

55 • Colonial Cartography in a European Setting: The Case of Tudor Ireland

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Many continental European mapmakers of the sixteenth century found it expedient to enclose what they called the “British Isles” within a single border, as Ptolemy was reputed to have done. When English contemporaries adopted the same format, it was more in observance of international custom than to express their own (not yet very vigorous) colonial ambitions.¹ There is admittedly much to be seen on sixteenth-century maps of Ireland that a modern historian can recognize as essentially colonial in character and origin, but a Tudor Englishman was more likely to see Ireland as a law unto itself than as any kind of political stereotype; and if he was a cartographer he would probably choose to wrestle with its peculiarities on a separate sheet. They were certainly unlike the parameters he was familiar with at home. In the first place, there was no ready-made Irish source deserving the respect paid to the Gough map of fourteenth-century England.² For the Anglo-Norman conquerors in Ireland, the institutions of feudalism had made a map-using bureaucracy superfluous; then feudalism gave way to anarchy, and anarchy needs no maps. Meanwhile the native Irish for their part had always known their homeland by personal acquaintance as well as they wished to know it; and outside the ambit of officialdom both communities had managed their agriculture without estate plans and their trade without charts throughout the Middle Ages. Medieval Ireland was a cartographic desert.³

Under the early Tudors the main hope for better maps of Ireland lay with the “old English” inhabitants of the region in and around Dublin known as the Pale. The Palesmen took a rueful interest in Ireland’s history and in certain aspects of its geography (though some of them imagined it to be shaped like an egg)⁴ but no Thomas Seckford, Humphrey Lhuyd, or John Norden seemed likely to emerge from their meager ranks. Small though it was, the country still proved more than a match for cartographic private enterprise. Its physiography and hydrography were frustratingly complicated. Its climate was unfriendly to field work. Its roads held little comfort for the traveler, and much of the north and west were without urban amenities. The native language was impenetrable to visitors, and many of those who spoke it were in a

state of rebellion. In such circumstances no foreign cartographer could be blamed for making do with second-hand information, however bad.

The best-known secondhand source was Ptolemy, whose fifty-odd Irish place-names and other inscriptions could still make a brave show on a small scale despite being incomprehensible to all sixteenth-century readers, including classical scholars and Irishmen.⁵ Among medieval authorities the most popular was Giraldus Cambrensis, who had accompanied the earliest Anglo-Norman conquerors to Ireland. Maps are lacking in most manuscripts of Giraldus’s “Topographia Hiberniae,” but several of his written geographical statements and mis-statements could have been expressed in diagrammatic form.⁶ Fi-

Abbreviations used in this chapter include: TNA for The National Archives of the UK, Kew.

1. The Tudor kings and queens of England were lords of Ireland, and, after 1541, kings or queens of Ireland. They governed the country, or attempted to do so, through the medium of an executive, judiciary, and legislature based in Dublin.

2. For the influence of the Gough map on sixteenth-century cartographers, see Sarah Tyacke and John Huddy, *Christopher Saxton and Tudor Map-Making* (London: British Library Reference Division, 1980), 7.

3. This also appears to be the opinion of P. D. A. Harvey in *The History of Topographical Maps: Symbols, Pictures and Surveys* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), 86.

4. Edmund Campion, *A Historie of Ireland Written in the Yeare 1571*, reprinted in *Ancient Irish Histories: The Works of Spencer, Campion, Hammer, and Marleburrough*, 2 vols., ed. James Ware (Dublin: Hibernia Press, 1809), 1:1.

5. Goddard H. Orpen, “Ptolemy’s Map of Ireland,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 24 (1894): 115–28, and Eoin MacNeill, “Ireland According to Ptolemy and Other Non-Irish Authorities,” *New Ireland Review* 26 (1906): 6–15. Hardly any of Ptolemy’s names are recognizable in modern Irish geographical nomenclature.

6. Certain manuscripts of Giraldus’s “Topographia” include a map of the British Isles (Giraldus Cambrensis, *Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland*, ed. and trans. A. Brian Scott and F. X. Martin [Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1978], lv). It is devoid of interior detail and was described by an eighteenth-century writer as “those two blots which Giraldus Cambrensis calls England and Ireland” (Gwyn Walters, “Richard Gough’s Map Collecting for the British Topography, 1780,” *Map Collector* 2 [1978]: 26–29, esp. 27). The manuscript of the “Topographia” in the National Library of Ireland, Dublin (MS. 700), includes a map of western Europe, reproduced in John J. O’Meara, trans., *The First Ver-*

nally, and spanning both late-medieval and postmedieval periods, there were the portolan charts, which collectively yield another 150 or so names of Irish ports and harbors and a fairly plausible coastline, but which left the hinterland empty and showed no sign of keeping up with sixteenth-century developments.⁷

THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND

To blanket the interior of Ireland with reliable information required the full power of a modern state. What brought that power into being was the English politicians' abandonment of feudal devolution. What brought it into use were the physical and mental barriers that separated Ireland from a foreign government fully conscious of its geographical ignorance and anxious to learn more. The one fact about Ireland that no administrator needed reminding of was its disunity. Outside the shrunken east-coast enclave of the Pale there were dozens of regional chiefs or "captains" (whether of Gaelic or Anglo-Norman origin no longer made much difference) who waged limited but almost continuous war against one another and against the English authorities. The government's program for these territorial interests was essentially opportunist, different policies alternating with no attempt at short-term consistency and very little long-term success. An Irish leader might be left to himself in return for keeping quiet. He might be brought into some kind of neofeudal relation with the crown. He might be made to accept a new pattern of local government comprising English-style sheriffs and shire towns. The more radical the policy, the harder it was to enforce without first deploying troops, establishing forts and garrisons, and even trying to anglicize country and people through an infusion of new settlers. By 1600 there were more genuine Englishmen in Ireland than in 1500, and most of the country had been divided into shires. But many of the Englishmen were soldiers, and many of the shires had no reality except on paper. The most that could be claimed after a hundred years of anxiety was that Ireland had escaped successful invasion from Catholic Europe, just as most of it had also escaped the attention of continental surveyors. Only in the opening years of the seventeenth century were the last citadels of native power brought precariously under government control.

