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Scots Irish History

- 563 Columba arrives in Iona, Scotland, establishing an Irish Christian monastery there.
- 1171 Henry II, Norman King of England is recognized as “Lord of Ireland.”
- 1316 Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, is crowned King of Ireland at Dundalk.
- 1318 Edward Bruce, Robert’s brother, is defeated and killed by the English at Faughart, Ireland. His head was sent as a present to Edward II.
- 1509 Henry VIII becomes King of England and begins to re-establish English control over Ireland.
- 1590 Elizabeth I fails in her effort to establish a plantation in Ireland.
- 1599 Robert Devereux arrives with 17,000 English troops on his failed expedition to subdue the Irish.
- 1601 Sir Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, defeats Irish chieftains, Hugh O’Neill and Hugh O’Donnell, in the final battle of survival for Gaelic Ireland.
- 1603 James I becomes King of England and begins bringing Scottish and English settlers to Northern Ireland as tenants on lands forfeited by rebellious Irish nobles.
- 1622 A survey lists 6,000 - 7,000 adult Scottish males in Ulster, mainly from the lowlands of Scotland.
- 1625 Charles I becomes King of England and establishes a strict policy of religious uniformity for the British Isles.
- 1634 Thomas Wentworth is appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland and begins the strict enforcement of the uniformity policy, removing Puritan bishops and dismissing Presbyterian ministers from their churches.

- 1636 Most Presbyterian churches have no ministers for a period of five years forcing people to travel to Scotland for Communion and baptisms.
- 1638 Wentworth orders all Scots over the age of 16 to swear the “Black Oath” renouncing the “National Covenant” of Scotland. Many Presbyterians were imprisoned and fined for refusing the oath. Some Scots returned to Scotland because of this persecution.
- 1641 Wentworth is recalled to England and executed by the Puritan controlled Parliament. An Irish Catholic rebellion led by Sir Phelin O’Neill and Sir Conn Magennis overwhelms much of Ulster, resulting in the killing of about 12,000 settlers. Many Presbyterians are saved from the massacre because they fled to Scotland earlier to avoid Wentworth’s persecution.
- The Derrykeighan church becomes a gathering place for Presbyterians fleeing the massacre of Protestants in Upper Antrim.
- 1642 English Civil War begins, further complicating the situation in Ireland. The first meeting of an Irish Presbytery at Carrickfergus is held in response to the collapse of the Church of Ireland in the aftermath of the rebellion.
- 1646 Major General Robert Munro arrives in Ireland with 2,500 Scottish troops to take command of all parliamentary forces and to protect Protestants from Catholic insurgents.
- 1649 Oliver Cromwell invades Ireland with 15,000 troops. Having won the Civil War in England, Cromwell is determined to avenge the atrocities of the Catholic uprising of 1641 and follows through with massacres at Drogheda and Wexford.
- The Presbytery of Belfast passes a resolution condemning the English Parliament for executing Charles I and reaffirming the Solemn League and Covenant of Scotland.
- 1650 Cromwell’s Irish commissioners respond to this Presbyterian action by drafting an Engagement Oath requiring Irish Presbyterians to renounce the line of Charles Stuart.

- 1652 The English Parliament passes an act of Settlement confiscating 11,000,000 acres of Irish land to punish Catholics who participated in the uprising of 1641.
- 1654 Henry Cromwell, son of Oliver Cromwell, and Lord Deputy of Ireland, ends official persecution of Presbyterians and allows Presbyterian ministers to work within the Church of Ireland.
- 1657 The Route Presbytery is established in Upper Antrim under the authority of the Synod of Derry and the General Synod of Ulster.
- 1660 Seventy Presbyterian ministers are serving eighty parishes with 100,000 worshipers.
- Oliver Cromwell's generals proclaim Charles II King of the British Isles.
- 1661 Charles II issues the Act of Uniformity which resulted in the ejection of over 2,000 ministers in the British Isles, including 61 Presbyterian ministers in Ireland.
- Four Presbyterian ministers are jailed for a period of six years.
- 1663 After the "Blood Plot" coup attempt by Cromwell sympathizers in the south of Ireland orders are issued to arrest all Presbyterian ministers.
- 1670 Charles II's repressive uniformity measures foment a Covenanter rebellion in the western lowlands of Scotland. The Scottish government passes the notorious "Black Act" which makes preaching at field gatherings punishable by death.
- 1672 Charles II reverses his policy of persecuting Presbyterian ministers in Ireland and issues the Regnum Donum (King's Gift) providing state support for the Irish Presbyterian Church.
- 1673 The Reverend David Houston is suspended by the Route Presbytery for creating division in the Ballymoney church by promoting his Covenanter ideas. He would later become a Covenanting minister serving a church near Armoy.
- 1679 The defeat of Scottish Covenanters at Bothwell Bridge in Ayrshire, Scotland and the ensuing persecution there leads to a large migration of Scots to Ireland from the western lowlands of Scotland.

