CHAPTER ONE

PARAGRAPH

Belfast is a city built during and heavily influenced by the Plantation of Ulster, a period during which, English and Lowland Presbyterians, many Protestants from Scotland and England, resettled to the North of Ireland, largely displacing the local population.

Quelling the former Gaelic stronghold of Ulster and forever changing the linguistic and demographic makeup of this island.

Belfast was one of the epicentres of this movement, and at a first glance one may think that there is little left of the Gaelic presence. However, the Irish language and legacy is forever ingrained in the city's fabric. Irish-speakers, the language lives on in place names, surnames and even Irish vernacular English. Belfast, the capital of the Northern state has Gaelic origins, **'Beal Feirsd'** meaning 'the mouth of the sand bank'.

Arthur Chichester was in charge of the Plantation of Ulster and he was therefore determined to set a good example for the other settlements. He granted the Earls of Donegall (after the Irishtown acquisition) and until the 19th century, the Marquis, the second Marquis, blew the family fortune on horses and women at the beginning of the nineteenth century, virtually all of the town was owned by the Chichesters.

By the turn of the century Belfast was the largest industrial city, Belfast was inhabited by approx. 50,000 residents. A bustling port and manufacturing centre, Belfast was an industrial outlier in a rural country, it was the fastest at one stage the fastest growing urban agglomeration in the United Kingdom. The city was built at this time chose names proclaiming the city's loyalty to the Crown.

The symbolical and other, unlocated lack of anything that represents a Gaelic presence in Belfast, is further alienated through the unwillingness to understand/learn the native language of this land.

Lagan Bridges

not surprisingly, many streets in the newer parts of the city are named after members of the family. For example.

DONEGALL ROAD

DONEGALL PLACE DONEGALL QUAY DONEGALL PASS

DONEGALL PASS AVENUE DONEGALL SQUARE

CHICHESTER STREET CHICHESTER ALLEY

DONEGALL ALLEY is named after his Arthur's first agent. **DONEGALL** was once the family dead pain. **MAD MEDEN** and **MAD MARGAR** were named in honour of the second Marquis's wife's family.

CHICHESTER STREET CHICHESTER ALLEY

DONEGALL PLACE DONEGALL QUAY

DONEGALL PASS AVENUE DONEGALL SQUARE

DONEGALL PASS

DONEGALL ROAD

Cave Hill

Scottish Provident Building

The old Belfast City Walls.

this street has been the main street in the 17th and 18th centuries.

an interconnected system of "Entryes" previously facilitated passage through the walled city of Belfast.

Donegall Place, Donegall Pass, Donegall Square East, Donegall Square South, Donegall Square West, Donegall Street, Donegall Quay, Donegall Place, Donegall Pass, Donegall Pass Avenue

BLANK SPACE

Suddenly as the nightmare moved in,
it was removed by exploration marks.

Nuts, bolts, nails, car-keys.
A fount of broken type.

And the explosion itself—an asterisk
on the map. This hyphenated line,
a burst of rapid fire...

I was trying to complete a sentence in my
head, but it kept stuttering.

All the discovered alleys and streets
like a stammer of letters and colons.

I know this labyrinth as well. Bombsites,
Raglan, Inkerman, Crimea Streets.

Why can't I escape? Every move is punctuated.
Crimea Street. Dead end again.

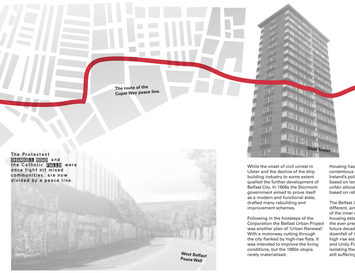
A Sanskrit, Kremlin-2 mash.
Malvolion face-shields. Walkie-talkies.

What is My name? Where am I coming from?
Where am I going?
A fastfalls of quotation marks.

Ciaran Carson
from Belfast Confetti (1989)

There have always been divisions in Belfast. Communities were defined by religion, nationalities, cosmopolitan languages. They became even more real during the partition of Ireland, when previously arbitrary county borders became real international borders. Families, streets divided the island, and Belfast was no different.

In the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement, the city was a place where tensions boiled between communities, neighbours turned on neighbours. The Burning of Bombay Street 1969 was a turning point for the once mixed Protestant/Catholic area. Families were forced people to move and streets were divided along 'Peace Lines'.



Thank you.

Transition to children's social barrier.

Peace wall in front of the Divis Tower in Belfast.

A city divided. Memory is subject.

While the onset of civil unrest in Ulster and the decline of the ship building industry to some extent had a direct and indirect impact of Belfast City. In 1968 the Stormont government aimed to prove itself as a modern and functional state, drafted many rebuilding and improvement schemes.

Following in the footsteps of the Corbusier inspired Le Plan Voisin project was another plan of 'Urban Renewal'. With a motorway cutting through the city flanked by high-rise flats. It was intended to improve the living conditions. The 1960s utopia rarely materialised.

Housing has always been a contentious element of Northern Ireland's politics, from voting tied to property ownership to the unfair allocation of council houses based on religious background.

The Belfast Urban Project was no exception. It was responsible for many of the inner city's substandard housing estates. Unable to escape the poverty and overcrowding of slums, future decades would see the downfall of the project and new build high rise estates such as the Divis and Unity Flats. With the Westlink motorway, overshadowing, who are still suffering to this day.

URBAN RENEWAL HAS ALSO RESULTED IN A LOSS OF COMMUNITY AND THE SENSE OF BELONGING FOR CITIZENS MANY HISTORIC WORKING CLASS AREAS WERE DEMOLISHED TO MAKE WAY FOR NEW HIGHRISE FORMATIONS COMPLETE WITH MOTORWAYS

DIVIS FLATS
DIVIS FLATS
DIVIS FLATS