

THE IRISH ‘INDEPENDENTS’ AND VISCOUNT LISLE’S LIEUTENANCY OF IRELAND*

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ABSTRACT. *This article examines the influence of a distinct Irish Protestant faction on parliamentary policy-making in the mid-1640s – the Irish Independents. These men were not merely clients of parliament’s lord lieutenant, Viscount Lisle, but formed a group with consistent personnel and policies, which can be traced back to the ‘Boyle group’ in the Irish council of the 1620s and 1630s. In the 1640s they came into an alliance with the English Independents, based on common hostility to the Presbyterian party, the Scots, and the supporters of Ormond and Inchiquin in Ireland. This coalition was, however, inherently unstable. Faced with equivocation at Westminster, where Ireland had always been low on the list of priorities, from December 1646 the Irish Independents were forced to take charge of parliament’s Irish policy, and many of the initiatives previously attributed to Lisle in 1646–7 can more properly be laid at their door. In conclusion, it is suggested that the Irish Independents represent a radical strain in Irish Protestantism, which supported Ireland’s closer integration into an ‘English Empire’, and which would see its fulfilment in the unionist agenda developed in the 1650s.*

In the spring of 1647, the lord president of Munster, Lord Inchiquin, was forced to play host to the new lord lieutenant, Viscount Lisle. This was not a happy time for Inchiquin. Lisle used his authority to override the president’s decisions, to exclude him from the council of war, and to interfere with military appointments in the province. Inchiquin, convinced that the ultimate aim was to remove him from office, was bitterly critical of Lisle and his men, whom he lumped together as ‘Independents’ – men allied to the Independent party at Westminster, led by the earl of Northumberland and Viscount Saye in the House of Lords, and by Oliver St John and Sir Henry Vane in the Commons. Historians have tended to equate Lisle’s expedition with a new, vigorous policy towards Ireland developed by the English Independents in the later 1640s, which saw a re-conquest as necessary for the extension of the English ‘empire’ over Ireland, and which threatened not only Ireland, but also Scotland, and

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eventually precipitated the Second Civil War of 1648.¹ Yet Inchiquin's main opponents were Irish Protestants rather than English MPs. Lisle's privy council, appointed in January 1647, included seven Irish Protestants as permanent members, but only two English MPs.² And in a contemporary list of Lisle's closest military and civilian advisers in Munster in the following April, of the twelve men named, eight proved to be men of Irish background and only four were Englishmen.³ While recognizing the role of some Irish Protestants, such as Sir John Temple and Lord Broghill, in the execution of Lisle's plans, historians have usually seen them as no more than clients of the English politicians, with personal or factional links with Lisle and his family.⁴ In this article I shall suggest an alternative interpretation: the Irish 'Independents' who supported Lisle were not merely pawns of English imperialists, but formed a coherent group, with distinct policies of their own; and their main task in the 1640s was to persuade a reluctant parliament to put Ireland at the top of its political agenda.

I

The membership of this Irish Independent group can be identified with some certainty. Viscount Lisle's privy councillors, Sir Adam Loftus, Sir John Temple, Sir William Parsons, Sir John Borlase, and Sir Robert Meredith, were at its heart, supported by a number of military men, including Loftus's son, Sir Arthur Loftus, Sir Hardress Waller, and Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill, who had all served as senior officers in Munster. These men advised Viscount Lisle in 1646, accompanied him on his expedition to Munster in 1647,⁵ and in 1648 were still identified by their enemies as the 'Irish Renegados, which are bought at a good rate into the Faction, to become Independent Creatures'.⁶ In addition to the central group, a number of relatives were drawn into the faction: Nicholas Loftus (brother of Sir Adam), Adam and William Meredith (sons of Sir Robert), James Parsons (Sir William's son), Sir William Fenton

¹ John Adamson, 'Strafford's ghost: the British context of Viscount Lisle's lieutenantancy of Ireland', in Jane Ohlmeyer, ed., *Ireland from independence to occupation, 1641–1660* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 128–59.

² These were Sir Adam Loftus, Sir John Temple, Sir William Parsons, Sir John Borlase, Sir Robert Meredith, Viscount Valentia, and Arthur Annesley; with Sir Gregory Norton and Richard Salwey as the English MPs: Bodleian Library (Bodl.) MS Nalson 21, fo. 111r.

³ Of those forced to return to England when Lisle's commission ended, Lord Broghill, Sir Adam and Sir Arthur Loftus, Temple, Valentia, the mayor of Cork, Captains James Parsons and William Meredith were Irish Protestants, and only Algernon Sidney, Commissary-General Thomas Harrison, Colonel Grey, and Major Piltson of English stock: see *A true and brief relation of the Lord Lisle's departure* (30 Apr. 1647), p. 5.

⁴ Adamson, 'Strafford's ghost', pp. 134–42.

⁵ See *Lord Lisle's departure*, p. 5; also *Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC) de Lisle MSS*, VII, p. 566, which notes that Temple, Broghill, two Loftuses, and the already disaffected Valentia returned with Lisle in April 1647.

⁶ *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, no. 4 [of the second numbering] (18–25 Apr. 1648), sig. D4: lists the former Presbyterian, Sir Robert King, as well as Broghill, Meredith, Sir Adam and Sir Arthur Loftus; see also Clement Walker, *The history of Independency* (26 May 1648), p. 58, which includes Temple, Broghill, and the Loftuses alongside Lisle and Cromwell.

(Broghill's uncle), and Sir John Veel (Temple's brother-in-law). The involvement of relatives and in-laws suggests that this group had an internal coherence which did not depend on Lisle's powers as a political patron. In fact, it is possible to trace the ancestry of the Irish Independents back at least twenty years before Lisle's appointment: to the Boyle group of the 1620s and early 1630s.

Before 1632 the Irish administration was polarized between a group led by the lord chancellor, Viscount Loftus of Ely, and the vice-treasurer, Lord Mountnorris, and a rival party, originally centred on the lord deputy, Viscount Falkland, which included Sir William Parsons, the elder Sir Charles Coote, Viscount Ranelagh, Richard Bolton, and Sir Adam Loftus. After the recall of Falkland in 1629, this latter party reformed itself around the dominant figure of Richard Boyle, first earl of Cork, and became known as the 'Boyle group'.⁷ This political alliance was augmented by a network of marriages. The family connection between Cork and Parsons dated from the beginning of the century, when the earl took as his second wife Catherine Fenton, who was Sir William Parsons's cousin. By the early 1630s there had been numerous other marriages within the group: Viscount Ranelagh's son married Cork's daughter in 1630; in the same year, another Boyle daughter married Sir Arthur Loftus, son and heir of Sir Adam Loftus of Rathfarnham; Loftus's daughters in turn married Parsons's son and heir and his nephew, both named Richard Parsons. In a demonstration of their new family ties, in 1630 Loftus, Parsons, and Ranelagh served as pall-bearers for the countess of Cork's funeral.⁸ By November 1632 Mountnorris could comment bitterly to Wentworth that Coote, Parsons, and their allies were 'all birds of a feather and of the earl of Cork's party'.⁹ The genealogical links between this group were strengthened by a shared attitude to Ireland and the Irish. A letter by Sir William Parsons to Lord Conway, of December 1625, shows the basic tenets of the Boyle group's policy. In it, Parsons argued for the necessity of continuing the wardship programme and for an extension of the policy of plantation, as 'this regeneracon in them is one of the principall ends of all our labors ... because we cannot avoide their presence here, without too greate effusion of blood', and called for the Irish to be brought into obedience to 'the Lawes & Empier of England'.¹⁰ This emphasis on incorporating Ireland into an English empire, re-educating the native lords and extending plantation, tied in closely with the ideas of the first earl of Cork, lord justice of Ireland 1629–32. During this period, Cork and Parsons were involved in schemes to plant the Ormond baronies of County Tipperary,

⁷ Michael Perceval-Maxwell, *The outbreak of the Irish rebellion of 1641* (Montreal, 1994) pp. 16–17.

⁸ Michael Perceval-Maxwell, 'Protestant faction, the impeachment of Strafford and the origins of the Irish Civil War', *Canadian Journal of History*, 17 (1982), pp. 235–55, at 235; also Perceval-Maxwell, *Outbreak*, pp. 17–18.

