

# R J Hunter Bursary 2021

## Final report

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Name Jonathan Cherry

2a. Year awarded: 2021

2b. Title of project: Mapping Cavan: From Plantation to Brexit

2c. Summary of project  
(Minimum 100 words):

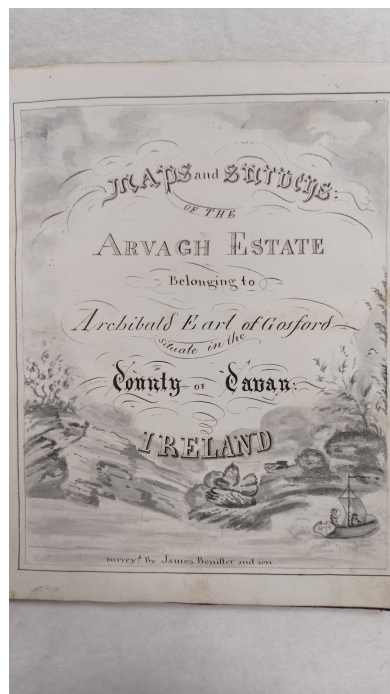
This project examines the extent to which county Cavan, has been mapped and surveyed over the past four centuries. The R J Hunter funding has been used on account of its primary concern namely history pre 1800, in identifying maps and surveys from the early seventeenth century through the long eighteenth century to the eve of the Ordnance Survey of the 1830s. A central plank of the project is the identification and recording of the extant maps relating to Cavan during this period and the surveyors and cartographers involved with each map.

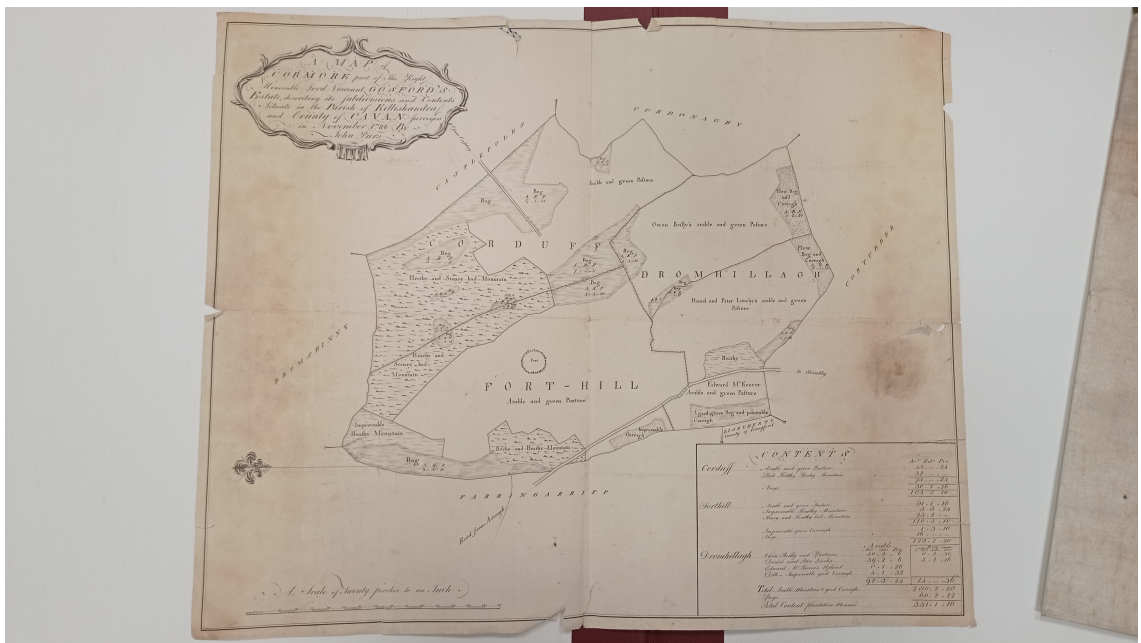
On completion this project will provide a comprehensive and definitive record of Cavan's cartographic history from the seventeenth century plantation and Down Survey maps to the eighteenth and nineteenth century estate maps of town and country, the immense cartographic legacy of the Ordnance Survey to the present day, and maps created through the agency of the Encumbered Estates and Land Courts of the 19th and early 20th centuries in mapping Cavan.

