reconciled with the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the English crown.

In the second half of the sixteenth century both the English and Irish alike recognised the lordship of Tír Eoghain as the pre-eminent political entity in Gaelic Ireland. The documents in this booklet are grouped thematically allowing students to identify the core issues and themes which lie at the heart of the case study. The first grouping of documents relates to ‘Geography and Structure.’ Located at the geographical heart of the province of Ulster, the lordship of Tír Eoghain was much larger than the present County Tyrone. With the Slieve Gallion and Sperrin Mountains in the north and the River Blackwater to the south acting as great natural barriers, the lordship was something of an unknown territory for the English. (Document 1). The O’Neills, the lords of Tyrone, ruled over a vast and nominally independent estate paying little regard to the laws and edicts of Queen Elizabeth’s chief governors in Ireland (Document 2). The second theme, ‘Succession and Internecine Conflict,’ illustrates the extent of the sovereignty enjoyed by Gaelic lordships during the sixteenth century and underscores the fact that the English feudal system of succession and landholding did not exist throughout much of Ulster. Taken as a complete set, the first two thematic sections should focus student attention on the conflict between the desire of Gaelic lords to defend their hereditary lands and rights and the English colonial policy of establishing their writ and government throughout the country.

The documents in the third thematic section, ‘Alliances with the English,’ are arranged according to a sequence illustrating the relationship between the crown and *Turlough Luineach O’Neill, ‘The O’Neill’ from 1567 to 1595. Turlough Luineach skilfully used crown institutions to subtly bolster his own rule of the lordship. Even when submitting to the lord deputy (Documents 5 and 6), the O’Neills were generally equivocal in their attitude to the English administration. It is important to be aware that the O’Neills were not above giving declarations of loyalty and obedience to an English monarch if they felt their local power would be bolstered by it. The unfeigned

testimonies of fidelity given by both *Turlough Luineach (Document 6) and Hugh O'Neill suggest that they were willing to countenance a measure of royal influence within their lordships even if complaints about the broken promises and bribery of English officials indicate that the Irish were wary of constructing a working relationship with the Tudor state. Finally, the section entitled 'Conflict with the English' presents documentary evidence from a period when the English programme for reform broke down as it faced obdurate Gaelic opposition. The rejection of interference in the internal politics of the Gaelic lordships resulted in rebellion and the complete extirpation of lordships after the Tudor conquest was completed in 1603. Charting the initial optimism brought about by early military victories, these sources offer an insight into Irish tactics (Document 8), the responses of the English, the symbolic destruction of O'Neill authority in Tír Eoghain (Document 9) and the final pardon afforded Hugh O'Neill after the Treaty of Mellifont (Document 10).

These source documents raise broader questions about the period of the case study. The documents and the accompanying questions have been selected with these issues in mind. At a more advanced level, some questions introduce an element of criticism asking students whether they would trust an account of events or offer an opinion as to the credibility of the statements made. It is clear from the sources for this case study that successive English administrations had to formulate policies which accepted the reality of O'Neill supremacy in a large part of Ulster. Equally, the O'Neills yearned for government recognition as it was believed it offered a means of reinforcing their rule. Accordingly, the documents can be used to introduce students to the internal political dynamic which lay at the heart of the Gaelic lordships as they contended with the centralising power of Tudor governance in Ireland.

An edited transcript is included with each document to facilitate student comprehension. The *Biographical Notes* section contains short character sketches of the principal figures mentioned in the documents. A *Glossary* has also been added which includes archaic words with which students may be unfamiliar. Cross references to both the *Biographical Notes* and *Glossary* sections are indicated by an asterisk (*) and have been included in the document descriptions and transcripts where they seem most likely to assist the student. The questions on each document range from descriptive interrogation of the source to assessments of reliability and accuracy. Students should first consider where, when and why a document was produced before moving to more analytical questions which include the element of interpretation. Finally, students should be encouraged to consider the subject matter of the document in a wider historical context and, if possible, make comparisons and correlations with other evidence.

Biographical Notes

Sir Henry Bagenal (1556-98)

Marshal of Ireland, 1590, Chief Commissioner of Ulster, 1591

Bagenal came from a family which had been granted a lordship from the crown in the Newry area in the mid-sixteenth century. His career was essentially a military one and he worked with an unremitting desire to uphold and expand English rule in Gaelic Ulster. This brought him into conflict with Hugh O'Neill, 2nd earl of Tyrone, their hatred acquiring a very personal edge when O'Neill eloped with Bagenal's sister, Mabel, in 1591. Antagonised by O'Neill's growing power, Bagenal angrily refused to accept the validity of his sister's marriage. The rivalry between the two culminated in the battle of the Yellow Ford (14 August 1598) where Bagenal lost his life.

John Derricke

English engraver.

Derricke's well-known series of woodcuts in his *Image of Ireland* (1581) provide the most important visual record of life in sixteenth-century Ireland. Little is known of his background but in view of his writings about the Irish it is almost certain that he was English. We do not know if he ever visited Ireland or if he did how long he was in the service of lord deputy Sidney, but from his derogatory depictions of Irish life and the accuracy of detail in the text, it is probable that Derricke spent some time in the country. He was clearly a competent draughtsman and the plates for the *Image* were probably engraved from his sketchbook. His principal subjects are the barbarous Irish woodkern and an enthusiastic celebration of the exploits of lord deputy Sidney. In the last three years of his final term as lord deputy (1575-78), Sidney pursued the destruction of the old Irish families with an unequalled ferocity. It is from the scenes and events of these three years that Derricke took the incidents and places depicted in his *Image*. Essentially visual propaganda, the woodcuts should be treated cautiously as Derricke's illustrations contain many unflattering and generally negative representations of Gaelic lords. They remain, however, most valuable sources of information on life in sixteenth-century Ireland.

Sir William Fitzwilliam (1526-99)

Lord Deputy, 1571-75, 1588-94.

Fitzwilliam was an experienced administrator but his terms of office in Ireland were marked by insufficient funds, a lack of military knowledge and accusations of widespread bribery and corruption. Fitzwilliam succeeded in quashing the rebellion in Monaghan but his subsequent partition and settlement of the lordship (1590-91) resulted in the alienation of the Ulster Irish. He provided the spark for the Nine Years War by sending an English sheriff into Fermanagh and by attempting to arrest Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone, on charges of treason in 1593.

Meiler Magrath (?1523-1622)

Church of Ireland Archbishop of Cashel, 1571-1622.

Born into a prominent Gaelic ecclesiastical family in Fermanagh, Meiler Magrath was reputedly a foster-brother of Shane O'Neill. He became a Franciscan friar and managed to secure from the Pope the appointment to the bishopric of Down and Connor in 1565. In 1567 he gave his spiritual allegiance to Queen Elizabeth and took the oath of supremacy recognising her as the 'supreme governor' of the church. The crown subsequently appointed him Anglican archbishop of Cashel. English officials

in Dublin routinely denounced Magrath, suggesting that his conversion to Protestantism was a sham, and that he was a drunk and a despoiler of church property. Noted for his ability to hold multiple ecclesiastical positions, Magrath was appointed to no fewer than six Anglican bishoprics in his lifetime, happily taking the revenues from all of them.