The agents of English rule were a small official class in Dublin, headed by the lord deputy or lord lieutenant and later assisted by subordinate establishments for the provinces of Munster and Connaught. Much of our evidence for Tudor cartography in Ireland comes from the flow of information, explanation, and recrimination that kept these hard-pressed public servants in touch with the Privy Council in London. A modern reader of their correspon-

dence will find an obvious role for maps in assessing political and military danger, in planning diplomatic initiatives, in directing the movement of troops and the location of garrisons, in regulating the seizure and reallocation of confiscated land, and in justifying expenditure on fortifications and public works. But this does not mean that the relevant maps were always commissioned, let alone supplied. Throughout the period, the incidence of cartographic sophistication among the ruling class continued to depend on personal psychology and life history, and there were always administrators who preferred to get their geography from written descriptions or the narratives of official journeys. As experience accumulated, however, and especially after about 1540, there was a general intensification of map-consciousness—fastest, we may suspect, among Anglo-Irishmen with direct experience of Europe or the New World.

MAPS AND THE ADMINISTRATOR

Cartographically, as with the rest of their administration, Ireland's governors spent most of the sixteenth century living from hand to mouth. The results are abundantly represented in contemporary state papers. Yet even among men with no pretensions to geographical scholarship official maps were often seen to have a value beyond the immediate circumstances of their time. Many maps were therefore withdrawn from the archival mainstream to form separate collections—not necessarily improving their chances of preservation, and sometimes depriving future historians of important contextual knowledge.⁸

sion of the Topography of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1951); this map includes eight Irish names, which are only a fraction of the number mentioned in Giraldus's text. See Thomas O'Loughlin, "An Early Thirteenth-Century Map in Dublin: A Window into the World of Giraldus Cambrensis," *Imago Mundi* 51 (1999): 24–38.

7. Thomas Johnson Westropp, "Early Italian Maps of Ireland from 1300 to 1600, with Notes on Foreign Settlers and Trade," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 30, sec. C (1912–13): 361–428, and Michael C. Andrews, "The Map of Ireland: A.D. 1300–1700," *Proceedings and Reports of the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society for the Session 1922–23* (1924): 9–33, esp. 16–23.

8. The best guide to English maps of Ireland at this period is still Robert Dunlop, "Sixteenth-Century Maps of Ireland," *English Historical Review* 20 (1905): 309–37, which strictly observes its terminal date of 1600. For more detailed studies of individual collections, see p. 1672, notes 10 and 11. Two important collections have come to light since Dunlop wrote: the Bowlby maps in the National Library of Ireland, Dublin (p. 1682, note 44); and the Dartmouth maps in the National Maritime Museum, London (p. 1681, notes 38 and 41), of which the only printed description is *Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, Important Manuscript Maps, Autograph Letters, Historical Documents, Etc. . . . Which Will be Sold by Auction by Messrs. Sotheby and Co. on Monday, the 8th March, 1948, and Two Following Days* (London: Sotheby, 1948). The most striking deficiencies are the lack of any royal collection

The general impression from extant maps and references to maps is that on the Irish side few lord deputies took the cartographic initiative. They had no permanent staff of mapmakers indoors or outdoors. (The functions of the Irish surveyor-general, first appointed in 1548, were as yet almost entirely inquisitorial.)⁹ Nor did they generally keep their own copies of maps dispatched to London: presumably the deputy and his staff were content with the kind of “anecdotal” geography obtainable by word of mouth in Dublin.

The English map archives seem to have been equally neglected, at least as regards Ireland, until Sir William Cecil, later Lord Burghley, began his forty-year stint as Queen Elizabeth's most trusted counselor. Cecil was the only begetter of many an Irish map. From his own statements, from those of his cross-channel correspondents, and from his own personally annotated maps, a whole cartographic philosophy can be elicited—if philosophy is the right word for an attitude that any present-day historian must find disappointingly pragmatic and unpremeditated.¹⁰ Broadly speaking, an Irish map drawn for the queen's secretary was expected to show the location of some particular crisis (typically a rebellion or dynastic quarrel) and to be supplied without delay by an author personally familiar with that location. As Cecil soon came to realize, this emphasis on first-hand knowledge eliminated virtually the entire output of even the most famous continental map publishers. More importantly, and more regrettably, his insistence on quick results gave no guarantee that the next map would be any better than the last. It was doubtless for this reason that he often chose to hedge his bets by examining old as well as new maps of each recurrent trouble spot. In the same spirit of impartiality, he preferred not to anticipate the modern historian's view of “the” map as an organism that responds to successive geographical stimuli through the medium of editorial synthesis. Cecil's collection was the raw material for a finished product that he himself did nothing to bring into existence; and to judge from another set of Irish maps assembled by Sir George Carew,¹¹ Cecil was by no means the only empiricist among the government's map users.

IRELAND'S CARTOGRAPHIC PERSONALITY

Most of the cartographers represented in Cecil's and Carew's Irish collections were soldiers or other public employees who happened to be in Ireland when a demand for maps arose. Their abilities and antecedents varied widely. But to make a map at all they almost certainly had to be men of “new English” background, with no deep roots in Ireland and probably no desire to stay there; hence the lack of any recognizably Irish “school” among Tudor mapmakers. To a Dublin cartographer of this period, England was probably a more familiar sight on maps than Ireland.

Stylistic novelties, like the scripts and symbols inspired by Abraham Ortelius and Christopher Saxton, were quick to cross the Irish Sea. The only sign of a Dublin idiosyncrasy readily attributable to imitation (rather than to a shared state of ignorance and amateurism) was the habit of putting east at the bottom of a map, and this orientation must have come so naturally to Englishmen studying Ireland that they may not have needed an exemplar.¹² Other traits are even more clearly related to environmental conditions. The absence of latitude and longitude and other scientific refinements from almost all official maps of Ireland was consistent with Cecil's cartographic anti-academicism, and a general roughness of execution betrays the embattled mapmaker's need for haste, as well as a chronic shortage of good instruments and good copyists that was inevitable in an undeveloped country.

As for subject matter, Ireland's political fragmentation and the English response to it explain the comparative rarity of official maps showing the whole country, just as the superficiality of the shiring process stands revealed in a notable dearth of Irish county maps.¹³ The most com-

of Irish maps from this period and of any collection known to have been formed in Ireland.

9. J. H. Andrews, *Plantation Acres: An Historical Study of the Irish Land Surveyor and His Maps* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1985), 19–21.