The project will highlight the rich and varied cartographic heritage available for the county, while showcasing how cartographic sources - frequently overlooked and marginalised as historical source material in comparison to documentary materials - can be employed in shedding further light on the evolution of landscapes, environmental change and by extension society over time.

2d. Date report was submitted: Jun 28, 2022

2e. Please provide at least one appropriate image:





2f. Please outline the objectives of the project:

The main objectives of the project are to

1. Identify the extant pre Ordnance Survey (1830s) maps and surveys relating to County Cavan held in private and institutional collections
2. Photograph and record the detail of these maps (type - for example road, estate; place/ location depicted, date and cartographer / surveyor responsible) in Excel in creating a database
3. Link this database to a GIS in charting the extent and time periods when the county was mapped.

Collectively these objectives will form an integral component of the larger Mapping Cavan project which is tracing the mapping of the county, down to the present day.

2g. Please describe the methodology used in conducting the research:

In charting the extent, and by whom was Cavan mapped between circa 1600 and the pre- Ordnance Survey period circa 1830, the first task was to identify maps relating to / depicting county Cavan in local, national and international archives and libraries and record details of these in an Excel database. This was primarily a desk based exercise - particularly suited to 2021 when most archives were closed and travel restricted due to COVID 19 - using online catalogues and digital content.

The second and more exciting methodology was planning and undertaking a number of in-person research trips to libraries and archival institutions in London and Belfast where significant collections of maps and surveys relating to Cavan had been identified. These visits allowed me to survey and 'read' the maps identified, the majority of which are unique manuscript maps. In addition to photographing each map where allowed to, I recorded detail relating to the type of maps, names of surveyor / cartographer and dates in our EXCEL database.

2h. Please outline the findings of your research and/or milestones achieved. (Please refer to the intended outcomes stated in your application form)

Task 1: Desk based scoping exercise identifying maps relating to / depicting Cavan in archival and private ownership completed. Maps / surveys of interest have been identified in the following institutions

- Cavan County Library
- Cavan County Museum
- Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
- Trinity College Dublin
- Royal Irish Academy
- Special Collections University College Dublin
- British Library

National Archives, Kew  
National Archives of Ireland  
National Library of Ireland  
Representative Church Body Library  
Library of Congress, Washington

Task 2: Archival research visits / recording detail / 'reading' the maps.  
Completed in the British Library and Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and underway in the National Library of Ireland, National Archives of Ireland and Cavan County Library.

Task 3: Constructing the database: I have maintained construction of the database in EXCEL, after each archival / research visit.

Task 4: Framework for narrative chapters for the main monograph established.

3a. Please provide details of the dissemination of the outcomes from this project (Publications, presentations, outreach, media etc) including details of any social media/web platforms used to publicise this project:

An article entitled 'Mapping Cavan: from Plantation to Brexit' was published in Breifne Journal of Cumann Seanchais Bhreifne (2021). It aimed to outline the project and making a call for those with maps in private ownership to get in touch.

3f. How will you continue to communicate the results of your project?

As the project is still continuing the opportunity to communicate results will gather momentum. I am considering the development of a Twitter account something similar to the Plymouth Estate Maps Project <https://twitter.com/PlymouthMaps> in showcasing particular maps.

It also anticipated that the project will also in time form part of the website [www.cavantownlands.com](http://www.cavantownlands.com)

3g. What are your publication plans?

The publication of a monograph entitled Mapping Cavan from Plantation to Brexit remains a key output from this project. The research completed using this funding will form the early chapters of this extensively illustrated monograph.

4b. Please tell us about any additional funding that you received from other government sources, Trusts, EU funding, or any other sources including the amount of the award

During this project, potential funding opportunities have been explored with Cavan County Council who are immensely supportive of the project. While no firm commitments have been made we are hopeful that they will fund other stages of this project. Another aspect of the project that has come to light that we want to explore further is the digitisation of maps so as to democratize access to these unique historical materials. We are hoping to approach the Heritage Council for funding for this aspect of the project which could provide a template in terms of digitisation of such historical source material for other counties.