Lord Mountjoy (1563-1606)

Charles Blount, Lord deputy, 1600-04

With his tough militaristic approach, Mountjoy's arrival as lord deputy in 1600 marked a new departure in English tactics in the struggle against the chief adversary in the rebellion, Hugh O'Neill. He reorganised the army and raised money to finance his campaigns through currency debasement. Although these measures crippled the economy and resulted in much deprivation, Mountjoy was successful at the siege of Kinsale where he inflicted a decisive defeat on O'Neill and his Spanish allies. As a reward for his endeavours, in 1603 James I appointed him lord lieutenant of Ireland.

Hugh O'Neill (?1550-1616)

3rd Baron of Dungannon; 2nd Earl of Tyrone; the last inaugurated O'Neill.

After the murder of his father, Matthew, by the followers of Shane O'Neill, Hugh was brought up in the English Pale. The crown re-established him in Ulster in 1568 as a counterpoint to his rival for the title of 'The O'Neill', Turlough Luineach O'Neill. In his youth he was ennobled by the crown as baron of Dungannon and in 1585 he was recognised as Earl of Tyrone. He gradually consolidated his position in Tír Eoghain and by the early 1590s he had completed the overthrow of Turlough Luineach O'Neill. In 1595 he was inaugurated 'The O'Neill.' When the English attempted to curb his power, Hugh resorted to rebellion and sought aid from Elizabeth's enemies abroad. A decisive victory over his main English rival in Ulster, Sir Henry Bagenal, at the battle of the Yellow Ford confirmed O'Neill's standing as an astute military and political leader. Hugh and his ally Hugh O'Donnell, earl of Tyrconnell, were defeated, however, in the siege of Kinsale (1601). In 1603 O'Neill surrendered himself at Mellifont, formally ending the Nine Years War. He gained a pardon and succeeded in retaining his lands in a subsequent treaty. Later, both he and O'Donnell escaped to the continent in the dramatic but ultimately futile 'flight of the earls.' O'Neill died in exile in Rome in 1616.

Shane O'Neill (?1530-67)

Having murdered his step-brother Matthew Kelly, his main rival to the title of 'the O'Neill' and the crown's nominated successor to the lordship, Shane O'Neill was recognised as chieftain in 1559. Shane survived successive attempts by the earl of Sussex to remove him and engaged in a series of campaigns to secure his position in his own territory and acquire supremacy in Ulster. He set his sights on neighbouring lordships including that of the MacDonnells. He also imprisoned Calvach O'Donnell. These factional disputes did much to destabilise the north of Ireland. In 1562 Shane travelled to London and in a much trumpeted agreement signed a peace with the Queen which recognised his position as 'the O'Neill.' Shane, however, never became earl of Tyrone although he continued to petition for the title. With the arrival of Sir Henry Sidney as lord deputy in 1563, the tentative peace between the crown and O'Neill collapsed. Shane was eventually defeated at the battle of Farsetmore and appealed to the Scottish MacDonnells who promptly murdered him on 2 June 1567.

Turlough Luineach O'Neill (?1531-95)

Turlough was the fourth son of Niall Connallach O'Neill (d. 1544) who was *tanist* to Conn Bacach, the first earl of Tyrone. After the assassination of Shane O'Neill in 1567, Turlough succeeded as 'the O'Neill.' He strengthened his ties to Scottish mercenary families by marrying Agnes Campbell which enabled him to draw upon an abundant supply of Scottish soldiers. A peace signed in 1575 with the earl of Essex in the aftermath of the disastrous *Enterprise of Ulster recognised Turlough's position and crucially allowed him to exact the customary Gaelic dues from the client lords or *urraight* of the O'Neills in Ulster: Maguires, O'Cahans, McMahons, Magennis, MacQuillans and O'Hanlons. The treaty also conferred upon O'Neill extensive holdings and the right to retain some of his Scottish mercenaries. By the late 1570s he was the most powerful Gaelic lord in Ulster. With the rise of Hugh O'Neill, 2nd earl of Tyrone, however, Turlough increasingly had to rely on the English to prop him up in his lordship.

Sir Henry Sidney (1529-86)

Lord deputy 1565-67; 1568-71; 1575-78

Responsible during his first deputyship for the final overthrow of Shane O'Neill's hegemony, Sidney was a vociferous advocate of a thorough reform in Ireland. His plans included the establishment of provincial presidencies, the promotion of plantations, and the introduction of composition in both Connacht and Munster which he achieved during his final stint as lord deputy. His high-handed approach, however, brought widespread dissension amongst both the native Irish and the Old English who distrusted him.

Glossary

Act of Attainder

An act of parliament removing or confiscating the property of an individual outlawed or sentenced to death for a serious offence, usually treason. The act for the attainder of *Shane O'Neill (1569) confiscated most of Ulster for the crown and banned (in theory) the use of the traditional Gaelic title of 'The O'Neill.'

Bonnaught [Buannacht]

Buannacht (or in English 'bonnaught') can refer to the billeting of mercenary soldiers on a civilian population or more frequently in the sixteenth century to a land tax exacted instead of the actual billeting. Sometimes English sources call the hired soldiers in the pay of the lord 'the bonnaught.'

Calendar

Calendars are published extracts of historical documents. In many cases they contain extended citations of material and, on occasion, may even include the entire text of a particularly informative or unusual document. When access to the complete manuscript is not possible or the original document contains obscure or indecipherable text, a calendar may be a useful substitute. The *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, 1509-1670* (24 vols., London, 1860-1912) includes published extracts from a vast repository of material held in the Public Record Office, London, relating to the English administration of Ireland in the early modern period.

Carew Manuscripts

Held in London's Lambeth Palace library, the Carew manuscripts are a large collection of Irish papers assembled by the Lord Justice of Ireland and Provincial President of Munster, Sir George Carew (1555-1629). These papers later inspired Carew's secretary, Thomas Stafford, to write *Pacata Hibernia* (1633) a history of the Nine Years War. The Carew papers were calendared by J.S. Brewer and W. Bullen, *Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts, 1575-74, 1575-87* and contain many documents concerning state policy in Ireland.

Cess

An English term denoting taxes to maintain a local military garrison. A cess could be applied to meat, grain and other agricultural produce and every harvest and was taken in each county or town. Cesses were heaviest when the need for billeting soldiers in a disturbed district was thought to be urgent.

Composition

Composition was an agreement between the crown and the vassal lord which turned feudal dues for the upkeep of either personal retainers or government troops into a permanent tax. Enacted in order to promote law and order and reduce the private military retinue of Gaelic chieftains, composition marked a significant attempt by the English state to impose taxation on the native Irish.

Creaghts

A term seemingly peculiar to Ulster referring to a nomadic herd of cattle driven about the place for pasture or in time of conflict, the word can also refer to the herdsmen and the drivers.

Enterprise of Ulster

The Enterprise was an attempt to confiscate and colonise the lands of eastern Ulster by private means. The main protagonist in the scheme was a favourite of Queen Elizabeth, Walter Devereux, earl of Essex, who mortgaged his estates to finance an expedition to Ulster. He arrived in Carrickfergus in August 1573 with over a thousand soldiers. At first the O'Neills seemed prepared to submit to Essex, but the English encountered problems attracting enough colonists to make a plantation viable. Having secured a measure of royal support, Essex ordered massacres of the O'Neills of Clondeboye in Belfast Castle and in July 1575 ruthlessly slaughtered McDonnell women and children on Rathlin Island. The whole episode, however, was a costly and bloody failure as the plantation scheme collapsed. In 1576 Essex died of dysentery in Dublin leaving Ulster dangerously destabilized and the Gaelic lords alienated from the crown.