10. R. A. Skelton and John Newenham Summerson, *A Description of Maps and Architectural Drawings in the Collection Made by William Cecil, First Baron Burghley, Now at Hatfield House* (Oxford: Roxburghe Club, 1971), 25–28.

11. Sir George Carew was master-general of the ordnance in Ireland from 1588 to 1592 and lord president of Munster from 1600 to 1603. He is known to have collected more than a hundred maps and atlases of Ireland or parts of Ireland, but most of these were not acquired until after his retirement from full-time office, when his motives as a collector had become historiographical rather than practical. Some of his acquisitions were original maps obtained from existing repositories, some were copies made especially for Carew himself, and some were associated with official inquiries into Irish affairs on which he was briefly employed in 1611 and 1625. Like Cecil, Carew made no serious attempt to use his collection as a source for new synthetic maps. See William O'Sullivan, “George Carew's Irish Maps,” *Long Room (Bulletin of the Friends of the Library, Trinity College, Dublin)* 26–27 (1983): 15–25, and J. H. Andrews, “The Irish Maps of Lord Carew: An Exhibition in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin,” unpublished typescript, n.d. [1983], Department of Manuscripts, Trinity College, Dublin.

12. With east at the bottom, Dublin, the Englishman's point of entry to Ireland, is the point on the map nearest him. Of ninety-five maps of Ireland or parts of Ireland from the period 1520–1605, forty-nine have west at the top, thirty-one north, nine south, five east, and one south-west. This reckoning excludes duplicates and close copies, maps of areas larger than Ireland, town plans, and fort plans. Sets of provincial maps are counted as single maps.

13. The local government divisions of Tudor Ireland formed a nested series comprising (from smallest to largest) parishes, baronies, shires or counties, and provinces. The Irish provinces were descended from pre-Norman kingdoms: only two of them had separate organs of government in the Tudor period—Connaught (from 1569) and Munster (from 1571).

TABLE 55.1. Tudor and Early Stuart Maps of Ireland and Parts of Ireland

Compilation Date	Number of Extant Maps				
	Munster	Ulster	Leinster	Con-naught	Ireland
Before 1560	0	0	0	0	2
1560–69	1	6	4	0	8
1570–79	2	2	2	1	3
1580–89	33	12	8	10	2
1590–99	20	25	5	6	6
1600–1609	31	30	5	4	6

Note: Charts, national and regional maps, and plans of towns, forts, and battles are included, but not maps of the British Isles or any larger area. Printed maps are included once each, omitting small-scale reductions that add no information to a larger original by the same author. Manuscript versions of a common original are included if they differ in content, however slightly. A few maps of uncertain date or doubtful authenticity have been omitted, as have all maps associated with the Ulster plantation of 1609–10.

mon units of geographical discourse were the four provinces of Munster, Ulster, Leinster, and Connaught (in that order; see table 55.1), and within them the numerous “countries” of native tradition. The best surveyors noted major tactical features, such as hills, forests, rivers, lakes, and bogs, together with the “passes” that led through these barriers (elsewhere, as in Elizabethan England, roads were evidently considered too commonplace to need mapping), and defensible buildings like stone castles and churches invariably took precedence over the flimsy thatch-roofed cabins of the populace. Most expressive of Irish preoccupations was the care lavished on territorial divisions and dominant families. The latter were especially puzzling to non-Irish copyists of Irish maps, who would sometimes invent the towns that they thought must have been denoted by such names as “O’Neill” and “Magennis.” Despite the government’s intentions, the landscape thus portrayed was curiously static; its unchanging appearance, coupled with defective captioning in maps that were never meant to be published, makes the work of many Anglo-Irish cartographers difficult to date even in terms of whole decades. One more generalization about English maps of Ireland seems not inconsistent with the hypothesis of official skepticism and insouciance proposed above, although admittedly leading in a different direction. Some recent writers have cast doubt on the theory that “as civilization improves so map-making also progresses.”¹⁴ In sixteenth-century Ireland this theory was half true: while civilization failed to improve, mapmaking did progress, and a cartographer of 1500 would surely have preferred the maps of 1600 to his own.

THE EARLIEST OFFICIAL MAPS

The first phase begins in 1526 with the earliest known use of maps by an Anglo-Irish administrator. The official in question complained that the English Pale had shrunk to a mere four counties, “as by the platt may appear,” compared with seven turbulent counties abutting on to it.¹⁵ The plat in question can no longer be identified, but most of the same counties appear on an undated sketch from the Cotton collection in which three river basins and their associated towns, all in the east and southeast, are made to fill nearly the whole of an egg-shaped Ireland (fig. 55.1). So low a standard of accuracy seems almost by itself to disprove the existence of any earlier Anglo-Irish cartographic tradition, unless that tradition included a habit of grossly changing scales within the same map.

Like many of its Irish successors, the Cotton map has much to say about proprietorship, and a number of the castles shown on it were stated to belong to the semi-independent Earl of Kildare. It was the defeat of this powerful magnate in 1534 that faced the English government with its first major postmedieval challenge. Over a period of several years the king’s deputy made long journeys through Leinster, Munster, and southeast Ulster striving to impose a new political equilibrium, assisted, as were most subsequent deputies, by a growing number of officers imported from England. Among the latter was a new master of the ordnance, John Travers. Gunnery and mapmaking have often been connected, and it may be no accident that in 1540 King Henry VIII began referring to maps of Ireland not long after a visit from Travers,¹⁶ especially as the latter is thought to have drawn a map of Irish ports and harbors three years later.¹⁷ None of Travers’s work appears to survive, but presumably the government’s hard-won knowledge had reduced the image of the Pale to better proportions; it may also have brought a new familiarity with the River Shannon, and a discrediting of the “egg” analogy among practical men if not among scholars. These improvements can be found on a manuscript sketch of Ireland that TNA dates to ca. 1558¹⁸ and on another

14. Michael J. Blakemore and J. B. Harley, *Concepts in the History of Cartography: A Review and Perspective*, Monograph 26, *Cartographica* 17, no. 4 (1980): 17–23.

15. In *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, 2d ed., 21 vols. in 37, ed. J. S. Brewer et al. (Reprinted Vaduz: Kraus, 1965), 4:1077.