⁹ Quoted in H. F. Kearney, *Strafford in Ireland, 1633–1641: a study in absolutism* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1989), p. 39.

¹⁰ Public Record Office (PRO), SP 63/241, fos. 338v–9r *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland (CSPI) 1625–32*, pp. 56–8).

despite opposition from the Catholic eleventh earl of Ormond. Cork also tried to enforce the recusancy laws, to root out Catholic priests, and to put the burden of maintaining a Protestant standing army onto the Catholic gentry.¹¹ This anti-Catholic, plantation agenda would reappear with greater force during the 1640s, once more championed by members of the Boyle, Loftus, and Parsons families. In both personnel and policy, the Boyle group formed the root-stock of the Irish Independent clique of the later 1640s.

The Irish Independents could trace their roots not only to the Boyle group, but also to the privy council of the earl of Strafford.¹² This was not necessarily a contradiction in terms. Strafford's policies of extending plantation and reinforcing English rule over Ireland were similar to those of the Boyle group in the previous decade; and Strafford was not above taking sides in New English factionalism, when it suited his purposes. Indeed, in political terms, Strafford's rule can be seen to fall into two halves: from his appointment in 1632 until late 1635 he cultivated Ely and Mountnorris; from 1636 until 1640 he turned against his old allies, and instead fostered links with their enemies, including members of the Boyle group. Strafford's change of attitude towards Mountnorris was swift, and brutal: in late 1635 he was accused of treason, imprisoned and stripped of his office; soon afterwards, Ely was removed as chancellor, and gaoled. The Boyle group filled the political vacuum. Mountnorris's replacement as vice-treasurer was Sir Adam Loftus, and the new lord chancellor was Sir Richard Bolton.¹³ Sir William Parsons continued as master of the court of wards; his surveyor was Nicholas Loftus, Sir Adam's brother.¹⁴ Even the earl of Cork, attacked by Strafford for his corruption in the mid-1630s, had become a covert supporter of the lord lieutenant by 1639.¹⁵ In the later 1630s the Boyle group was joined by two significant recruits: Sir Robert Meredith, who was appointed to the Irish privy council in September 1635, and was made chancellor of the exchequer in 1637;¹⁶ and Sir John Temple, the son of the provost of Trinity College Dublin, who had been cultivated by Strafford in the 1630s, and (presumably on Strafford's recommendation) was chosen by the king to succeed Wandesford as master of the rolls in January 1641.¹⁷ It was this augmented Boyle group which re-emerged in the mid-1640s, as Lisle's advisers. The connection between the two was made by one of the oldest enemies of the Boyle group, Lord Mountnorris, who, as Viscount Valentia, complained in August 1647 that those 'whose

¹¹ Kearney, *Strafford*, pp. 36–7; *CSPI 1625–32*, pp. 589–90; John Reeve, 'Secret alliance and Protestant agitation in two kingdoms: the early Caroline background to the Irish rebellion of 1641', in Ian Gentles, John Morrill, and Blair Worden, eds., *Soldiers, writers and statesmen of the English Revolution* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 19–35.

¹² Cf. K. S. Bottigheimer, *English money and Irish land: the 'adventurers' in the Cromwellian settlement of Ireland* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 104–5.

¹³ Wentworth had favoured Loftus since 1634: see W. D. Knowler, ed., *The earl of Strafford's letters and despatches* (2 vols., London, 1739), I, p. 306.

¹⁴ *CSPI 1633–47*, p. 174.

¹⁵ Patrick Little, 'The earl of Cork and the fall of the earl of Strafford, 1638–41', *Historical Journal*, 39 (1996), pp. 619–35, at 620–5.

¹⁶ *CSPI 1633–47*, pp. 111, 168; Knowler, ed., *Strafford's letters*, I, p. 495.

¹⁷ *CSPI 1633–47*, pp. 169, 175, 257; Knowler, ed., *Strafford's letters*, II, pp. 4–5.

councils are taken for Oracles concerning Ireland, and who have had and would still have the mannadg[ment] of those affairs' were 'the very same Instruments who did co-operate with therle of Strafford and wear promoted by him for bribery'.¹⁸ In terms of personnel, and broad policies, Valentia had a point. But, in his eagerness to link his enemies to the disgraced Straffordian regime, he overlooked one important aspect. This group was not, at the last instance, dependent for its identity on Strafford. As we have seen, the core of the privy council of the later 1630s was the pre-Straffordian Boyle group; and when the lord lieutenant came under political pressure in 1640–1, Sir Adam Loftus, Sir William Parsons, Sir Charles Coote, Sir Robert Meredith, Sir John Borlase, and Viscount Ranelagh were all implicated in conspiracies against him. The earl of Cork, although keeping out of such machinations, eventually joined his friends as a witness against Strafford in 1641. And once Strafford had been overthrown, it was his old councillors, led by Sir William Parsons and Sir John Borlase as lords justices, who took control of the Dublin administration. Their characteristically harsh policies helped to provoke the Irish rebellion of October 1641, and encouraged potential loyalists, such as the Old English of the Pale, to join the rising.¹⁹

The third stage in the evolution of the Irish Independent group began with the Irish rebellion. During this period the old Boyle group went through a process of refinement, becoming smaller, and more tightly knit. The deaths of the elder Sir Charles Coote, the first earl of Cork, and Viscount Ranelagh removed three senior figures; and when the second earl of Cork sided with the royalists in 1643–4, his younger brother, Lord Broghill, became the political leader of the Boyle interest in Munster. Ignoring existing tensions between the Boyles and Lord Inchiquin, Broghill joined the president's defection to parliament in July 1644. By siding with parliament, Broghill, far from becoming isolated, drew still closer to a core group, comprising Sir William Parsons, Sir Adam and Sir Arthur Loftus, Sir John Temple, Sir Robert Meredith, and Sir Hardress Waller, who had all decided to support parliament by 1644. He knew these men very well. Parsons and Sir Adam Loftus were trustees of Broghill's estates;²⁰ in the early years of the war Waller acted as governor of the Boyles' castle at Askeaton in County Limerick;²¹ and Sir Arthur Loftus probably encouraged Broghill to defect to parliament in 1644.²²

¹⁸ Valentia to Sir Philip Percivalle, 4 Aug. 1647, British Library (BL), Add. MS 46931/B, fo. 148r (*HMC Egmont*, I, pp. 441–2).

¹⁹ Perceval-Maxwell, *Outbreak*, pp. 98–102, 104, 240–2; Little, 'Cork', pp. 630–4.

²⁰ National Library of Ireland (NLI), Box D. 22017–22, bundle 'years 1631, 1640(3)': indenture of 15 Jan. 1641; see also Cork's will, printed in Dorothea Townshend, *The life and letters of the great earl of Cork* (London, 1904), p. 499.

²¹ Sir William St Leger to first earl of Cork, 15 Nov. 1641, Chatsworth, Lismore MS 22, no. 88; Waller had borrowed £1,000 on mortgage from Cork in the 1630s: see NLI, MS 6245 (Cork rentals, 1639–40), p. 166.

²² The close contact between Broghill (in Munster) and Loftus (in Dublin) in the months before the July defection is suggestive: see Petworth House, MS 13192, unfol.: note by William Roberts, 10 Apr. 1644; NLI, MS 6900 (first earl of Cork's accounts, 1641–5), unfol.: entry for 16 Apr. 1644.