Gallowglass

Literally meaning 'foreign warrior', these heavily armoured soldiers from the Scottish Isles were retainers used by Irish and Old English lords in Ireland for personal protection and later for use in conflict. Usually the gallowglass were of a higher status than the ordinary Irish foot soldiers or kern. They wielded long spears, axes and two-handed swords and could resist a cavalry charge or form an impenetrable line of defence. Many of the leaders of the gallowglass eventually settled in Ireland and were given grants of lands by Ulster lords.

Hostings

Refers to the ancient custom of receiving lodging and providing feasts for a lord or someone of noble birth.

Kern

Kern were small bands of mercenaries who took military employment wherever they could find it. Frequently armed only with sword, spear or bow, the kern were unsuited to anything other than light skirmishing.

Lord Deputy

Lord deputy was the title given to the chief governor of Ireland appointed by the crown. For the period of the case study high-ranking English noblemen held the deputyship.

Letters Patent

An official document stating that the subject has been granted land by the crown. Succession rights or duration of the grant were frequently incorporated into the document.

Pledges

Pledges were hostages handed over by a lord or client to a superior to seal an agreement between the two parties. The transfer of pledges normally signified a political contract and the hostages were frequently close relatives of the submitting party. They would be treated fairly as long as the client remained subservient, but in case of rebellion or breaking of the contract they could be tortured or even executed.

Provincial President

Presidencies were regional administrations set up with the intention of enforcing English law and customs in areas outside the Pale. A presidency was established by *Sir Henry Sidney in Connaught in the 1560s and later in Munster. Each presidency had a small military force attached to it and had a judicial function extending common law into Gaelicised areas. The presidencies were funded by compositions from local lords.

Servitor

Servitors were civil and military servants of the crown who were given grants of lands as a reward for their defence of the realm.

State Papers

The largest single collection of documents on early modern Ireland is to be found in the State Paper collection in the Public Record Office, London. The content varies but includes correspondence between the sovereign and the chief officials of the English administration in Ireland regarding affairs of state. There is also considerable material relating to plans for defence of the Pale, records of expenditure, reports on rebellions and confiscations, and schemes for plantations.

Tullaghoge

Located on a prominent hill in northeast Tyrone, Tullaghoge was associated with the O'Hagans one of the urraghts of the O'Neills. It was reported in a number of sixteenth-century sources that a large boulder known as the *Leac na Ri* or king's stone supposedly blessed by St. Patrick rested there. The boulder was later fashioned to resemble a stone chair, and from the end of the thirteenth century the O'Cahans and the O'Hagans inaugurated the O'Neills as kings on the stone chair. The casting of a shoe over O'Neill's head was supposed to be an integral part of the ceremony.

To take a prey

A common military and political tactic of the Gaelic Irish was to attack and confiscate livestock (usually cattle) in order to enforce political or vassal obligations.

Route

The northern part of what is today County Antrim which was in Sidney's time controlled by a family of Norman descent, the MacQuillans. Their lordship had become Gaelicised and by the late sixteenth century was threatened by incursions by Sorley Boy MacDonnell.

Urraghts

Urraghts were the leading nobles of any district or lordship ruled by a Gaelic Irish chieftain.

Documents included in case study

Geography and Structure

1. A map by David Quinn, 'The physical and strategic basis of the autonomy of the North-West, 1460-1534' (Art Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland*, ii, Oxford, 1993, p. 620).
2. An extract from a report by the archbishop of Cashel, *Meiler Magrath, reflecting on the state of Ireland, and the means to increase the revenues, amend the government, and withstand Spanish practices, 30 May 1592 (*Calendar of State Papers, Ireland*, 63/164, no. 47, pp 497-502).

Succession and Internecine Conflict

3. A genealogical table showing the principal O'Neills of Tír Eoghain in the sixteenth century, adapted from Hiram Morgan, *Tyrone's rebellion: the outbreak of the nine years war in Tudor Ireland* (Dublin, 1993), pp 86-87.
4. An extract from the annals describing *Shane O'Neill's defeat at the battle of Farsetmore (8 May 1567) and his death at the hands of the MacDonnells (John O'Donovan (ed.), *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland, by the Four Masters*, v, 3rd ed., 1990).

Alliances with the English

5. An extract from the memoir of *Sir Henry Sidney censuring Turlough Luineach O'Neill for his assumption of the title of 'The O'Neill' in 1567 (Ciaran Brady (ed.), *A viceroy's vindication, Sir Henry Sidney's memoir of service, 1556-78*, Cork, 2002, pp 54-55).
6. A woodcut by *John Derricke of the submission of *Turlough Luineach O'Neill to Sir Henry Sidney, [?August 1577] (*The Image of Ireland, with a discourse of Woodkerne*, London, 1581).

Conflict with the English

7. 'A note of sundry causes and articles wherewith the *earl of Tyrone is aggrieved,' 14 March 1594 (J.J. Brewer & William Bullen (eds), *Calendar of Carew Manuscripts*, London, 1869, iii, [137], p. 87).
8. An extract from a letter 'from an Irish soldier in the *earl of Tyrone's camp dated tertio [3] Januarii, 1600' sent to Sir Geoffrey Fenton reflecting on O'Neill's strategy (*Calendar of State Papers, Ireland*, 63/207 part 1, no. 118/3, pp 389-90).
9. A map by Richard Bartlett showing Dungannon, Tullaghoge and a crannog, c.1602 (N.L.I. Bartlett maps, MS 2656/5).

10. A proclamation by James I pardoning *Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone, and restoring his dignity (London, 1603).

Document 1

A map by David Quinn, 'The physical and strategic basis of the autonomy of the North-West, 1460-1534' (Art Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland*, ii, Oxford, 1993, p. 620).

Description of Map

This map illustrates the regional complexity of the lordships which constituted Ulster's political structure in the sixteenth century. As the map shows, the major Gaelic Irish lords, the O'Neills of Tír Eoghain and the O'Donnells of Tír Conaill, had acquired sufficient power and control over their own territories to contemplate moves into adjoining lordships. Exerting influence outside their borders frequently brought both the O'Neill and O'Donnell chieftains into conflict with neighbouring sub-chieftains and with the English in their outposts in Connaught and along the northern frontiers of the Pale. Rivalry between the O'Neill and the O'Donnell lordships continued in this period and was focused on the lands adjoining the Foyle valley and on the Inishowen peninsula. Crossing the Foyle estuary *Shane O'Neill made repeated raids into O'Donnell lands. In 1561 he succeeded in capturing the lord of Tír Conaill, Calvach O'Donnell. The final resolution of this regional dispute between the two great Gaelic lordships was later reflected in the modern boundaries separating counties Donegal and Tyrone. The O'Neills, however, also had to contend with numerous family septs or branches. The O'Neills of Clondeboye (*Clonn Aodha Buidhe*) located to the west of Tír Eoghain in what is now the northern part of County Down formed an independent and powerful chieftainship in this period. Also competing for influence in Ulster were the Scottish *gallowglass families of the MacSweenys to the north of Tír Conaill and the Lords of the Isles, the MacDonnells, located in the Glens of Antrim.