16. Henry VIII to the Earl of Ormond, 26 September 1540, in *Letters and Papers*, 16:23, and Council in Ireland to Lord Thomas Cromwell, 14 March 1540, and Henry VIII to Sir Anthony St. Leger, 26 September 1540, both in *State Papers, Published under the Authority of His Majesty’s Commission: King Henry the Eighth*, 11 vols. (London, 1830–52), 3:192 and 245.

17. Lord deputy and council to Henry VIII, 15 May 1543, in *State Papers*, 3:458–59.

18. TNA, MPF 72. Dunlop, “Sixteenth-Century Maps,” 310, mistakenly describes this map as a copy of the Ireland by Sebastiano di Re



FIG. 55.1. IRELAND IN THE 1520s OR 1530s. Apparently the earliest surviving map of Ireland drawn wholly from postmedieval sources, depicting a geopolitical situation that was still essentially medieval, with Leinster and East Munster perceived as covering almost the whole island and the king's

power challenged by territorial magnates like the Earl of Kildare. Shown here with north at the top. Size of the original: ca. 70 × 48 cm. Photograph courtesy of the BL (Cotton MS. Aug. I.ii.21).

map, now lost, which left traces in several continental publications, including Gerardus Mercator's Europe of 1554.¹⁹

Traveling and war-making continued to absorb the energy of lord deputies before and after the accession of Queen Elizabeth I, with cartographic results that seem implicit in two independent references, of 1552 and 1561, to groups of widely separated geographical features (different in each case) that were each said to lie on a straight line.²⁰ Such precision would have been impossible without maps—better maps than any that survive from this period; among them, no doubt, the map of Ireland known to have been presented to the queen by one of the most cartographically minded deputies of her reign, the Earl of Sussex.²¹ Politically, Sussex faced new threats from the O'Neills of Ulster and, behind them, from the clansmen of western Scotland. Cartographically, his deputyship was a time of convergent advance. Hitherto, maps of interior Ireland had looked remarkably heterogeneous, each seeming to draw on the travels, memories, and conjectures (never very extensive) of a different author. Among foreign maps this dissension lasted until late in the century. Nearer home, a family resemblance was now beginning to show itself.

AN EARLY ELIZABETHAN CONSENSUS

The maps exhibiting the new trend were those of Laurence Nowell (ca. 1564),²² Gerardus Mercator (1564),²³ and John Goghe (1567). All give hundreds of names where previous maps had been content with dozens. In southeastern Ireland they are as good as any map at a scale of approximately 1:1,000,000 could hope to be without a measured survey. Elsewhere they diverge significantly from the truth, with several common errors, as in the shapes of Lough Erne and Lough Neagh, that are too similar to be unrelated. Mercator's map, *Angliae Scotiae & Hiberniae noua descriptio* (Duisburg, 1564), was said to have come from a friend in England but includes many exogenous (and erroneous) additions that no contemporary Englishman would have been capable of²⁴—that is if we can judge from Nowell, who makes only one editorial mistake of the same oversophisticated kind (fig. 55.2). Goghe makes none. Startlingly mature in both design and workmanship, his map breaks all the Irish rules. It is signed, dated, scaled in degrees of latitude and longitude, and formally titled in Latin as if for an international readership (fig. 55.3). Yet it is virtually free from combinatorial and copyist's errors, and its names, although sparser than Mercator's and Nowell's, are chosen with unerring discrimination. No sixteenth-century map of Ireland derives so manifestly from inside knowledge; and sure enough, a John Gough is known to have lived in

contemporary Dublin, although there is nothing else to link him with cartography.²⁵

Goghe's low-profile career can hardly have lasted very long, but on any interpretation there is room for him to have drawn at least one other map, for although his Ireland is less obviously derivative than Nowell's and Mercator's it seems to stand at a slight distance from some common archetype for which no more probable author can be suggested. Our only other glimpse of this joint ancestry comes from Sussex's brother-in-law, Sir Henry Sidney, a one-time government emissary to Spain who became lord deputy of Ireland in 1565. Although he achieved little, Sidney was a vigorous advocate of conquest and colonization who shared Cecil's belief in maps.²⁶ In particular, he is the first Irish deputy known to have tested a map in the field and to have made sure that his illustrious English correspondent had her own copy of it. This happened in 1566,

in *Britanniae insulae quae nunc Angliae et Scotiae regna continet cum Hibernia adiacente noua descriptio*.

19. Maps derived from this source include *Hibernia Insula non longe à Brita[n]nia in oceano sita est* attributed to Paolo Forlani (Venice: Bolognino Zaltieri, 1566) and a map reproduced in Roberto Almagià, *Monumenta cartographica Vaticana*, 4 vols. (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944–55), vol. 4, pl. 1.

20. TNA, SP 61/4/13 (Sir James Croft, 1552), and BL, Cotton MS. Titus B. xii. 153 (Earl of Sussex, 1561).

21. TNA, SP 63/4/37 (19 August 1561).

22. BL, Cotton MS. Domitian xviii. 101, 103. See Peter Barber, "A Tudor Mystery: Laurence Nowell's Map of England and Ireland," *Map Collector* 22 (1983): 16–21, and Bernhard Klein, *Maps and the Writing of Space in Early Modern England and Ireland* (Houndmills, Eng.: Palgrave, 2001), 114–17. For further speculative comment on Nowell's contribution to Irish cartography, see J. H. Andrews and Rolf Loeber, "An Elizabethan Map of Leix and Offaly: Cartography, Topography and Architecture," in *Offaly: History & Society*, ed. William Nolan and Timothy P. O'Neill (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1998), 243–85.

23. Gerardus Mercator, *Angliae, Scotiae & Hiberniae noua descriptio* (Duisburg, 1564). Walter Reinhard, *Zur Entwicklung des Kartenbildes der Britischen Inseln bis auf Merkators Karte vom Jahre 1564* (Zschopau: Druck von F. A. Raschke, 1909).

24. For Mercator's English connections, see E. G. R. Taylor, *Tudor Geography, 1485–1583* (London: Methuen, 1930), 85–86; Gerardus Mercator, *Correspondance Mercatorienne*, ed. Maurice van Durme (Antwerp: De Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1959), 35–36; R. A. Skelton, "Mercator and English Geography in the 16th Century," in *Gerhard Mercator, 1512–1594: Festschrift zum 450. Geburtstag*, Duisburger Forschungen 6 (Duisburg-Ruhrort: Verlag für Wirtschaft und Kultur W. Renckhoff, 1962), 158–70, esp. 167; and Peter Barber, "The British Isles," in *The Mercator Atlas of Europe: Facsimile of the Maps by Gerardus Mercator Contained in the Atlas of Europe, circa 1570–1572*, ed. Marcel Watelet (Pleasant Hill, Ore.: Walking Tree Press, 1998), 43–77. Fictitious elements in Mercator's map of Ireland include the names Lampreston, Lough Antre, and Pontoy, which hardly ever appear on English maps.