These personal connections were reinforced by a new uniting factor: their abiding hatred of the twelfth earl and first marquess of Ormond. This animosity had its origins in the policies of the Boyle group. The first earl of Cork and Sir William Parsons had done their best to undermine the power of Ormond's grandfather in southern Ireland before 1632, and Cork's attempts to resurrect the Kildare dynasty naturally brought him into conflict with the Butlers throughout the 1620s and 1630s.²³ Under Strafford, the young twelfth earl of Ormond had been promoted in a way that was threatening to the Boyle group, which also courted the lord deputy's favour. In the early months of the rebellion the Boyle group had been forced to co-operate with Ormond as the king's lieutenant-general, but in 1643 relations between them became openly hostile, and in March of that year Ormond's opponents in the Irish council called for a hard line against Old English and Gaelic Irish alike.²⁴ The cessation of arms, signed in September 1643, and Ormond's appointment as lord lieutenant in the following November, seemed to indicate the king's readiness to compromise with the Catholic rebels at the expense of Protestantism and good government; and Ormond was held personally responsible for this and subsequent attempts to make peace with the forces of Papal Antichrist. Having struggled against the pro-parliamentarian elements within the Irish council for much of 1643, he now imprisoned Parsons, Loftus, Temple, and Meredith, who opposed the cessation.²⁵ Sir Hardress Waller wrote to Ormond in December, denouncing the peace initiatives,²⁶ and he joined the other Munster Protestants (including Broghill) who defected to parliament in July 1644. At the same time Sir Arthur Loftus openly criticized Ormond, alleging that he would soon 'turne to the Rebbells'.²⁷ By April 1645, Waller, Broghill, and Loftus had all taken the Solemn League and Covenant, which had become a test not only of loyalty to parliament, but of a willingness to reject Ormond's authority in Ireland.²⁸ The suspicions of the Boyle group were confirmed in July 1645, with the publication of the *King's cabinet opened*, a pamphlet which included damaging revelations about Charles's willingness to make peace with the Irish rebels in return for military aid, and highlighted Ormond's role as the king's chief negotiator.²⁹ At the end of 1645 Broghill would denounce Ormond, saying that the lord lieutenant 'has now declared himselfe soe Publikely for ye Roges, yt I wounder he sticks at anny thinge

²³ See Patrick Little, 'The Geraldine ambitions of the first earl of Cork, c. 1620–1643', *Irish Historical Studies* (forthcoming).

²⁴ Sir Adam Loftus and Sir William Parsons were involved in this challenge to Ormond's policies: see Robert Armstrong, 'Protestant Ireland and the English parliament, 1641–1647' (PhD thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1995), pp. 90–2.

²⁵ *CSPI 1633–47*, p. 388.

²⁶ Waller to Ormond, 18 Dec. 1643, Bodl. MS Carte 8, fo. 147.

²⁷ Robert Moulton to Ormond, 9 June 1644, Bodl. MS Carte 11, fo. 161r.

²⁸ Bodl. MS Carte 14, fo. 425r; 24 Apr. 1645; Michael Perceval-Maxwell, 'Ireland and Scotland, 1638–1648', in John Morrill, ed., *The Scottish National Covenant in its British context* (Edinburgh, 1990), pp. 193–211.

²⁹ Henry Parker, *The king's cabinet opened* (14 July 1645), esp. pp. 16, 45.

henceforward yt may advantage them'.³⁰ Broghill's attitude was influenced by the situation in Munster. After a year of uneasy co-operation with Inchiquin, by the end of 1645 Broghill had come to see the president as a dangerous liability, not least because he suspected he was secretly working with Ormond. Increasingly, therefore, Broghill and his allies saw the removal of Ormond as the only solution for Ireland's ills.³¹

The Irish Independent party of the mid-1640s did not appear fully formed, as Viscount Lisle's 'circle': it had evolved in three stages over the previous twenty years. The old Boyle group, with its English loyalties and anti-Catholic prejudices, threw in its lot with the Straffordian regime after 1635, and from 1641 continued to champion the same political ideas in response to the Irish rebellion and the perceived treachery of the king's lord lieutenant, the marquess of Ormond. What emerged was a distinctive political group, willing to ally with English interests when necessary, but not dependent on English politicians for ideas or political leadership. The fall of Strafford had demonstrated the looseness of such bonds, and a similar, equivocal relationship between Irish and English politicians would characterize the 1640s. But in the 1640s, as in the 1630s, the realities of politics in the three kingdoms meant that there was little choice for the Irish Protestants but to try to work with those in power in England.

II

The members of the old Boyle group were no strangers to parliament and its factions. They had worked with English MPs to secure the removal of Strafford in 1641, and through the early years of the Irish wars Westminster had been the focus for lobbying by groups of Irish Protestants, usually styled the 'gentlemen of Ireland'.³² For most of the 1640s such tactics had little success, as English parliamentarians, preoccupied with defeating the king and getting their own way in the subsequent peace negotiations, had little time and few resources to devote to Ireland. The adventurers' scheme, which introduced private funding into the Irish war, was warmly welcomed by the Irish Protestants at its conception in 1642, but the money and men raised were soon diverted into the English war.³³ From the end of 1644, such problems were complicated by the rise of factionalism at Westminster, between the Presbyterians and Independents, which tended to turn parliament in on itself. For the old Boyle group, an alliance with the Presbyterians was clearly out of the question. The leading Presbyterian peer, the earl of Essex, was a friend of Ormond and half-brother to the Catholic earl of Clanricarde; his main ally in the Commons, Denzell

³⁰ Broghill to Percivalle, 9 Dec. 1645, BL, Add. MS 46929, fo. 53v (*HMC Egmont*, 1, p. 266).

³¹ For Irish Protestant views of Ormond, like Charles I, as a 'man of blood', see Armstrong, 'Protestant Ireland', p. 267.

³² In August 1645, for example, Broghill, Temple, Sir Arthur Loftus, and two members of the Parsons family signed a petition for more money to be sent to Ireland: MS Nalson 21, fo. 41r (28 Aug. 1645).

³³ Bottigheimer, *English money and Irish land*, pp. 76–82.

Holles, was Ormond's cousin; and Holles's brother-in-law, Oliver Fitzwilliam, was an Old Englishman, a royalist agent and Confederate officer.³⁴ The Presbyterians also had strong political links with Broghill's local rival in Munster, Lord Inchiquin, and with the Anglo-Scottish forces in Ulster, through the agency of William Jephson, Sir Robert King, Sir John Clotworthy, and other MPs of Irish background. Both Inchiquin and the Ulster Scots were suspected of having links with Ormond, who in the winter of 1645–6 was still hoping to create a broad royalist alliance from the different parties in Ireland. And this plan was in turn part of a more general, 'confederal' policy supported by Essex and his friends at Westminster. With the Presbyterians in charge, the Irish compromise feared by Temple, Parsons, Broghill, and their friends would become a reality.³⁵

The rival, Independent, party was much more attractive to the old Boyle group. For a start, there were a number of existing personal and political connections between them. Sir John Temple, a second generation settler and master of the rolls in Ireland, had been a political client of the Sidneys since the 1630s and retained a personal attachment to both Leicester and Lisle in the 1640s. His election for Chichester in October 1645 was probably secured on the interest of Leicester's brother-in-law, the earl of Northumberland, who was lord lieutenant of Sussex; and as an MP Temple invariably supported the Independents in the Commons.³⁶ Lord Broghill had family connections with the earls of Northumberland, Pembroke, and Salisbury, and had studied with Viscount Lisle at the Huguenot academy at Saumur in the 1630s. In 1644 and 1645 he had twice used his personal influence with the Committee of Both Kingdoms to secure supplies for Munster,³⁷ and he probably owed his success in this to the support of the earl of Northumberland. In July 1644, when the Munster Protestants defected, Broghill had written privately to Northumberland, asking the earl 'to imploy yor power for that speedy relief wch wee humbly desire',³⁸ and in December 1645 he again enlisted Northumberland's support, this time to further his attempts to blacken Inchiquin's reputation in parliamentary circles.³⁹ The connections of Temple and Broghill with the Independents at Westminster were complemented by Sir Hardress Waller's links to the New Model Army. Despite his previous loyalty to Inchiquin, from early 1645 Waller received favours from the Committee of Both Kingdoms,

³⁴ Patrick Little, "'Blood and friendship': the earl of Essex's protection of the earl of Clanricarde's interest, 1641–1646', *English Historical Review*, 112 (1997), pp. 927–41; Little, 'The marquess of Ormond and the English parliament, 1645–1647', in Toby Barnard and Jane Fenlon, eds., *The dukes of Ormonde, 1610–1745* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 83–99, at 84–7. In the latter I was wrong to state that Holles's kinship with Ormond was through Fitzwilliam: they were in fact cousins, both being descended from the Sheffield family.

³⁵ See Little, 'Ormond', *passim*.