Document Questions

Description and Comprehension

What is meant by the term 'O'Neill hegemony'?

Identify the extent of the O'Neill lordship.

What natural boundaries exist around the Lordship of Tír Eoghain?

Where are the principal lines of attack emanating from the Gaelic lordships directed?

Interpretation and Criticism

List three things the map tells you which you think are important for the study of the lordship of Tír Eoghain in the Elizabethan period.

Identify the following *urraght or client lords of the O'Neills: O'Hanlons, MacMahons, Maguires, O'Cahans. [Note that David Quinn has retained the Irish spelling of these family names.]

What influence did the O'Neills of Tír Eoghain exert over these client lords?

Wider Context

How does this map contribute to your knowledge of the influence of geography and topography on the crown's dealings with the lordship of Tír Eoghain?

What can visual texts (such as maps) illuminate that written sources cannot reveal?

Has the map raised any questions to which you would like answers?

Document 2

An extract from a report by the archbishop of Cashel, *Meiler Magrath, reflecting on the state of Ireland, and the means to increase the revenues, amend the government, and withstand Spanish practices, 30 May 1592 (*Calendar of State Papers, Ireland*, 63/164 no. 47, pp 497-502).

Description of Document

This is an extract from a long report written in 1592 by the controversial Anglican archbishop of Cashel, *Meiler Magrath. Of Gaelic-Irish and Ulster ancestry, Magrath was formerly a Franciscan friar and was appointed by the papacy to the bishopric of Down and Connor before submitting to Queen Elizabeth's spiritual supremacy. Having renounced his Catholicism, Magrath was appointed archbishop by the crown. He was a well-versed commentator on Gaelic society and was an important intermediary between the Gaelic world and the English government. Magrath provides an astute analysis, laced with a political subtext, of the different septs of the O'Neills inhabiting Tír Eoghain. His extract also describes the ancient ceremony of inauguration of 'the O'Neill' which took place at *Tullaghoge. (See Richard Bartlett's map, Document 9).

Edited Transcript of Document

First it is to be noted that in O'Neills' country named Tyrone are three principal families ... viz., [*Turlough] O'Neill with his line, named the generation or sept of Art Óge who heretofore have not had the principal name nor government in their hands by many descents till this [Turlough Luineach] O'Neill, which was admitted to the same, rather by strength and policy, than by the right course according to the observations and customs of that country.

The second is the generation of Conn Bacach O'Neill, which lineage is now divided into two principal branches, viz., the *earl of Tyrone [*Hugh O'Neill], with his brethren Cornemock [Cormac] and Arthur [Art], and the many sons of *Shane O'Neill viz., Henry [Enri] Con, Arthur [Art], Edmund [Emann] Brian, and Turlough [Toirdhealbhach], which Shane was O'Neill before this Turlough [Luineach], who is now O'Neill ...

Yet there is the third branch viz., Turlough Brasselagh [Breasalach], uncle to the late *Shane O'Neill ... The said *Hugh O'Neill [Earl of Tyrone] is thought by the Irishry to have his nomination and authority rather by English government than by any right to the principality after the manner of that country ...

Besides the said three generations and lines there are many in that country of that name, who had their own proper lands and territories severally to themselves, which are daily so oppressed and put down by each of the aforesaid principal families, that every one of these will be glad to yield yearly revenue to Her Majesty, by whom they may be defended from the cruel exactions of the aforesaid families ...

O'Cahan also by custom has power to name and confirm out of the principal house, O'Neill, when O'Neill is dead, in such sort that if any will take upon him to be O'Neill, being not named or chosen by O'Cahan, he is not to be obeyed nor taken for

O'Neill ... And seeing that the name of O'Neill is abolished by Parliament, it were not unmet [unjustified] that O'Cahan should be restrained from henceforth or ever to call or appoint any of that name. For if any should undertake the name of O'Neill not appointed by O'Cahan, the people will think themselves not bound in conscience to obey him.

Document Questions

Description and Comprehension

What class of document is this?

When was it written?

For what purpose was it written?

Identify the different O'Neills mentioned in Magrath's extract. Use the genealogical table in document 3 to aid you. Remember that Magrath has anglicised many of the names. [Paragraph, First it is to be noted... and The second generation...]

Why does Magrath suggest in the first paragraph that Turlough Luineach's rule represented a break with tradition? [Paragraph, First it is to be noted...]

What does he say about Hugh O'Neill's [earl of Tyrone's] standing amongst his own people? [Paragraph, Yet there is a third...]

Interpretation and Criticism

How well informed as to the internal structure of the O'Neill lordship does Magrath appear to be?

Based on the information provided in this source, examine the struggle for supremacy within the lordship of Tír Eoghain in the early 1590s?

Did Magrath have any advice for government on how to deal with the O'Neill lordship?

What opinions or interests might have influenced what Magrath said about the O'Neills?

Wider Context and Comparison

How has this source added to your knowledge of the O'Neills of Tír Eoghain in the sixteenth century?

Using the information in this source and the visual evidence in Document 9, describe the ceremony of inauguration of 'the O'Neill.' What role is played by the O'Neill's *urraght? What do you think would happen if someone attempted to name himself 'The O'Neill' without the approval of the principal urraght, the O'Cahans?

Document 3

A genealogical table showing the principal O'Neills of Tír Eoghain in the sixteenth century, adapted from Hiram Morgan, *Tyrone's rebellion: the outbreak of the nine years war in Tudor Ireland* (Dublin, 1993), pp 86-87.

Description of Document

The O'Neills of Tír Eoghain could justifiably claim that they had history on their side as they could trace their dynastic line back to Niall Noígiallach ('Niall of the Nine Hostages') who was reputed to have flourished in the early fifth century. In Gaelic Irish lordships the chosen method of succession to guarantee the continuance of such a pedigree was a system referred to by English writers as tanistry. It was the custom for leading members of the sept or family within the lordship to nominate a successor who would automatically gain the rights and lands attached to the office of chief or king. In theory, succession was confined to the eldest and worthiest of the descendants of the chief but in practice it fell to those who had the best command of resources and military might (whether inside or outside the lordship) to seize their opportunity to gain the title. In order to establish some stability and gain a foothold in native lordships, the English attempted to introduce the feudal system of primogeniture which confined the right of inheritance to the eldest son. The lordship of Tyrone was an independent Gaelic Irish entity but had, with the creation of an earldom in 1542, been recognised by the English as coming under their common law and customs. The clash of these two contrasting systems resulted in innumerable difficulties and, on occasion, much bloodshed in Tír Eoghain. *Shane O'Neill asserted his right to the title of inaugurated lord as the legitimate successor to the chief and murdered the crown's appointed successor Matthew Kelly. In turn Matthew's son, *Hugh O'Neill, used his right under English law to claim the lordship as the 2nd earl of Tyrone.

Document Questions

Description and Comprehension

How many of the O'Neills in the table were inaugurated chief?

How many had English titles?

Interpretation and Criticism

Why did the crown's decision to nominate Matthew rather than Shane O'Neill as Conn Bacach's successor to the Earldom of Tyrone ignite so much conflict?