25. Dunlop, "Sixteenth-Century Maps," 311.

26. A modern assessment of Sidney is Nicholas P. Canny, *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: A Pattern Established, 1565–76* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1976).



FIG. 55.2. ABRAHAM ORTELIUS, IRELAND, 1573. Based on Gerardus Mercator's *Angliae, Scotiae & Hiberniae nova descriptio* (1564), with corrections in the vicinity of Belfast Lough and woods copied from a map related to those of Laurence Nowell. The most influential map of Ireland before that of Robert Lythe, although in many areas inferior to those of

Laurence Nowell and John Goghe.

Size of the original: 42 × 54.5 cm. *Eryn, Hiberniae, Britannicae Insulae*, in *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, by Abraham Ortelius (Antwerp: Apud A. C. Diesth, 1573), fol. 10. Photograph courtesy of the Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

when from the wilds of central Ulster he wrote of “Omagh, in your highness’ cart called Castle Thomye” and of “the old castle broken asunder mentioned as we suppose in your majesty’s map of Ireland.”²⁷ Omagh and Oldcastle were named by Mercator and not by Goghe, but it would be acting out of national and professional character for Sidney to depend on Mercator: more probably the queen’s map was a fourth version that has since disappeared.

In fact none of these maps was good enough for the more vigorous policy that Sidney hoped to introduce. The first of his comments quoted above suggests some dissatisfaction on the score of nomenclature; the second implies a map content too selective to be easily matched with experience. Similar reservations were evidently being felt in

London, for in 1567 the Privy Council admitted that one of its recent locational decisions for Ulster had been governed rather by “consideration of the plat of Ireland than by any knowledge that we have of the aptness of the place.”²⁸ It was probably during this long Ulster crisis that what is now the only surviving contemporary copy of Goghe’s map acquired a crop of adventitious northern place-names, many of them written by Cecil. A few such annotations are a tribute to a map. More than a few, and it is time for the cartographers to try again.

27. TNA, SP 63/19/43 (12 November 1566).

28. TNA, SP 63/20/83 (12 May 1568).



FIG. 55.3. JOHN GOGHE, “HIBERNIA: INSULA NON PROCUL AB ANGLIA VULGARE HIRLANDIA VOCATA,” 1567. A geopolitical view of early Elizabethan Ireland based on first-hand knowledge but not on instrumental survey. Detail is sparse but well chosen, with special emphasis on physical features and the names of dominant families. Annotations,

some by Lord Burghley, are mainly in the northeast. “B.W.” denotes the Blackwater fort, built in 1575 to command the approach to the still-unconquered heartland of Ulster. Size of the original: 40.6 × 53.3 cm. Photograph courtesy of TNA (MPF 1/68).

THE FIRST MEASURED SURVEY

The new start was organized by Sidney almost at once. What Ireland needed now was not another compiler, however adroit, but someone “skilful in the description of countries by measure according to the rules of cosmography”;²⁹ and not just for the arena of proposed colonization in Ulster but also for the rest of the country, which had recently been brought into the news by Sidney’s plan for separate provincial administrations. His surveyor was Robert Lythe, who spent a total of just over four years in Ireland between September 1567 and November 1571.³⁰ Compared with the Sussex era these years are well documented—well enough to prove, among other things, that not all Lythe’s maps have survived. However, coverage at

1:500,000 or more is available for the whole extent of his fieldwork, most of it in the midlands and south (fig. 55.4). North of a line from Killary Harbour to Strangford Lough he was defeated by forest, lakes and bogs, and doubtless by the hostility of the local population. For this no-go area Lythe adopted a model from the Nowell-Mercator-Goghe family, probably preserved by Sidney for just such an occasion.

Since the number of Lythe’s Irish place-names runs to several thousands (no other Elizabethan surveyor reached four figures) his visit must—on grounds of quantity

29. TNA, SP 63/24/29 (? May 1567).

30. J. H. Andrews, “The Irish Surveys of Robert Lythe,” *Imago Mundi* 19 (1965): 22–31.



FIG. 55.4. ROBERT LYTHE, DETAIL FROM MAP OF CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN IRELAND, 1571. The whole map shows the exact area that Lythe is known to have surveyed himself and appears to be in his own hand. The tinted broken lines are county boundaries. This region was not surveyed again until the middle of the seventeenth century. Size of the entire original: 81 × 112 cm. Photograph courtesy of Lord Egremont and the West Sussex Record Office, Chichester (PHA 9581).

alone—be accounted the most important event in the cartographic history of sixteenth-century Ireland. In much of west Munster he mapped the coastline from a boat, necessarily using instrumental methods. Elsewhere he was generally accompanied by guides, perhaps sometimes picking their brains for data currently inaccessible to direct observation.³¹ The whole enterprise showed nice judgment in adapting standards of accuracy to the exigencies of time and place. Only now and then within the survey area, notably among the mountains and sea-loughs of Connaught, did Lythe revert to earlier levels of sketchiness. More often he stands comparison (allowing for differences of scale) with his English opposite number Christopher Saxton. Both men chose much the same topographical subject matter—coasts, rivers, hills, forests, settlement—except that in rural Ireland the focal points of the settlements were castles rather than parish churches. Lythe went further with a characteristically Irish emphasis on territorial and family names. He also introduced his own thematic strains. One of these, in anticipation of Elizabethan naval warfare, was a series of notes on the capac-

ity of Ireland's major harbors. Other notes described its economic infrastructure, a service to the new kind of colonial entrepreneur who might also soon be reading Sir Thomas Smith's pamphlet (illustrated by a regional map) on a proposed plantation in County Down.³² In all these preoccupations Lythe and Sidney were at one: it was appropriate, although coincidental, that master and servant should have left Ireland at about the same time, in 1571.