³⁶ For Temple see History of Parliament project, London, 1640–60 section, draft biography.

³⁷ Patrick Little, 'The political career of Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill, 1636–1660' (PhD thesis, London, 2000), pp. 59–61.

³⁸ BL, Add. MS 25287, fo. 32v: dated by reference to *ibid.*, fos. 3v, 27r–v.

³⁹ *HMC Egmont*, 1, p. 453: see Little, 'Broghill', p. 70.

and in April he was given command of a regiment in the New Model, and fought with distinction at Naseby in June.⁴⁰ By December, Waller was busy trying to persuade the senior officers to back a more aggressive policy towards Ireland, claiming that ‘tis certaine our greatest hopes for Ireland is from this army, about which I have had many free & serious discourses with Lieut: Gen: Crumwell, whose spirritt leads much that way’.⁴¹ The personal connections between these men and the English Independents were particularly strong from the end of 1645, and it is from that point onwards that the old Boyle group can first be described as the Irish ‘Independents’.

There was one problem with this new alliance. In 1645 there was no sign that the English Independents favoured an ‘imperial’ policy towards Ireland – or, indeed, any coherent policy at all. Ireland lay at the very bottom of the Independents’ list of priorities, well below Scotland and England. There were general concerns in England about the security threat posed by the Irish Catholic rebels, but in practice, it was clear that before Ireland could be considered, Anglo-Scottish relations needed to be resolved. The involvement of the Scots in Irish affairs, confirmed with the creation of a Committee of Both Kingdoms in April 1644, had in fact hampered the Irish war effort, especially once the Independents had turned against the Scots in the winter of 1644–5; and the Ulster commissioners, appointed in 1645, found their task rendered almost impossible by parliament’s refusal to work with the Scots on the ground. But the Scottish situation was itself dependent on the situation in England. The defeat of the king, sealed at Naseby in June 1645, prompted a scramble for political power at Westminster, and increased the Independents’ anxiety to remove the Scots from any future peace deal with the king.⁴² Propaganda concerning Ireland was a useful way of guiding opinion in England. Even the Irish revelations contained in the *King’s cabinet*, published in July 1645, did not provoke the Independents to adopt a new, vigorous policy towards Ireland. The Independent propagandist, Henry Parker, used the Irish letters to scare his English readers into rejecting an easy peace with the king, emphasizing Charles’s duplicity in planning to bring Irish troops to England, and hinting at a general Catholic plot sponsored by the queen.⁴³ In early July Zouch Tate also warned that any Irish peace would be made with the sole aim ‘that the Irish may come over into England to cut your throats, as they cut the throats of all the Irish Protestants in Ireland’.⁴⁴ The Independent newsbook, *Mercurius Britannicus*, continued this train of thought in later weeks, arguing that ‘This

⁴⁰ For Waller’s career see History of Parliament, 1640–60 section, draft biography.

⁴¹ Waller to Percivalle, 4 Dec. 1645, BL, Add. MS 46929, fo. 49r (*HMC Egmont*, 1, pp. 264–5).

⁴² For parliamentarian policy in Ireland and Scotland in this period see Patrick Little, ‘The English parliament and the Irish constitution, 1641–1649’, in Micheál Ó Siochrú, ed., *Kingdoms in crisis: Ireland in the 1640s* (Dublin, 2001), pp. 106–21; David Scott, ‘The “Northern gentlemen”, the parliamentary Independents, and Anglo-Scottish relations in the Long Parliament’, *Historical Journal*, 42 (1999), pp. 347–75.

⁴³ Parker, *Kings cabinet*, pp. 44–5.

⁴⁴ Zouch Tate, *Three speeches spoken at Common-Hall* (14 July 1645), pp. 7–8; Tate was echoed by Samuel Browne: *ibid.*, pp. 14–16.

Peace then is not so much for the safety of the Irish Protestants, as to ruine the English.⁴⁵ Such statements were part of a consciously anglocentric agenda, which sought to discredit the king, to scare the English public, and thereby to assert the position of the Independents in any forthcoming peace negotiations with the king.⁴⁶ The fate of the Irish Protestants was once again being sidelined.

In fact, in the summer and autumn of 1645, the few advances in Irish policy at Westminster came not from the Independents, but from their political rivals. In July 1645 the Presbyterians, concerned at the neglect of Inchiquin in Munster, pushed for the creation of a new Star Chamber Committee of Irish Affairs, to take over the war effort.⁴⁷ In the following months they organized the recruitment of new forces – including a regiment of horse for Inchiquin’s ally, William Jephson – and backed the efforts of the Ulster commissioners to negotiate a peace treaty with Ormond.⁴⁸ The activity of the Presbyterians was rivalled by that of the adventurers. In the autumn, the adventurers, angered by parliament’s poor response and by the corruption of the contractors appointed by the Committee of Both Kingdoms, called for a wide-ranging policy-change, including the raising of 24,000 troops paid for in Irish land, and (crucially) the appointment of an English commander-in-chief, ‘with such a Comission and title of honour and comand as may most impresse respect and feare’ – in other words, a new lord lieutenant.⁴⁹ The adventurers’ spokesman was William Hawkins. Hawkins, a London merchant and adventurer, must not be confused with his namesake, William Hawkins of Iver, Buckinghamshire, who was the earl of Leicester’s solicitor in the 1630s.⁵⁰ The distinction is important, for this was not a policy document drawn up by a member of ‘Lisle’s circle’, but rather the adventurers’ response to parliament’s mishandling of the Irish war. As Sir Philip Percivalle implied, the appointment of a lord lieutenant originated with the adventurers, not the Independents, and Lisle’s nomination was ‘contrarye to the expectacon of those who set the businesse first on foote’.⁵¹ Interestingly, neither faction in parliament was prepared to countenance Hawkins’s ideas in

⁴⁵ *Mercurius Britannicus*, no. 92 (28 July–4 Aug. 1645), pp. 828, 830; for the political allegiance of *Britannicus* (and its author, Marchmont Nedham) in the late summer of 1645 see Jason Peacey, ‘Henry Parker and parliamentary propaganda in the English Civil Wars’ (PhD, Cambridge, 1994), p. 156.

⁴⁶ Ethan Shagan, ‘Constructing discord: ideology, propaganda and English responses to the Irish rebellion of 1641’, *Journal of British Studies*, 36 (1997), pp. 4–34.

⁴⁷ The Presbyterian MP (and ally of Inchiquin), William Jephson, was the originator of this committee: see *Commons Journals (CJ)*, iv, p. 191a; cf. Armstrong, ‘Protestant Ireland’, pp. 198–200.

⁴⁸ Little, ‘Ormond’, pp. 87–9.

⁴⁹ PRO, SP 63/261 (Committee of Irish Affairs, minute book, 1645–6), fo. 45r–v.

⁵⁰ There can be no doubt that we are dealing with two men of the same name, as they both appeared as trustees of the £50,000 ordinance on delinquent estates in June 1648 (see C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait, eds., *The acts and ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642–1660* (3 vols., London, 1911), I, p. 1150): for the London adventurer see Bottigheimer, *English money and Irish land*, pp. 95n, 155, and R. Dunlop, *Ireland under the Commonwealth* (2 vols., Manchester, 1913), II, p. 574n; for Leicester’s solicitor, who acquired the estate at Iver through marriage, see *HMC de Lisle*, VI, pp. 113, 117, 170, 328 and passim. Cf. Adamson, ‘Strafford’s ghost’, pp. 138–9.