Why did Turlough Luineach O'Neill's assumption of the title of lord represent a break with traditional succession practices?

How legitimate was Hugh O'Neill's claim to succession under the Gaelic system?

What does this document reveal about the importance of pedigree for the Gaelic Irish?

Wider Context and Comparison

What were the underlying reasons for the introduction by the English of primogeniture into Gaelic lordships?

Does this source complement or conflict with the evidence provided by Meiler Magrath in his contemporary account of the O'Neills (Document 2)?

Bearing in mind what you have read in other sources and in your textbook, how has this document contributed to your knowledge of the persons to which it refers?

Document 4

An extract from the annals describing *Shane O'Neill's defeat at the battle of Farsetmore (8 May 1567) and his death at the hands of the MacDonnells (John O'Donovan (ed.), *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland, by the Four Masters*, v, 3rd ed., 1990).

Description of Document

Having murdered his father's illegitimate son, Matthew Kelly, whom the crown had nominated as the earl of Tyrone, *Shane O'Neill embarked upon a career which would bring him into conflict with the English and ignite years of strife in the O'Neill lordship. In 1567 Shane set his sights upon re-establishing a firm foothold in the neighbouring O'Donnell lordship of Tír Conaill. This extract recounts how O'Neill's force of nearly 2,000 men crossed the great ford on the tidal section of Lough Swilly called *Fearsad-Suilighe* (Farsetmore). Hugh O'Donnell rallied his own forces and for once the normally fractious clans of his lordship came to his aid. The extract provides graphic detail on the manner of Shane's defeat in the ensuing battle and his death at the hands of his enemies, the Scottish *gallowglass family of the MacDonnells whom he had defeated at the battle of Glenshesk in 1565. Later the English had Shane's body exhumed; they decapitated it and sent the head to Dublin Castle to be put on display. Shane's death may have appeared to be an act of revenge at the hands of the Scots but his successive military adventures and his policy of dealing with the English had weakened his standing among the Irish. The Annals of the Four Masters (*Annál Ríoghachta Íreann*) are not a contemporary source for the events of Shane's death. They are a seventeenth century (1632-36) collection, principally compiled by an Irish Franciscan friar, Micheál Ó Cléirigh and three collaborators, of older texts and chronicles. They were later translated and edited by the nineteenth-century scholar, John O'Donovan.

Edited Extract of Document

THE AGE OF CHRIST, 1567

The age of Christ, one thousand five hundred sixty seven

[Shane] O'Neill mustered a very numerous army, to march into Tirconnell against [Hugh] O'Donnell to plunder and ravage the country, as he had done some time before, when O'Donnell (Manus) was not able to govern or defend his principality or country, in consequence of his own infirmity and ill health, and the strife and contention of his sons.

As they were waiting, they received no notice of anything, until, at break of day, they perceived a body of forces rapidly advancing towards them in hosts and squadrons; [and] without halting or delaying, they had crossed the *Fearsad*, for the tide was out at the time. When O'Donnell perceived this, he instantly drew up his little army in order and array, and dispatched a troop of cavalry, under the command of the son of O'Donnell (Hugh, the son of Hugh) to engage the van of the enemy ... When O'Neill perceived them moving directly towards him, he became disturbed in spirit, and he said: 'It is very wonderful and amazing to me that those people should not find it easier to make full concessions to us and submit to our awards, than thus come forward to us to be immediately slaughtered and destroyed.'

...They raised the battle cry aloud, and their united shouting, when rushing together, was sufficient to strike with dismay and turn to flight the feeble and unwarlike. They proceeded and continued to strike, mangle, slaughter, and cut down one another for a long time ... The Kinel-Owen [O'Neills] eagerly plunged into the swollen sea, and no one would wait for a brother or a relation, although it was no escape from danger or peril for them to have reached the dark, deep ocean estuary which was before them ...

for a countless number of them was drowned in the deep full tide ... In short the total number of O'Neill's army that were slain and drowned in battle was thirteen hundred; some books [however] state that O'Neill's loss in this battle was upwards of three thousand men. As for O'Neill, he escaped from this battle; but he would rather that he had not, for his reason and senses became deranged after it ...

After O'Neill had arrived in Tyrone he did not take ease, nor did he enjoy sleep, until he had sent messengers to Scotland, to invite James MacDonnell [to come to his assistance]. It was an omen of the destruction of [his] life, and the cause of his death, that he should invite to his assistance the sons of the man who had fallen by himself sometime before [at Glenshesk]. They came hastily with a great marine fleet, and landed at *Bun-abhann-Duine* [now Cushendun], in Ulster, where they pitched their rich, many-tented camp. As soon as O'Neill heard of the arrival of that great host, he did not consider his enmity towards them; he went under the protection of that fierce and vindictive host without surety or security, in order that [by their assistance] he might be able to wreak his vengeance upon the Kinel-Connell [O'Donnells]. And the reception he got from them, after having been for some time in their company (after having shewn [the causes of] their enmity and animosity towards him), was to mangle him nimbly, and put him unsparingly to the sword, and bereave him of life [so that they left him dead without a soul]. Grievous to the race of O'Neill, son of Niall, was the death of him who was there slain, for Shane had been their Conchobhar in provincial dignity, their Lugh Longhanded, in heroism ...

Document Questions

Description and Comprehension

What class of document is this?

When was it written?

For what purpose was it written?

Are there people or events with which you are unfamiliar mentioned in the document?

What action did Hugh O'Donnell take when Shane crossed the ford at Farsetmore? [Paragraph, [Shane] O'Neill mustered a ...]

How did the battle of Farsetmore end? [Paragraph, They raised the battle cry aloud ...]

What were the actual circumstances of Shane's death? [Paragraph, After O'Neill had arrived...]

Interpretation and Criticism

Was the account written by an eyewitness or by somebody informed by an eyewitness?

How large a lapse of time was there between the events described in the document and the actual written account provided here?

How might any lapse of time between the occurrence of the event and the actual writing of an account affect the reliability of a source?

Wider Context

What information in this source gives you a better understanding of the reasons why Shane sought assistance from the Scots?

From your wider reading, why do you think Shane's career as chieftain of the O'Neills antagonised the English?

Why are the Annals particularly revealing as a source of evidence on the O'Neills?

Document 5

An extract from the memoir of *Sir Henry Sidney censuring *Turlough Luineach O'Neill for his assumption of the title 'the O'Neill' in 1567 (Ciaran Brady (ed.), *A viceroy's vindication, Sir Henry Sidney's memoir of service, 1556-78*, Cork, 2002, pp 54-55).

Description of Document

This is an extract from the memoir of Sir Henry Sidney which has been published as a primary source for the use of historians. Written nearly twenty years after the event (1583), Sidney wrote this memoir with a view to enhancing his reputation as an effective governor of Ireland. In the extract Sidney recalls a meeting with the Gaelic Irish nobility of Ulster near his camp beside the River Blackwater in 1567. In the immediate aftermath of the death of *Shane O'Neill, Sidney delivers a stern rebuke to *Turlough Luineach O'Neill for his usurpation of the title 'the O'Neill.' Of most interest to the historian is the reference made by Sidney to the young baron of Dungannon, *Hugh O'Neill, whom he claims spent his youth in his care where he was presumably exposed to English customs. Although it is questionable whether O'Neill was actually brought up in England, there is little doubt that he spent his childhood amongst English rather than native Irish lords.