Mapping Ireland had left Lythe tired but not permanently unfit. He is known to have practiced later in England, although the theory that he taught Saxton how to make a national map appears to have no adherents. He lacked Saxton's gift for finding himself in the limelight: economic and military considerations alike made any large-scale map of Ireland unpublishable at this time, and it may not have been until after 1585 that Lythe's maps were transcribed and eventually printed, always with numerous editorial errors and with never a mention of the real author.³³ By that time Lythe himself was either dead or in retirement, or simply averse to seeing any more of Ireland. Sidney's second deputyship of 1575–78 yields no reference to him; or, surprisingly, to Irish maps in general. Perhaps no one was on hand to make them; and indeed the main question raised by Lythe's unfinished masterpiece was how soon would Anglo-Irish society be able to support its own cartographers. The trouble was that a resident cartographer prefers a quiet life, whereas after Sidney's departure the districts that most needed mapping were those of conflict and violence, a bias best symbolized by the absence from all present-day archives of any regional map of the English Pale. The seats of disturbance comprised almost everything beyond the Pale, although Connaught and Munster enjoyed some spells of peace in which a fast-moving surveyor might hope to produce a creditable map in time for the next outbreak.

PROVINCIAL CARTOGRAPHY: THE WEST AND SOUTH

The first cartographer with the ambition to make his home in Ireland was apparently John Browne (d. 1589), who became sheriff of Mayo in 1583 and drew his earliest maps in the same year. As the only Englishman in living memory to settle this Irish fastness it was precocious

31. J. H. Andrews, "Robert Lythe's Petitions, 1571," *Analecta Hibernica* 24 (1967): 232–41.

32. BL, Harl. MS. 5938 (129). For Smith, see David B. Quinn, "Sir Thomas Smith (1513–1577) and the Beginnings of English Colonial Theory," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 89 (1945): 543–60.

33. J. H. Andrews, "An Elizabethan Surveyor and His Cartographic Progeny," *Imago Mundi* 26 (1972): 45. Maps of Ireland based mainly on Lythe include those of Jodocus Hondius (1591 and 1592), Petrus Plancius (1592), and Gerardus Mercator (1595).



FIG. 55.5. JOHN BROWNE, DETAIL FROM MAP OF CONNAUGHT AND THOMOND, 1591. This is the best sixteenth-century map of any Irish province. Hills topped with circles are believed to be triangulation points. Additions by Lord Burghley include a genealogical diagram. Despite its ac-

curacy in depicting the Mullet, Blacksod Bay, and many other features, this map had no influence on its successors. Size of the entire original: 99 × 76 cm. Photograph courtesy The Board of Trinity College Dublin (MS. 1209/68).

of Browne to introduce the English notion of the county map in northwest Ireland, and after he had been killed in a local rebellion there was no sustained attempt at following suit. Instead, Browne's nephew, also called John Browne, made a somewhat less detailed map of all Connaught, which was delivered to the provincial governor in 1591.³⁴ The governor, Sir Richard Bingham, was a tough military commander, proud of his own cartographic expertise, who wrote knowledgeably about the number of "stations" that would have to be "taken" in surveying an area of a given size.³⁵ Browne's thoroughly modern-looking Connaught was certainly accurate enough to have needed a good many stations, but unfortunately it disappeared into Carew's collection before any later cartogra-

pher had the chance to digest it (fig. 55.5). Like many an able amateur, the Brownes were left outside the evolutionary stream.

34. Martin J. Blake, "A Map of Part of the County of Mayo in 1584: With Notes Thereon, and an Account of Its Author and His Descendants," *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society* 5 (1907–8): 145–58, and J. H. Andrews, "Sir Richard Bingham and the Mapping of Western Ireland," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 103 (2003): 61–95.

35. Sir R. Bingham to [Burghley], 6 March 1591–92, in *Calendar of the State Papers, Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth*, 11 vols., ed. Hans Claude Hamilton, Ernest G. Atkinson, and Robert Pentland Mahaffy (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1860–1912), 4:469.