⁵¹ Percivalle to Waller, 24 Dec. 1645, BL, Add. MS 46929, fo. 64r (*HMC Egmont*, I, p. 268).

the autumn of 1645: his proposals were thrown out by the Commons, and, in response, the adventurers refused to grant any more money to parliament.⁵²

In contrast to the Presbyterians and adventurers, the Independents did not have a dynamic Irish policy. Instead, they remained preoccupied with attempts to exclude the Presbyterians and the Scots from any peace deal with the king. This obsession with the Scots would have important implications for Ireland. By the end of 1645 it had become apparent that the situation in Ulster, in particular, was obstructing Independent attempts to disentangle the Scots from English affairs. The position of commander-in-chief in Ireland, granted by parliament to the Scottish general, the earl of Leven, in early 1644, gave the Scots a legitimate reason to interfere in any English settlement, and it was for this reason that the Independents adopted the idea, first suggested by the adventurers, of appointing a new lord lieutenant of Ireland, whose authority would trump that of Leven. It was on this basis that the Independents backed calls for the Irish command to be placed in a 'single person', and used their political muscle at Westminster to force through the nomination of Viscount Lisle to the governorship in January 1646.⁵³ Lisle's appointment as parliament's lord lieutenant demonstrates not only the closeness between the Irish and English Independents, but also their distinctiveness. From the English point of view, Lisle's lieutenantcy was an important part of their attempt to reduce the political influence of the Scots. For the Irish Independents, Lisle's office was principally an attack on the position of the king's lord lieutenant, the marquess of Ormond, who had come to represent everything that was wrong with Charles I's Irish policy. Lisle's appointment in early 1646 thus satisfied both the English Independents and their Irish allies, but for very different reasons. The Independents were preoccupied by English affairs, while the Irish Independents' concerns were focused on Ireland; and the tensions inherent within this situation would become more apparent as the year wore on.

III

During the spring and summer of 1646, the new alliance between the Irish and English Independents proved remarkably strong. Lisle's commission as lord lieutenant came into effect on 9 April 1646, and in the following weeks the English Independents quickly took control of the Irish war effort. On 4 May Lisle and five English Independents were added to the Committee of Irish Affairs, and from the next day they could ensure a majority at every meeting.⁵⁴ In the same month, oversight of the Irish finances was taken away from the Presbyterian-dominated Committee of Accounts, and put under a new auditor, Gabriel Beck, client of the Independent peer, Viscount Saye.⁵⁵ Sir William

⁵² Bottigheimer, *English money and Irish land*, p. 96.

⁵³ See Armstrong, 'Protestant Ireland', pp. 207–11.

⁵⁴ *CJ*, IV, 532; *CSPI 1633–47*, pp. 446ff; Armstrong, 'Protestant Ireland', p. 228.

⁵⁵ Firth and Rait, eds., *Acts and ordinances*, I, pp. 717–22; *CSPI 1633–47*, p. 486; for Gabriel Beck see *History of Parliament*, 1640–60 section, draft biography.

Parsons, Sir Adam Loftus, and the ageing Sir John Borlase were brought into the new administration;⁵⁶ and in June the Committee of Irish Affairs began to promote Lord Broghill as a rival to Inchiquin in Munster.⁵⁷ When Inchiquin was away from the province, Broghill was authorized to disburse money 'for carrying on the warre in that province' – a privilege he freely exercised until Inchiquin returned to Munster in late July.⁵⁸ With Inchiquin's return, Broghill went to Westminster, arousing fears that he intended to undermine the lord president's credit with parliament.⁵⁹ Broghill's hand was strengthened by news of the conclusion of Ormond's peace deal with the Confederate Irish in August, and from the end of the month, the Irish committee was actively whittling down Inchiquin's military strength. On 28 August the committee ordered the Munster commissary to 'lay up' all further arms and ammunition arriving in the province, until Lisle sent further instructions;⁶⁰ on 11 September the president's officers were ordered to return 300 pikes reserved for Lisle's army and mistakenly given to Inchiquin;⁶¹ and in October there were bitter complaints in Munster that a further shipload of arms had been withheld in order 'to shorten his lo[rds]hip's power'.⁶² The £6,000 allocated for Munster was not sent to Inchiquin, but kept in England and disbursed by Broghill.⁶³ In parallel with such restrictive measures against Inchiquin, Broghill was rapidly promoted. On 6 September the Irish committee advised that Broghill should return to Ireland with 'some better command then that of a Colonell', proposing that he should take control of four new regiments bound for Munster as the advance guard of Lisle's army, as 'a distinct Brigade from the rest of the Armie there'.⁶⁴ This could only be taken as an attack on Inchiquin's authority as president of Munster. Broghill's commission, drafted by 26 September, made it clear that he was to accept instructions only from Lisle, the Irish committee or parliament, not from Inchiquin. The final version of the commission, presented on 2 October, was passed by a committee made up solely of Independent MPs.⁶⁵ Inchiquin had good cause to fear that Broghill, and his brother-in-law, Sir Arthur Loftus, were now joined with Viscount Lisle in a triumvirate which aimed at his destruction.⁶⁶

⁵⁶ Armstrong, 'Protestant Ireland', p. 229.

⁵⁷ Sir Hardress Waller and Sir Arthur Loftus were also promoted: see Armstrong, 'Protestant Ireland', p. 236.

⁵⁸ PRO, SP 63/261, fo. 141v; SP 16/539/3, fos. 226r–31r, 510r–11r; SP 28/39/2, fo. 120v.

⁵⁹ *HMC Egmont*, I, pp. 301, 305.

⁶⁰ *CSPI 1633–47*, p. 502; *HMC Egmont*, I, p. 309; the attendance at this meeting was four to one in favour of the Independents: Denbigh, Temple, Norton, Challoner, and Clotworthy.

⁶¹ PRO, SP 63/262 (Committee of Irish Affairs minute book, 1646), fo. 107v.

⁶² PRO, SP 63/262, fo. 123r.

⁶³ *HMC Egmont*, I, pp. 283–4, 312; PRO, SP 28/41/5, fo. 460r.

⁶⁴ PRO, SP 63/262, fo. 103r. The attendance on this day was five to one in the Independents' favour: Visc. Lisle, Norton, Challoner, Jn Lisle, Knightley, and Clotworthy.

⁶⁵ PRO, SP 63/262, fos. 121r, 123r–v: those attending: Northumberland, Nottingham, Visc. Lisle, Temple, Norton, Challoner, and Knightley.

⁶⁶ *HMC Egmont*, I, p. 317; see Little, 'Broghill', p. 87.

There was also a high degree of co-operation between the English and Irish Independents in the attack on Ormond, as can be seen in the propagandist works published in the spring and summer of 1646. Sir John Temple's notorious book, *The Irish rebellion* was produced in April, just after Lisle's formal appointment as lord lieutenant. This should be seen as an Irish Protestant, as much as an English parliamentarian, text. For Temple, the original 'conquest' was that of Henry II, who united Ireland (in an echo of Parsons's language of twenty years before) 'to the Imperiall Crown of England'; this established the English settlers 'in point of interest and universall possession, owners, and proprietors of the whole Kingdome of Ireland'; and Elizabeth I did not reconquer Ireland, but intervened to 'redresse the disorders of her subjects in Ireland', with the implication that a similar policy was needed now.⁶⁷ The main body of Temple's book concentrated on the early years of the war, and attacked the Old English of the Pale for joining the Gaelic Irish in rebellion, justifying the action of lords justices Parsons and Borlase (as 'persons of great integrity') and defending the lieutenancy of Lisle's father, the earl of Leicester.⁶⁸ Temple was a close associate of Lisle, and an English Independent MP; but he had also been a Straffordian councillor and an associate of the Boyle group since the 1630s, and his approach to the Irish situation should properly be seen as that of an Irish Protestant.⁶⁹ Significantly, in October 1646 Temple's work was seconded by *Ormonds curtain drawn*, a pamphlet written by Adam Meredith, the son of another prominent Irish Independent, Sir Robert Meredith.⁷⁰ Although sharing Temple's ethnic prejudices, Meredith's short-term political goals were more apparent, and his attack on Ormond more outspoken. He praised the faithful councillors of 1641 – Parsons, Borlase, Loftus, Temple, Coote senior, and Meredith (all Boyle group members) – and added that problems only arose with the advancement of new councillors (who 'like Tares (sowne by the wicked one) suddenly over-top the good Corne'). There followed a sustained attack on Ormond, who showed favour to the rebels, obstructed the best military men (notably Sir Arthur Loftus and Viscount Lisle), and engineered the 1643 cessation of arms.⁷¹ In concentrating on the period before the cessation, both works aimed to justify the lords justices and the old councillors,

⁶⁷ Sir John Temple, *The Irish rebellion* (27 Apr. 1646), pp. 4–8.

⁶⁸ Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, especially pp. 13–14.