Edited Transcript of Document

To my camp there came *Turlough Lunieach O'Neill who had been in Shane's life tanist of Tyrone, and yet by me made in these wars his enemy. He was by the people of that country chose O'Neill, which title in truth he accepted, being given him with the brutish ceremonies incident to the same. There came with him the principallest of all his surname, and I had with me the young baron of Dungannon [Hugh O'Neill], Shane eldest brother's son, whom I had bred in my house from a little boy, then very poor of goods, and feebly friended. I then (in the presence and hearing of all that were in my camp, as well of them who came with me, as those that came with him, and all other potentates and landlords of Ulster, rebuked him sharply for taking upon the title of O'Neill before Her Majesty's pleasure were known, affirming unto him that I would not confirm the same, but would write to Her Highness to nobilitate him, with title and degree of higher honour and dignity which he seemed reverently to accept.

I then set down in form the articles briefly ... That he [Turlough] should not take upon him the name of O'Neill till Her Majesty's pleasure were known; that he should disclaim any superiority, rent or service taken before by Shane, or any of his ancestors, over or of any of those landlords which were commonly termed his *urraghts, the which are before recited, and that he should cease to exact other rent or service, or other buying (as they call it there) of the country called the *Route, or MacQuillan's country...

Then I descended with him into the consideration of his own country of Tyrone, meaning indeed the dissipation of the same; and appointed unto him all the lands beneath or by the north the Blackwater, with the service of O'Kane, MacCann, O'Donnelly, O'Quinn and two other of like rank; and to bear the title of principal of his surname. I appointed unto Turlough Brasselagh the lands called Clanbrasil ...

Then allotted I to Hugh, baron of Dungannon, and of right ought to be Earl of Tyrone, all the lands called the O'Neill's lands, the very first and most ancient possession of the O'Neills, lying above and by south of the Blackwater. I exempted him from any exaction upon any of the lands of the church of Armagh, or any member of the same; to all which covenants he agreed, to the great rejoicing and contentment of all the proprietors of that province. Saving some particular and peculiar followers of his own, who much repined that the great and regal estate of the O'Neill (as they deemed it) should be so broken and dismembered.

Document Questions

Description and Comprehension

What class of document is this?

When was it written?

For what purpose was it written?

Are there any people mentioned in the document with whom you are unfamiliar?

Why does Sidney rebuke Turlough Luineach O'Neill for the taking of the title 'the O'Neill'? [Paragraph, To my there came...]

What does Sidney say about Hugh O'Neill's early life? [Line, 'I had with me the young baron of Dungannon...]

How does Sidney propose to deal with Hugh O'Neill? [Line, Then I allotted to Hugh, baron of Dungannon...]

Interpretation and Criticism

Did Sidney produce his memoirs for the public at large?

Did Sidney have any interests which may have influenced what he said about the O'Neills?

Are there any phrases in the extract that would make you believe that Sidney was self-serving in writing his memoirs?

Wider Context and Comparison

Why is this source particularly revealing as evidence of Turlough Luineach O'Neill's relationship with the crown. Was he a friend or foe of the English interest in Ireland?

Why does Sidney refer to Hugh O'Neill as 'of right the earl of Tyrone'? Compare what Sidney says about Hugh O'Neill with Meiler Magrath's account of the different septes of the O'Neills (Document 2). In what way are their accounts comparable?

Are there any questions raised by this document to which you would like answers?

Document 6

A woodcut by *John Derricke of the submission of *Turlough Luineach O'Neill to Sir Henry Sidney, [?August 1577] (*The Image of Ireland, with a discourse of Woodkerne*, London, 1581).

Plate XII The submission of *Turlough Luineach O'Neill to *Sir Henry Sidney.

Description of Woodcut

This engraving comes from a collection which provides the best known visual representation of contemporary life in early modern Ireland. Considering that it was *John Derricke's intention to denigrate the cause of the Gaelic Irish lords it would be unwise to view the engravings as a wholly accurate and impartial visual record of sixteenth-century Ireland. This particular example, however, illustrates the submission of *Turlough Luineach O'Neill to *Sir Henry Sidney. We do not know for certain if Derricke ever visited Ireland but it can be surmised from the accuracy of detail in his *Image* that he probably spent some time in the country in Sidney's service. It can also only be assumed that Derricke was present at one of Sidney's meetings with Turlough Luineach but the exact date of the meeting remains open to question. However, Sidney's encounter with O'Neill in August 1577 is the most likely occasion depicted by Derricke in this engraving. From the elaborate tented pavilions it is clear that this was no casual meeting. In the foreground, Turlough and his sub-chiefs or uirri kneel in submission to Sidney who receives them sitting in his tent. In the background a second tableau is represented with Sidney, accompanied by his retinue, coming forward to embrace O'Neill.

The lines of verse read

*When flickering fame had filed the ears of marshal men of might,
With rare report of Sydney's praise (that honourable Knight);
And though the brute in Irish soil did well confirm the same,
As who could say in England's claim of Justice there he came;
And to maintain the sacred right of such a Virgin Queen,
For seeking of her Subjects wealth, whose like hath never been,
The great O'Neill, to strike the stroke, in sealing up the same,
And to prepare this noble Knight, a way to greater fame,
Amazed with such strange reports, and of his own accord
Came in, prostrating him before the presence of this Lord,
With humble suit for Princes grace and mercy to obtain,
With like request upon the same, his friendship to attain;
Who promise then by pledge of life, and virtue of his hand,
For ever to her noble grace, a subject true to stand,
And to defend in each respect, her honour and her name,
Against all those that durst deface the glory of the same,
Which things with other actions redound unto fame,
Of good *Sir Henry Sydney, Knight, so called by his name.
Loe where befits in honours seat, most comely to be scene,
As worthy is to represent, the person of a Queen.*

Document Questions

Description and Comprehension

Describe in detail each feature of the woodcut.

Describe the appearance of O'Neill's subordinate chiefs.

How does the depiction of O'Neill's followers differ from that of Sidney's assembled knights?

How is Turlough Luineach O'Neill depicted?

Interpretation and Criticism

To what event is the woodcut referring?

What do you know about the event?

Do you think Derricke was an eye-witness to the event depicted?

How did Derricke's opinions affect the authenticity of the engravings he created?

Which words or phrases in the verse accompanying the woodcut appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?

What evidence in the woodcut and caption helps you understand why it was created?

How effective is this woodcut in achieving its purpose?

Wider Context and Comparison

Derricke, while concerned with glorifying the deputyship of Sidney, also depicted the native Irish as a wild and untrustworthy people. What is his message in this particular engraving?

Compare Derricke's visual record of Sidney's meeting with O'Neill with the written account supplied by Sidney in his memoir (Document 5). Do you think the two sources are referring to the same event? Explain.

How has this woodcut changed your interpretation of the event, issue or persons to which it refers?

Document 7

‘A note of sundry causes and articles wherewith the *earl of Tyrone is aggrieved,’ 14 March 1594 (J.J. Brewer & William Bullen (eds), *Calendar of Carew Manuscripts*, London, 1869, iii, [137], p. 87).