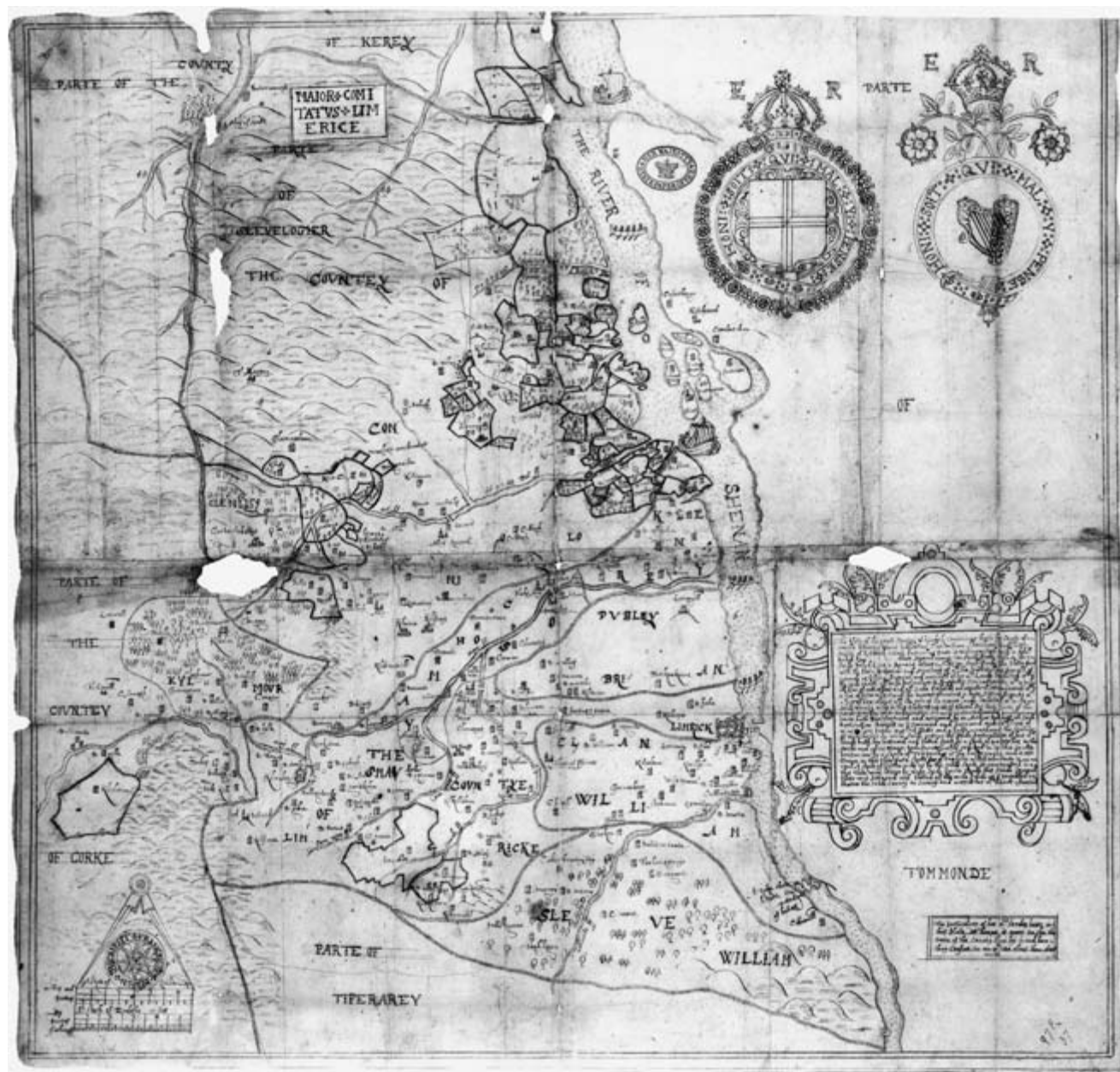


FIG. 55.6. FRANCIS JOBSON, “MAIOR COMITATUS LIMERICE,” CA. 1587. Territories are classified by tenurial status in the context of the government’s scheme for settling English colonists in various parts of the province of Munster.

Jobson showed originality by combining scattered local surveys into a county map, an unusual genre in Elizabethan Ireland. Size of the original: 58.4 × 62.5 cm. Photograph courtesy of TNA (MPF 97).

Francis Jobson did more to ensure that his maps survived than either of the Brownes did, and Munster was a kindlier environment than Connaught. In 1584 not even Bingham had dreamed of actually measuring the estates involved in a province-wide tax assessment known as the composition of Connaught. Two years later, in the wake of a Munster rebellion, Jobson and three other English surveyors were trying to do just that on 500,000 acres of land newly forfeited to the crown in the counties of Kerry,

Cork, Limerick, and Waterford.³⁶ Although the colonial function of such surveys would have been plain enough to any Munstermen who witnessed them, in conception they were no different from the kind of estate maps becoming fashionable in Elizabethan England. Their chief “frontier”

36. Michael MacCarthy-Morrogh, *The Munster Plantation: English Migration to Southern Ireland, 1583–1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 56–63. The 500,000 acres is a contemporary estimate.

characteristic was a man-land ratio far below the optimum. Of the four surveyors only Jobson stayed the full course. He doubtless hoped to continue as a freelance, like Saxton in his later years, surveying the kind of modern private estate that the Munster settlement had been designed to encourage, but as it turned out there were too few colonists to sustain such a position, and most of Jobson's later maps were politico-military exercises in the manner of Lythe and Browne.

Jobson's most unusual trait was the enthusiasm with which he sought out cartographic opportunities at various levels on the hierarchy of scales. An early example was a map of County Limerick (fig. 55.6), in which a scatter of confiscated parcels was, in his own words, "measured and plotted first by a scale of 40 perches to the inch [1:7920] and after divers reducements lastly reduced into this small proportion by a scale of 320 perches in the half inch [1:126,720] . . . all the which I did as I travelled through the said county to survey and measure her majesty's lands"³⁷—the same technique being used afterward for an even smaller-scale map of all Munster.³⁸ He also showed unusual zeal in presenting duplicates to likely patrons: no one was going to deprive posterity of a Jobson map by "borrowing" the only copy. Other features of his complex cartographic persona were more distinctly Irish, such as his deceptively slapdash-looking style and his apparent ignorance of earlier Anglo-Irish cartography. In this latter respect he resembled the Brownes, except that they lost nothing by starting afresh in Connaught whereas in Munster Jobson could have done better by consulting Lythe.

PROVINCIAL CARTOGRAPHY: THE NORTH

In most of Ulster, as in most of Connaught, there were no maps worth consulting until Jobson was brought north by the current lord deputy to meet a new request from Cecil in 1590. Two Ulster counties, Donegal and Fermanagh, were still unsafe for strangers, but Jobson now mapped the other seven, as well as Lythe would have mapped them and in much the same style, at a scale of approximately 1:240,000.³⁹ But it was not long before almost all northern Ireland had slid once more into rebellion, and it must have been in some safer place that Jobson's last extant map was drawn to accompany a proposal for pacifying Ulster with a garrison of 12,000 troops distributed among eight forts.⁴⁰ In the increasingly warlike atmosphere of 1598 such figures were far from ridiculous. The queen's army in Ireland was now being rapidly augmented, and so in consequence was the number of English cartographers and their output. Much of their time was occupied in surveying forts and battlefields, an activity that culminated when Spanish forces took and held Kinsale in 1601; and although there were a number of new regional sketches (fig. 55.7), these added little to previous maps, the main



FIG. 55.7. DINISH ISLAND AND VICINITY, BANTRY BAY, WEST CORK. A typical Irish campaign map, showing the movement of English troops from Bear Island toward the rebel stronghold of Dunboy, June 1602. North is to the right. The western approach to the castle is shown on a companion map. Size of the original: 37.5 × 30 cm. From Thomas Stafford, *Pacata Hibernia, Ireland Appeased and Reduced: or, An Historie of the Late Warres of Ireland* (London, 1633), map 11. Photograph courtesy of the John J. Burns Library, Boston College.

exception from the 1590s being a belated acceptance that Ireland had not one Lough Erne but two, separated by a fordable river.⁴¹

In the last great Irish upheaval of the Tudor age, cartography mirrored the course of events. The crisis was met

37. Quoted from an inscription in the cartouche. Jobson used the English statute perch of 16.5 feet, not the 21-foot perch that became current in Ireland after 1600. In both systems of measurement there were 320 perches in one mile.

38. Different versions of this map are National Maritime Museum, London, MS. P.49 (18, 19, 20, 22, and 27); Trinity College, Dublin, MS. 1209 (36 and 37); and National Library of Ireland, Dublin, 16.B.13.