⁶⁹ Sir John (b. c. 1601) was born and brought up in Ireland, and educated at Trinity College Dublin; he left Ireland after his father's death in 1627, and fell in with the Sidneys while in London in the 1630s. His overriding concern for Ireland can be seen in his parliamentary career, which was dominated by his role in the various committees of Irish affairs: see *History of Parliament, 1640–60* section, draft biography. For an alternative view see Armstrong, 'Protestant Ireland', p. 229n. I am grateful to Dr John Adamson for discussion of Temple's background and sense of identity.

⁷⁰ For discussion of authorship see Armstrong, 'Protestant Ireland', p. 245n; Adamson, 'Strafford's ghost', pp. 140–2.

⁷¹ Adam Meredith, *Ormonds curtain drawn* (5 Oct. 1646), esp. pp. 10–14, 23–4; see Kathleen Noonan, "'The cruell pressure of an enraged, barbarous people': Irish and English identity in seventeenth century policy and propaganda", *Historical Journal*, 41 (1998), pp. 151–77, at 173n.

and to explore Ormond's role in negotiations with the Irish, which paralleled his deals with the Confederates in 1646. Henry Parker's unfinished pamphlet, *The Irish massacre*, was also published at this time. Concentrating on the conspiracy which surrounded the 1641 rising, it drew on documents collected by the Irish Protestant bishop, Dr Henry Jones, and the English Independent, Gabriel Beck.⁷² Like that of Temple and Meredith, Parker's work demonstrates how the English and Irish Independent factions had joined forces during 1646, in what promised to be a new and dynamic alliance, with far-reaching political consequences for Ireland.

Yet the close co-operation between the Irish and English Independents disguised fundamental differences in their attitude to Irish affairs. For the Irish Independents, attacks on Ormond and Inchiquin constituted the very essence of their political programme; for the English Independents, these were side-shows to the more important business of defeating their factional rivals at Westminster, and securing a favourable peace deal with the king. The crisis came soon after 14 September, when news of the collapse of Ormond's peace treaty with the Confederates reached London. Within a few days, the Presbyterians had seized the opportunity. Pamphlets were published defending Inchiquin, and voicing hopes that Ormond would at last 'declare himself for the Parliament'.⁷³ Presbyterian MPs returned to the Irish committee in force, and on 8 October Broghill was instructed that the supplies for his men had been stopped, and that, until further notice, 'the Comissions intended to his Lo[rdshi]p are to be respited'.⁷⁴ Inchiquin's soldiers now broke open the weapon-stores denied them in August,⁷⁵ and the Presbyterians began to plan their new treaty with Ormond. In response, the Independents abandoned their Irish policies, in order to wrest the political initiative back from the Presbyterians. The new Derby House Committee, set up on 12 October 1646 and staffed by Independents, was specifically designed to take control of the negotiations with Ormond. Ormond, who had been treated as a pariah all summer, was suddenly the focus for Independent blandishments. The Irish Independents, apparently duped by their Westminster allies, reacted with confusion. Broghill tried to mend fences with Inchiquin, calling on his few Presbyterian contacts to help effect a reconciliation with his former enemy.⁷⁶ He was helped in this by Sir William Parsons, who recommended Broghill in his own conciliatory letters to Sir Philip Percivalle and even to his enemy, the marquess of Ormond.⁷⁷ In a bizarre twist, in early November Sir Adam Loftus joined Parsons in recommending that Ormond should now be reinforced, to preserve Dublin from an Irish assault, and both men were now reported to

⁷² Henry Parker, *The Irish massacre* [n.d.], pp. 4, 21.

⁷³ *A letter from a person of quality residing in Kinsale* (15 Sept. 1646), p. 1; *The Irish papers, containing the Lord Digbys letter, and the Lord Inchiquins answer* (1 Oct. 1646), pp. 6–7.

⁷⁴ PRO, SP 63/262, fo. 128r.

⁷⁵ *HMC Egmont*, 1, p. 320.

⁷⁶ Little, 'Broghill', pp. 90–3.

⁷⁷ *HMC Egmont*, 1, pp. 318, 334; Bodl. MS Carte 19, fo. 402v (16 Nov. 1646).

‘speake very hono[ura]blie’ of Ormond.⁷⁸ In a world turned upside down, even reinforcing the suspect Ormond was better than the complete collapse of the Protestant interest in Ireland. This confused situation continued until the end of November, when news reached London that Ormond had refused to conclude a treaty with parliament’s agents, as the Independents (mindful of future negotiations of their own with the king) had set the stakes too high.⁷⁹

The collapse of parliament’s treaty with Ormond soon reopened the factional rifts within Protestant Ireland, and this allowed a patching up of the alliance between the Irish Independents and their English counterparts. On 28 November there were reports that ‘the differences between Enchyquin and Broghill groweth greater’ and on 11 December it was confirmed that Broghill was again expecting a ‘commission independent from In[chiquin]’.⁸⁰ But after the fiasco of October and November, the Irish Independents were no longer content merely to follow the Independents’ lead. On 10 December Loftus, Temple, Parsons, Waller, working with Arthur Annesley, filed a report to parliament on the state of Ireland, which set out a detailed plan of action ‘towards the restoring thereof to the due subjeccon & government: of the Crowne of England’.⁸¹ Their first proposal, ‘That the safety of their parties and places in Mounster be first taken into Care, and to that end, that the Lord Lieutenant: now residing here, be wth all convenient speed dispatched ther’,⁸² not only indicated their focus on reinforcing Munster as opposed to aiding Ormond in Dublin or the Anglo-Scottish forces in Ulster, but also their impatience with Lisle’s lack of progress in the previous year. The arrival of Lisle in Munster would supplant the authority of Inchiquin as president of the province, and facilitate Broghill’s independent command. The last point was suggested by an insistence on the three regiments of horse and four of foot already raised for service under Broghill, to be transported with Lisle to Munster. Other proposals betray the Irish Independents’ dissatisfaction with parliament’s lacklustre approach to the Irish question since Lisle’s appointment early in 1646: money already promised must now be sent, and it was ‘humbly offred, that the parliam[en]t wilbe pleased to ordaine a present monthly provision for support of those forces’. With such measures in place, it was hoped that Munster would be secured against not only the Confederates, but also ‘the imminent danger wch may happen through the discontent of our owne soldiers’ – another sideswipe at Inchiquin.⁸³ The detailed points made for the Munster campaign contrasted with the general – almost vague – suggestions that money and supplies (but no new forces) should be sent to Ulster and Connaught, until ‘they may intirely be reduced into one comaund, subject to

⁷⁸ [Thomas Pigott] to Percivalle, 20 Nov. 1646, BL, Add. MS 46930, fo. 110r (*HMC Egmont*, 1, pp. 330–1). ⁷⁹ Little, ‘Ormond’, pp. 90–3. ⁸⁰ *HMC Egmont*, 1, pp. 338, 341.

⁸¹ Bodl. MS Carte 19, fo. 604r; the December report echoed ‘proposals’ suggested by Broghill in August 1646, which denounced Ormond, requested 5,000 foot and 1,500 horse for Munster, and attacked Inchiquin, saying that without immediate support ‘many of the Gentry and others ... will join with them [Ormondists] heart and hand’: Bodl. MS Carte 67, fos. 299r–301r.

⁸² Bodl. MS Carte 19, fo. 605r.

⁸³ Bodl. MS Carte 19, fo. 605v.

the Lord Lieutennt:'.⁸⁴ The demands of Parsons, Loftus, and their allies should not be seen as a manifesto for Lisle's 'circle', but rather a critique of the conduct of the war over the past year. The Irish Independents now insisted that their English allies take the Irish war seriously. A strong, well-funded expeditionary force to Munster, led by parliament's lord lieutenant, would be the only way to begin a proper reconquest of Ireland; and such pro-active policies would also advance Broghill, neutralize Inchiquin, and reduce Ormond's bargaining power (which depended on his possession of Dublin, and his de jure authority as the king's lord lieutenant).