Description of Document

This document is an edited summary of the grievances presented by *Hugh O’Neill at a meeting with English commissioners in Dundalk in March 1594. Describing the rabid intrigues against him, the articles in the document refer to O’Neill’s personal antipathy towards *Sir William Fitzwilliam and *Marshal Henry Bagenal, accusing them of plotting his downfall. Having receiving a commission to deal with the rebels and restore order in the territory, O’Neill had been actively involved in 1593 in the crown campaign to suppress the rebel lord of Fermanagh, Hugh Maguire. This would not have been an easy course of action for O’Neill as the Maguire lordship was strategically located to the south of his own and, traditionally, the Maguires had looked to the O’Neills for support against English incursions. In these articles O’Neill expresses his anger that his early record of loyal service has not been fully appreciated. Acting, as he maintains, in what he believed to be good faith to further the cause of English reform in Ulster, O’Neill believes that he has been spurned and that his rivals have taken the lion’s share of the rewards.

Edited Transcript of Document

‘A note of sundry causes and articles wherewith the *earl of Tyrone is grieved.’

- (1) The Marshal (Sir Henry Bagenal) having possessed the now *Lord Deputy (Sir William Fitzwilliam) with many bribes in plate and great sums of money wrested from the inhabitants under his rule, hath, in June last, by false accusations of treason sought the Earl’s life ...
- (2) When the Earl brought into subjection the Upper Clandeboye ... Kilitagh, Kilwarlyn, MacCartan’s country, O’Hanlon’s country, and all McMahan’s country, such as appertained to the Earl were removed, and base and servile fellows of the Marshal’s faction placed in their stead.
- (3) All gentlemen bearing affection towards the Earl are put from having any place of credit or government and those that have served under them, either as officers soldiers, or servants, are preferred before them; so that, though the Earl could digest the villainy of Thomas Henshawe, now seneschal of Co. Monaghan, William Mote, vice-constable of the fort, and many more (who, being instruments of the Marshal, do nothing else than seek to cut the Earl’s throat) ...
- (4) The Earl’s foster brothers, Captain Richard and Henry Hovendon, having the leading of 200 footmen upon the Earl’s charges, overthrew 500 or 600 Spaniards in Tirconnell, and brought the best of them to the Earl, whom he sent to the now Lord Deputy; but neither they nor the Earl had any recompence for that service ...

- (5) In the late service against Maguire it was promised to the Earl that he should be in commission and he promised the Lord Chancellor [Adam Loftus] that he would come with the Marshal in that service ... that service cost him near 3,000l sterling, for which and the loss of his blood he had no thanks, but was called traitor by the Lord Deputy at his own table...
- (6) The Earl and the Marshal encamping in Fermanagh, the Marshal caused a false alarm to be suddenly raised in his camp, in hope to find him unwatchful.
- (7) When the Earl requested but 200 soldiers to enable him to go upon the borders of Tirconnell *to take a prey, the Marshal would let him have only about 60 or 80 men, the refuse of several companies...
- (8) After the overthrow given at Belleek [County Fermanagh] by the earl's means, wherein he himself was sore hurt, the Earl wrote to the Lord Deputy of the manner of the service and showed the letter to the Marshal, at whose request he added that both himself and the Marshal did kill [their] enemies with their own hands, though there was no eyewitness of the Marshal's killing any man; but the Marshal in his letter made no mention of the Earl according to his promise.

Document Questions

Description and Comprehension

What class of document is this?

When was it written?

For what purpose was it written?

Are there any people or events mentioned in the document with which you are unfamiliar?

What underlies O'Neill's grievances in the first three articles?

How does he describe his own conduct and that of his relations during the Armada crisis? Why does he feel aggrieved in this instance? [Article 4]

What does he say about his experiences during and subsequent to the campaign against Maguire? [Articles 5,6 and 8]

Interpretation and Criticism

How did O'Neill come by the information supplied in this document?

What are the main points of contention between O'Neill and the English at this time?

Does O'Neill's account of events convince you? Did he have reasons to be honest or dishonest?

Wider Context

To what extent does this document shed light on the underlying attitude of English officials toward O'Neill?

How does the document contribute to your understanding of O'Neill's motives for rebellion against English influence in Ulster?

Does this document support or contradict your textbook's interpretation of Hugh O'Neill's relationship with the English in the 1590s?

Document 8

An extract from a letter 'from an Irish soldier in the earl of Tyrone's camp dated tertio [3] Januarii, 1600' sent to Sir Geoffrey Fenton reflecting on O'Neill's strategy (*Calendar of State Papers, Ireland*, 63/207 part 1, no. 118/3, pp 389-90).

Description of Document

This is an extract from a letter supposedly written by a soldier with access to *Hugh O'Neill's camp. The soldier, who had become a spy for the English, passed on intelligence to one of the commissioners for the affairs of Ulster, Sir Geoffrey Fenton. The soldier refers to the earl of Tyrone's intention to attack the Pale in force and to pressurise the garrisons at Newry and Dundalk into submission. The letter contains valuable information on how the Gaelic leaders organised their armies during the conflict. By creating *buannacht through the *cessing of his lands, Tyrone created a formidable and much feared following of loyal soldiers capable of defeating Elizabeth's professional army. The letter also describes how the constant fighting not only kept vast armies on the move in Ulster but also turned farmers into *creaghts or nomadic herdsmen who under the leadership of their local lords drove their cattle out of war-ravaged lands. Finally, the soldier mentions that O'Neill has assigned various tasks to his brother Cormac, his half-brother Tirlough Mac Henry, and other senior lieutenants or *urraghts.

Edited Transcript of Document

There was some disagreement between *Tyrone and O'Donnell at their meeting at Strabane, but they are agreed again and have sworn, the one to other, to invade the English Pale, and, for the better surety of the matter, they have delivered four *pledges a piece, the one to the other. They will be ready to set forward within few days, and do but tarry for some of their army that cometh farthest off. Tyrone hath this week *cessed in his country 2,500 *bonnaughts more than he had before, and that force shall be placed in two forts to attend the Newry, where he meaneth to fortify upon the river, and to take the river from them. He hath sent to a churchman belonging to himself, that borders upon the Newry, to leave his dwelling by a certain day, otherwise his goods to be lawful booty to his bonnaughts. He hath likewise commanded his friends dwelling in Coole and Ballyscanlan [near Dundalk] to come away with their *creaghts, lest they should serve for the relieving of the garrison of Dundalk, and so in a sort he meaneth to lay siege to both those garrisons of the Newry and Dundalk at one instant. He hath appointed McMahan, Cormack, Tirlogh Mc Henry, and O'Reilly to invade Delvin, and himself with James McSorley, Magennis, and O'Hanlan, to keep a standing camp for seconding of these two businesses, the invasion and the siege. O'Donnell, Maguire, and McWilliam, are to attend Connaught, and Brian McArt with the woodmen, and Shane McBrian, the garrison of Knockfergus. There are soldiers running away from the garrison of Dundalk and other places of the borders every day, and Tyrone entertaineth them, and dealeth liberally with them, which will be a means to entice many more, if you look not well to it.

Document Questions

Description and Comprehension

What class of document is this?

When was it written?

In what circumstances was it written?

Are there any terms or people in the document with which you are unfamiliar?