39. Trinity College, Dublin, MS. 1209 (15).

40. TNA, MPF 312 (2).

41. John Thomas, map of Lough Erne, 1594, National Maritime Museum, London, MS. P.49 (21). For Thomas, see J. H. Andrews, "Maps and Mapmakers," in *The Shaping of Ireland: The Geographical Perspective*, ed. William Nolan (Cork: Mercier Press, 1986), 99–110, esp. 100–102.

by two campaigns against the queen's most determined enemy, Hugh O'Neill of Tyrone. The Earl of Essex's ill-judged maneuverings found an appropriate parallel in the first separate map of Ireland with an English publisher, a flamboyant and needlessly anachronistic copy of Lythe's survey by Baptista Boazio in 1599.⁴² Next, under a new deputy, Lord Mountjoy, came a three-pronged assault on O'Neill from the Pale, from Belfast Lough, and from Lough Foyle. All three forces had some cartographic support, including in the north a warship whose surveyors brought the Donegal coastline up to the same standard as the rest of Ulster.⁴³ In his approach from the Pale, Mountjoy was accompanied by Richard Bartlett, ablest of all the queen's Anglo-Irish cartographers. To the standard repertory of the 1590s Bartlett added the skills of landscape artist and topographical draftsman. His fort plans showed the circumjacent countryside almost as minutely as the fort itself,⁴⁴ and in his regional maps of Ulster and its borderlands the same spirit of realism was cleverly adjusted to a smaller scale.⁴⁵ One of these maps depicts a traverse survey of the deputy's campaign trail (plate 70); another, of the whole province in 1602, was perhaps the most successful compilation from diverse materials yet to be achieved in Ireland. Bartlett's careful handiwork conveys a sense of finality, as if announcing that the country had at last been subdued. And so it had: in March 1603 O'Neill surrendered just six days after the death of Queen Elizabeth.

THE EMPIRE OF GREAT BRITAIN

Ireland now witnessed a period of unprecedentedly purposeful government action, including a reform of local administration, the founding of numerous borough towns, a revival of the Munster colony, and an ambitious new Anglo-Scottish plantation scheme for Ulster. These measures generated a number of minor cartographic spin-offs, but it was a mark of Jacobean confidence that no fresh survey of Ireland seemed necessary after 1603: a definitive compilation from existing sources was now accepted as sufficient, and even this effort owed more to the private sector than to the government. The chief compilers, reviving an art neglected in metropolitan England since Laurence Nowell's time, were John Norden in 1608 and John Speed in 1610. Although Norden's maps were intended for the secretary of state they took little from government sources, their main authority being Boazio's unsatisfactory *Irelande*, and their post-1599 improvements not quite justifying Norden's famous reference to the tedium of "conferring . . . many disagreeing plots together."⁴⁶ Norden suffered from choosing too small a scale, a problem that Speed dealt with by giving each Irish province a large map of its own. In the midlands and south Speed also

followed Lythe, but at least it was a fuller and more authentic version of Lythe than anyone else had yet published. In central and eastern Ulster his model was Jobson, and for the coast of Donegal he shared a common source with Bartlett. By publishing the result between hard covers Speed stamped a new image of Ireland on the European consciousness (fig. 55.8), not to be erased until Sir William Petty's outline became current at the end of the seventeenth century. Whatever his attitude toward empires and empire-building, Speed saw no reason why Ireland should be bracketed with Virginia or Bermuda. Instead he put it in the first British atlas of the British Isles, ranking in prominence above Scotland, although well below England and Wales.⁴⁷

As London-based geographers neither Norden nor Speed really knew enough about Ireland to make the best possible map of it. What they did know about—if anything, too well—was the kind of engraver's and atlas-maker's cartography that made every landscape look alike. The best man to make a realistic all-Ireland compilation for King James I (r. 1603–25) would have been Bartlett. But Bartlett was no longer available. In the closing stages of the war he had been beheaded by the inhabitants of Donegal "because they would not have their country discovered."⁴⁸ It was a death charged with symbolism. In cartography, as in other ways, the end of the Tudor dynasty deserves recognition as a major historical landmark, but neither soldiers, politicians, nor mapmakers had solved the Irish problem.

42. J. H. Andrews, "Baptista Boazio's Map of Ireland," *Long Room (Bulletin of the Friends of the Library, Trinity College, Dublin)* 1 (1970): 29–36. In the north of Ireland Boazio added a few details not shown by Lythe, but none of these can be regarded as improvements.

43. Captain Charles Plessington to Sir Robert Cecil, 17 July 1601, in *Calendar of the State Papers*, 10:436–37; and Trinity College, Dublin, MS. 1209 (14).

44. National Library of Ireland, Dublin, MS. 2656, reproduced in Gerard Anthony Hayes-McCoy, ed., *Ulster and Other Irish Maps, c. 1600* (Dublin: Stationery Office for the Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1964), esp. pls. 1–12, known to be the work of Bartlett.

45. TNA, MPF 35–37, published in facsimile by the Ordnance Survey, *Maps of the Escheated Counties in Ireland, 1609* (Southampton: Ordnance Survey Office, 1861).

46. TNA, MPF 117. One of Norden's manuscript maps of Ireland is in the same collection, MPF 67; another, apparently of slightly earlier date, is in Trinity College, Dublin, MS. 1209 (1). See J. H. Andrews, "John Norden's Maps of Ireland," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 100, sec. C (2000): 159–206.

47. John Speed, *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine: Presenting an Exact Geography of the Kingdoms of England, Scotland, Ireland . . .* (London: John Sudbury and Georg Humble, 1611).

48. Sir John Davies to Salisbury, 28 August 1609, in *Calendar of the State Papers, Relating to Ireland, of the Reign of James I*, 5 vols., ed. Charles William Russell and John Patrick Prendergast (London: Longman, 1872–80; reprinted Nendeln: Kraus, 1974), 3:280.



FIG. 55.8. JOHN SPEED, *THE KINGDOME OF IRLAND*, 1610. The definitive map of Tudor Ireland, amplified in the same author's four maps of the individual provinces and copied by most later cartographers until William Petty's surveys (1655–59) became widely known toward the end of the

seventeenth century.

Size of the original: 43 × 55.5 cm. From John Speed, *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine* (London, 1611). Photograph courtesy of the Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.