The Irish Independent demands of 10 December had an immediate effect at Westminster: on the same day the Derby House Committee ordered Lisle to go to Munster as soon as possible;⁸⁵ and it was only a matter of weeks before an expeditionary force was ready to cross to Ireland from the south-west. The influence of the Irish Independents over Lisle's regime increased markedly in the intervening period. On 1 January, the Derby House Committee ordered that Loftus, Temple, Parsons, Borlase, and Meredith – all Irish Independents – would be appointed to Lisle's privy council, alongside Valentia and Annesley (who, for the moment, had aligned themselves with Lisle) and two English MPs.⁸⁶ Inchiquin, Coote, and King (all tainted by their Presbyterian connections) were also included, but 'onely for the present ... Till the Houses shall think fitt to adde any other.'⁸⁷ John Davies (at Belfast) was aware of the wider factional implications: 'I never doubted but Sr Will [Parsons] & Sr Ad[am Loftus] would joyne with Sr Jo. [Temple]; tyme will trye all things, & if destructyone doth not befaule some of them, I know noe thing; if bro[ghill] doth embrace that busines, it will ruyne him.'⁸⁸ The Irish Independents remained violently opposed to any compromise with either Ormond or Inchiquin. In late February 1647 Edmund Smith told Percivalle of continuing opposition to new peace negotiations between Ormond and parliament, led by those 'whose fiery zeale hath so farre transported them, that they have said, it were better all those inocent people should perish, rather then hee should escape unpunished'.⁸⁹ While Ormond was slandered at Westminster, Inchiquin was confronted in Munster. When Lisle embarked from Minehead on 18 February, he took Sir Arthur and Sir Adam Loftus and Sir Hardress Waller, and on arrival at Kinsale he was met by Broghill.⁹⁰ Inchiquin, who said the expedition had 'the semblaunce rather of a conquest, then of releif',⁹¹ saw Broghill as the source of the vindictiveness of Lisle's regime. On 5 March he

⁸⁴ Bodl. MS Carte 19, fo. 606r.

⁸⁵ *CSPI 1647–60*, p. 727.

⁸⁶ Annesley and Valentia supported Lisle in the winter of 1646–7, but sided with Inchiquin in the spring of 1647, and were openly hostile to Temple and his friends by the summer: see *HMC Egmont*, 1, pp. 441–2.

⁸⁷ Bodl. MS Nalson 21, fo. 111r.

⁸⁸ Davies to Percivalle, 13 Jan. 1647, BL, Add. MS 46931/A, fo. 10r (*HMC Egmont*, 1, p. 352).

⁸⁹ BL, Add. MS 46931/A, fo. 70r: 25 Feb. 1647 (*HMC Egmont*, 1, p. 364).

⁹⁰ *HMC Egmont*, 1, p. 362.

⁹¹ Inchiquin to Percivalle, 5 Mar. 1647, BL, Add. MS 46931/A, fo. 76r (*HMC Egmont*, 1, pp. 367–8).

complained that he had been excluded from Lisle's counsels, 'as well as all others of relacon to this Province formerly, except such only as my Lord of Broghill hath intimated to bee of that faction'.⁹² A few days later, his situation was worse, as 'purposely to avoyd owing anything to my assistance, advice or intelligence they repose sol[e]y on my Lord of Broghill's, who assures them myne to bee of no value'.⁹³ On 29 March, Inchiquin again characterized Broghill as the ring-leader of the Independents in Munster: 'my person and authority [are] dayly affronted, my Lord of Broghill comaunding all things at his pleasure, so as my Lo[rd] L[ieutenan]t putts the Execucon of my place in effect into his hands'.⁹⁴ Inchiquin seems to have been certain that, although Lisle was not quite a 'figurehead', in Munster he took his lead from his local subordinate, Lord Broghill.

Broghill's position in Munster was based on Lisle's authority as lord lieutenant; and when parliament refused to extend Lisle's term of office beyond April 1647, he was forced to join his master, and other Irish Independents, in a hasty and undignified departure from Ireland. It is nevertheless indicative that the attack on Inchiquin, later in 1647, was still led by Broghill and his allies, not by Lisle. In March, while Lisle was still in Munster, Broghill's brother-in-law, Sir Arthur Loftus,⁹⁵ was again trying to 'recriminalate' Inchiquin in London, prompting the lord president to draw up a detailed answer to the charges.⁹⁶ On this occasion Loftus was deflected by the factional changes at Westminster, which brought the Presbyterians back into control in late March; but in April, with the return of Broghill and Lisle's councillors, Inchiquin once again came under attack. Loftus was now supported by his father, Sir Adam, and Sir John Temple, who launched a blistering attack on Inchiquin on 23 April,⁹⁷ and in early June the English Independents included charges against Inchiquin (possibly acting on information provided by Waller) in their articles against the eleven members.⁹⁸ The impeachment of the eleven members allowed the Independents to take back control of the Derby House Committee of Irish Affairs in late June, and new attacks on Inchiquin followed. On 27 July, Percivalle told the president that all future Munster initiatives would be done 'by the advice and consent of the Lord Broghill and the rest of the Council'.⁹⁹ During the Presbyterian attempted coup in late July, Broghill, Temple, and Waller joined the New Model at its headquarters outside

⁹² BL, Add. MS 46931/A, fo. 76v.

⁹³ Enclosed in Inchiquin to Percivalle, 13 Mar. 1647, BL, Add. MS 46931/A, fo. 99v (*HMC Egmont*, 1, p. 374).

⁹⁴ Inchiquin to Percivalle, 29 Mar. 1647, BL, Add. MS 46931/A, fo. 138r (*HMC Egmont*, 1, p. 380).

⁹⁵ Sir Arthur must not be confused with his father, Sir Adam Loftus: cf. Adamson, 'Strafford's ghost', pp. 151–2.

⁹⁶ Inchiquin to Percivalle, 13 Mar. 1647, BL, Add. MS 46931/A, fo. 95r–v; Inchiquin's answers, c. Mar. 1647, *ibid.*, fos. 140r–1v.

⁹⁷ Bodl. MS Nalson 6, fo. 80r–v.

⁹⁸ R. Bell, ed., *Memorials of the Civil War, comprising the correspondence of the Fairfax family* (2 vols., London, 1849), II, pp. 376–7; Armstrong, 'Protestant Ireland', p. 289.

⁹⁹ *HMC Egmont*, 1, p. 438.

London – in yet another show of solidarity between the Irish and English Independents.¹⁰⁰ The New Model's march on London in August, and the collapse of the Presbyterian interest which followed, left Inchiquin dangerously exposed. Inchiquin's loss of influence coincided with the surrender of Dublin by Ormond – who left Ireland in late July – and the appointment of the politically reliable Michael Jones as governor of the Irish capital.¹⁰¹ With Ormond removed, and Inchiquin and his Presbyterian allies discomfited, in the late summer of 1647 the Irish Independents seemed to have tightened their grip on the reins of Irish policy.

IV

In late 1646, Sir William Parsons – himself a leading Irish Independent – had outlined the factional divisions which now plagued Westminster: 'The 2 visible p[ar]ties spoken of to support the divisions are the presbiterians and the independency, and under theis denominacons yt is thought do all other lesser divisions and p[ar]tialities ranke themselves, as occasion serves.'¹⁰² Parsons emphasized that these smaller interest groups were not integrated into the larger factions, but rather joined them when their interests coincided. His identification of a confederation of interests within the Independent party is especially significant. The contemporary diarist, Thomas Juxon, distinguished between 'the Independents' in the Commons and 'the Lord Northumberland's party' in the Lords;¹⁰³ recent work by Jason Peacey has questioned the unity even among the Independent peers;¹⁰⁴ and the British element of this coalition is identified by David Scott, in his work on the Northern gentlemen, who moulded the Independents' anti-Scottish stance.¹⁰⁵ The Irish Independents may be seen as the counterpart to Scott's Northern gentlemen: a single-issue lobby group, with access to the leaders at Westminster, and hence in a position to influence parliamentary policy. Theirs was an overtly hibernocentric agenda, which demanded vigorous intervention by parliament, the suppression of Catholicism, widespread confiscation and plantation, and the removal of Ormond and his cronies from any influence over Irish affairs. Yet, for most of this period, the English Independents did not share the priorities of their Irish neighbours. Without an outright victory over their Presbyterian rivals and the right to impose terms on the king free from Scottish interference, the English Independents could never commit themselves to less immediate concerns, including the re-conquest of Ireland. This tension between the Irish and English Independents was a permanent feature of their political relationship,

¹⁰⁰ *HMC Egmont*, 1, p. 436.