What is said in the document about O'Neill's strategy?

What does the document say are his immediate objectives?

Why does he provide relief for soldiers deserting the garrison at Dundalk?

Interpretation and Criticism

How would the cess for *buannacht and the creation of *creaghts affect day-to-day life for the ordinary inhabitants of O'Neill's lordship?

Do O'Neill's goals, as stated in this document, seem realistic?

What factors should be taken into account in your assessment of the reliability of this document?

Wider Context and Comparison

To what extent does this document shed light on your interpretation of the course of O'Neill's rebellion?

What does the document tell you about the threat O'Neill posed to the English during the Nine Years War?

What other sources could be used to fill in the gaps in the evidence in this document?

Document 9

A map by Richard Bartlett of Dungannon, *Tullaghoge and a crannog, in c. 1602 (N.L.I. Bartlett maps, MS 2656/5).

Description of Map

Richard Bartlett was an official English surveyor and cartographer. He accompanied *Lord Mountjoy during the military expeditions against *Hugh O'Neill in Ulster. He compiled ordinary maps of various parts of the province for military and administrative purposes. In addition, he produced a number of decorative 'bird's-eye' views of important sites for presentation to some unknown dignitary. Some of the bird's-eye views, including this example, were not completed. This was probably because Bartlett was captured and beheaded by the inhabitants of Tír Conaill. Bartlett

was a brilliant artist and cartographer and his maps contain as much symbolic meaning as accurate representations of the Irish countryside. Like most of Bartlett's maps, the one reproduced here is a 'birds-eye' plan. The ruined Dungannon Castle is depicted as surrounded by a moat. The Saint George's Cross indicates that it is once again under English control. The view of *Tullaghoge, the traditional hill-top site of the inauguration of 'the O'Neill,' features a detail of the stone inauguration chair. The rare depiction of an English assault on a crannog, then a common form of habitation in Ulster, recalls an incident in Mountjoy's campaign, possibly the assault on the crannog on Lough Roughan. Although Bartlett has left all the cartouches blank and the illustration itself is untitled, we can identify the places as they mark Mountjoy's progress across Ulster. Dungannon was captured in June 1602, *Tullaghoge was taken in September of the same year; the crannog on Lough Roughan was captured some time later. Mountjoy subsequently broke up the stone chair on which the O'Neills were inaugurated.

Document Questions

Description and Comprehension

What exactly do you see in the map?

Describe the locations depicted in the foreground and background.

Is the map drawn realistically?

Consider the visual components of the map, what does each symbolize for, a) the O'Neills and, b) the English forces?

Identify three unfinished features of the map.

Interpretation and Criticism

To what events is the map referring?

What do you already know about the events?

Name three people for whom the 'birds-eye' views might have been intended. Was Bartlett a neutral party, or did he have opinions or interests that might have influenced what he recorded?

Is the desired message of the map apparent?

What was Bartlett attempting to say about the Gaelic Irish in his maps?

Wider Context

Why do you think Bartlett was killed?

Give two arguments justifying the killing and two contrary arguments.

Why did Lord Mountjoy destroy the stone chair at Tullaghoge? Was its destruction necessary?

Has the map changed your interpretation of the events to which it refers?

Document 10

A proclamation by James I pardoning the *earl of Tyrone and restoring his dignity (London, 1603).

Description of Document

After the calamitous defeat suffered by the Irish at Kinsale, *Mountjoy ruthlessly harried *O'Neill and the confederates. Finding little respite even in their Ulster strongholds, one by one O'Neill's chief supporters went into hiding or deserted him and sought an accommodation with the English. In 1603 the earl, knowing that all hope of immediate Spanish intervention and outright victory was lost, submitted to Mountjoy on 23 June. Having spent the then colossal sum of £1,924,000 between the summer of 1594 and the outbreak of Tyrone's rebellion, the government was grateful for an opportunity to mediate a compromise with the Irish; the subsequent treaty of Mellifont (30-31 March 1603) left O'Neill in a relatively favourable position. For the price of acknowledging the sovereignty of the crown and giving up the use of the O'Neill title, he received a fulsome royal pardon, avoided confiscation and retained some of the traditional dues and rights of his lordship. This proclamation, issued by Elizabeth's Scottish successor, James I, refers to O'Neill's testimonies of obedience

and loyalty during a remarkable visit to the royal court in 1603 and marks his reestablishment as a feudal lord within the English system of governance.

Edited Transcript of Document

By the King

Although the offences committed against the Queen our sister deceased, and the honour of her estate by the Earle of Tyrone, were such as all princes ought to be very sensible of, and not by the impunity of offenders in so high a nature, give way to others to attempt the like: yet because we have understood that before the death of the Queen, the said Earle having expressed and made known to her, many tokens of an unfeigned repentance, had so far moved her therewith, as she had given power to the L. Mountjoy her Deputy, and now our Lieutenant of that Kingdome, to receive him to mercy if he should seek it, which her purpose, we cannot but commend, as being derived from the virtue of Clemency, of no less ornament to princely dignity than is the rigor of Justice: And for that said Earle hath not only done none offence against us since our coming to this Crown, but also, as we are certainly informed by our Lieutenant, hath both abandoned his adherence to all foreign Princes, and offered himself in his own person to doe service upon any other rebels within the Realm of Ireland; We could not think him worthy of less favour at Our hands, then he had obtained at hers, against whom his faults were committed. And therefore he being now admitted by our Lord Lieutenant, by virtue of the power first given by the Queen, and since confirmed by Us, into his State and condition of a good subject, and in the rank and dignity of and Earle, And being also come over into this Realm to cast himself at our feet, and to testify by his own words, his unfeigned sorrow of his former Offences, and earnest desire of our mercy and favour; Wee have thought good to signify to all men by these presents, that we have received him into Grace and favour, and do acknowledge him our Subject, and a noble man of such rank and place as in that our Realm of Ireland he is: And that therefore if any man shall by words, or deed, abuse the said Earle of Tyrone, or misbehave himself towards him, and not yield him such respect and bface, as belonged to a person of his sort received into our favour and good opinion, We shall esteem it an offence, deserving such punishment, as the contempt of our pleasure to expressly signified doeth deserve.

Document Questions

Comprehension

What class of document is this?

When was it written?

In what circumstances was it written?

How are O'Neill's offences against Queen Elizabeth described in this document? [Line, Although the offences committed...]

How has he since demonstrated his loyalty to the crown? [Line, Yet because we have understood...]

Is the crown's support for O'Neill's restoration to the title of earl unambiguous? Are there any conditions placed upon his enjoyment of the rank of nobleman? [Line, And therefore he being now...]

Interpretation and Criticism

Was the document written for personal use or for the public at large?

To what extent does this document serve to consolidate O'Neill's position in his own lordship?

Do the terms of this document suggest that O'Neill had unconditionally surrendered in 1603?

Wider Context and Comparison

Overall, how has this document added to your knowledge of the circumstances surrounding O'Neill's submission to royal authority in 1603?

O'Neill was formerly denigrated by the English as a deceitful, disloyal lord who had shown no gratitude for the favour and honours bestowed upon him. Does this document suggest that in the aftermath of the Nine Years War he had been fully rehabilitated as a loyal and obedient subject?

Formulate a question about O'Neill that is left unanswered by this source.