- 1685 James II becomes King of England and implements a policy intended to restore Catholic supremacy in England and Ireland.
- Huguenot refugees begin pouring into Ireland after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in France. They are assimilated into the Irish Presbyterian churches.
- 1687 Leadership of government and the army in Ireland is purged of Protestants by James II's choice for Lord Deputy, Richard Talbot, an arch anti-Protestant. Protestants begin selling their property and moving back to England and Scotland.
- 1688 On December 7, the Catholic regiment of the Earl of Antrim arrives in Londonderry to relieve the last Protestant force of the Irish Army commanded by Lord Mountjoy. When the gates of the city are locked to Antrim's forces, the siege of Londonderry begins. Fearing for their lives 30,000 Protestants pour into the city.
- On November 5, William of Orange lands in England and James II flees to France.
- 1689 On April 11, William and Mary are crowned as joint sovereigns of England.
- Richard Talbot prepares for war in Ireland arming a Catholic force of 100,000.
- James II arrives in Ireland with French troops linking up with Talbot's forces and seeking to regain the British throne.
- The siege of Londonderry is broken after 105 days and the deaths of 4,000 military defenders and 10,000 civilians. James II's failure to take the city gives William III time to move his forces into Ireland and costs James the opportunity to invade Scotland and England.
- In August 10,000 of William's troops commanded by the Huguenot, Marshall Shomberg, land in County Down.

- 1690 On June 14, William III arrives at Carrickfergus with 36,000 troops and is greeted by a deputation of the Presbyterian Church.
- On July 12, William's forces defeat the army of James II at the Boyne River, 30 miles north of Dublin, and James leaves for France.
- 1691 The Treaty of Limerick provides generous terms to the defeated Catholic army including safe conduct to 11,000 soldiers to sail for France to form the famous Irish Brigade.
- The defeat is decisive and results in the confiscation of another 1.5 million acres of Catholic owned land.
- 1692 50,000 Scots migrate to Ulster during the last decade of the 17th century to take advantage of favorable land tenancy rates created by the devastation of the recently concluded war.
- 1702 Queen Anne assumes the English throne and institutes a policy of strict religious conformity.
- 1704 The British Parliament passes the Test Act which requires all office holders to be active members of the established Church of Ireland (Anglican). Although aimed at Irish Catholics it excludes Presbyterians from the army, civil service, and the teaching profession. Legal standing is removed from Presbyterian clergy, leading to the prosecution of Presbyterian married couples for committing fornication with their spouses.
- 1708 In the face of governmental persecution the Presbyterian church continues to grow to 130 congregations.
- 1712 By act of the British Parliament, ministers of the Church of Scotland are no longer chosen by vote of the people but by large landowners.
- 1714 Presbyterian tenant farmers suffer the effects of a six year drought which ruins crops and causes food prices to soar.
- 1718 Long term land leases begin to expire and absentee English landlords increase rents charged to Scots Irish tenants by 200-300%. After working

hard to improve their land, most Presbyterians cannot afford to pay the new market rates. This practice comes to be called “rack renting.”

Presbyterians begin to migrate to America in significant numbers.

- 1722 The first major wave of Scots Irish migration to America begins with Presbyterians settling in large numbers in the back country of Pennsylvania.
- 1733 The Reverend Ebenezer Erskine officially secedes from the Church of Scotland because of the change in policy over selection of ministers. This Seceder movement later divides into Burgher and Anti-Burgher sects which become active in Northern Ireland.
- 1740 The second major wave of migration to America begins with Presbyterians moving through Pennsylvania and into the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.
- 1743 The Reformed Presbytery (Covenanter) is constituted in Scotland and receives the allegiance of many Presbyterians in Northern Ireland.
- 1748 Presbyterians in Ballyrashane, Derrykeighan, Ballymoney, and Kilraughts leave the Synod of Ulster and form a combined parish under the guidance of the Anti-Burgher Scottish Secession Synod.
- 1751 John Tennant, a licentiate of the Anti-Burgher Presbytery of Edinburgh arrives to serve the Seceders in Ballymoney and Derrykeighan.
- 1753 The Reformed Presbytery of Scotland is disrupted, leaving no Covenanter ministers in Northern Ireland for several years.
- 1754 The third major wave of migration to America begins with Presbyterians pouring into the Piedmont of the Carolinas.
- 1756 William Martin is licensed by the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland.
- 1757 William Martin is placed in charge of Covenanter societies centering on Ballymoney. He is the only Reformed Presbyterian minister in Ireland.
- 1763 With the arrival of more Covenanter ministers in Northern Ireland the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland is formed with William Martin playing a leading role.

- 1771 The fourth major wave of migration begins with settlements spread out from New York to Georgia. This wave ended with the outbreak of the Revolutionary War in 1774.
- 1772 The Lord Dunluce, one of five ships chartered by the Reverend William Martin, sails from Larne, Ireland on October 4 and arrives in Charlestown, South Carolina on December 20.