¹⁰¹ Jones replaced Lisle's brother, Sir Algernon Sidney, but agreed with the Irish Independent hard line on Ireland, as events would show.

¹⁰² Parsons to Ormond, 16 Nov. 1646, Bodl. MS Carte 19, fos. 402r–3r.

¹⁰³ K. Lindley and D. Scott, *The journal of Thomas Juxon, 1644–1647* (Camden Soc., 5th ser., 13, 1999), p. 147.

¹⁰⁴ Jason Peacey, 'The exploitation of captured royalist correspondence and Anglo-Scottish relations in the British Civil Wars, 1645–1646', *Scottish Historical Review*, 79 (2000), pp. 213–32, at 229–32.

¹⁰⁵ Scott, 'The "Northern gentlemen"', *passim*.

and demonstrated the looseness of the coalition between them: the two groups worked closely together in the spring and summer of 1646, but this alliance fractured in the factionalism of October and November, and when the collaboration was re-established in the winter of 1646–7, it was the Irish Independents who took the lead.

The identification of a distinct Irish Independent faction, with its own political ideology, also has implications for our understanding of Anglo-Irish relations in the mid-seventeenth century. The Irish Independents did not need to take their lead from the Westminster parliament – there was an alternative, radical tradition, which was home-grown, based on conquest, resettlement, and penal legislation. It also included a vision of integration between England and Ireland which owed little to the arguments of the Old English theorists that Ireland was a separate ‘kingdom’ under a shared crown, which Aidan Clarke has identified as influencing Irish Protestant constitutional theory later in the seventeenth century. Interestingly, Clarke’s earliest example of this separatist agenda is the work of William Domville in the Dublin Convention of 1660.¹⁰⁶ In earlier decades the Irish Protestants, far from being unwilling to comment on their own status, developed a radical position which put great emphasis on the status of the Irish Protestants as the ‘English of Ireland’. In 1625 Sir William Parsons could write of the need to force the native Irish to accept the ‘Empier of England’;¹⁰⁷ in 1646 Temple argued for a restoration of Ireland ‘to the Imperiall Crown of England’; and in their blueprint for the Lisle expedition, the Irish Independents called for a vigorous campaign to restore Ireland ‘to the due subjeccion & governemt: of the Crowne of England’.¹⁰⁸ The radical solution to the Irish problem came not from the English parliamentarians, but from a powerful group among the Irish Protestants, which consistently pressed for the destruction of Gaelic Irish society and religion, for systematic plantation and an extension of the ‘English Empire’. And this uncompromising approach would reappear in the 1650s, as the Irish Protestants consistently supported Ireland’s incorporation into the Cromwellian union.¹⁰⁹ It was only in 1659–60 that the Old English constitutionalist line began to have an impact on mainstream Irish Protestant opinion; and it is this short period, rather than the 1640s, which should be considered the ‘aberrant years’ of Irish political thought.¹¹⁰

The radical policies proposed by the Irish Independents came in sharp contrast to the consistently low priority given to Ireland by the parliamentarians,

¹⁰⁶ Aidan Clarke, ‘Colonial constitutional attitudes in Ireland, 1640–1660’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 90 (1990), pp. 357–75.

¹⁰⁷ PRO, SP 63/241, fo. 338v.

¹⁰⁸ Bodl. MS Carte 19, fo. 604r.

¹⁰⁹ Patrick Little, ‘The first unionists? Irish Protestant attitudes to union with England, 1653–1659’, *Irish Historical Studies*, 32 (2000), pp. 44–58; cf. Aidan Clarke, *Prelude to Restoration in Ireland: the end of the Commonwealth, 1659–1660* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 13–14.

¹¹⁰ Clarke, ‘Constitutional attitudes’, p. 361. For a survey of later attitudes towards union see James Kelly, ‘The origins of the act of union: an examination of unionist opinion in Britain and Ireland, 1650–1800’, *Irish Historical Studies*, 25 (1987), pp. 236–63.

and by the English Independents in particular. As I have suggested elsewhere, the Independents were notably reluctant to introduce constitutional innovations throughout the 1640s, and this was but one aspect of a general failure to concentrate political attention, let alone financial resources, on winning the Irish war.¹¹¹ This lack of urgency became all the more apparent in the months after the Independents had taken power in August 1647. Despite the hopes of Broghill and his friends, who thought their policies would now be realized, in a matter of weeks Irish affairs had once again slid to the bottom of the agenda, as English politics became increasingly radical, and resources were diverted to England to fight the Second Civil War. Parliament's Irish committees dithered over the appointment of commissioners to take charge of Munster,¹¹² and the much-heralded financial reforms of early 1648 failed to increase the money provided for the Irish war.¹¹³ In the meantime the Protestant commanders were left stranded, with few supplies, and no realistic hope of English intervention – a situation which hampered their resistance to the Confederate forces, and contributed to the defection of Inchiquin to the royalist camp in April 1648.¹¹⁴

The Irish Independents were left to kick their heels in London, waiting for English events to resolve themselves, and Broghill, thoroughly disillusioned, retired to Somerset, where he was courted by the royalists eager to win him for their cause.¹¹⁵ By the late summer of 1648, Sir John Temple had turned his back on the English Independents, and supported attempts at Westminster to reopen negotiations with the king – a change which ensured he was among the MPs secluded at Pride's Purge in December.¹¹⁶ Sir Adam Loftus continued in his efforts to raise money for the Irish war, but the lack of funds meant that the average delay between his warrants being issued and the receipt of the money in Ireland soon grew to nearly six months.¹¹⁷ Sir William Parsons's depression was palpable. In his will, written in London at about this time, he complained of 'his pr[e]s[en]te destitute condicon', and his last wish was, 'if God shall returne mee into Ireland' that he might be buried 'in my owne vault in Patrickes Dublin'.¹¹⁸ It was only in late 1648 – as the Irish Independents sank into even greater depths of gloom – that the English politicians suddenly became concerned about Ireland. Predictably, it was fears of England's security – rather than a coherent imperial policy – which prompted this quickening of interest. It was another few months before Cromwell's

¹¹¹ Little, 'Irish constitution', passim.

¹¹² PRO, SP 21/26 (Derby House Committee, foul book of orders, 1646–8), pp. 105, 108, 144, 147: by the time the membership of the commission had been settled, Inchiquin had defected to the king.

¹¹³ *Calendar of State Papers Domestic (CSPD) 1648–9*, p. 21; *CSPI 1647–60*, pp. 22, 25, 35, 39, 784.

¹¹⁴ Little, 'Irish constitution', pp. 118–9; for a convincing overview of this period see Bottigheimer, *English money and Irish land*, pp. 109–12. ¹¹⁵ Little, 'Broghill', pp. 109–12.

¹¹⁶ David Underdown, *Pride's purge: politics in the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford, 1971), p. 387; *CJ*, v, p. 673b; vi, p. 94b.

¹¹⁷ See Little, 'Irish constitution', p. 118n.

¹¹⁸ PRO, PROB 11/215, fos. 251v–3r; see also Toby Barnard, 'The Protestant interest, 1641–1660', in Ohlmeyer, ed., *Ireland from independence to occupation*, pp. 218–40, at 222.

expeditionary force was ready, and by this time most of the Irish Independents had been coaxed back into the parliamentary fold. Meredith, Loftus, Waller, and Broghill all became advisers of Cromwell in the period before his invasion in August 1649;¹¹⁹ and, significantly, in May of that year the English council asked Sir William Parsons to publish his ‘discourses asserting the English Interest in Ireland’ – over two decades after his first, uncompromising, assertion of Ireland’s place within the ‘Empier of England’.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ *CSPD 1649–50*, pp. 77, 142, 584, 587; Little, ‘Broghill’, pp. 113–17.

¹²⁰ PRO, SP 25/62 (council of state order books, 1649), p. 279 (*CSPD 1649–50*, pp. 131–2).