Empire and Resistance

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# Introduction

In the mid-seventeenth century, Ireland is a political hotbed. King Charles I has appointed Thomas Wentworth as the Lord Deputy of Ireland, bringing with him the specter of continued plantations. These plantations were massive upheavals of the established social order, in that the crown appropriated lands from the Gaelic Irish and redistributed them to new settlers from England and Scotland. This was a way of forcing a religious change in Ireland as the new settlers were predominately Protestant (whereas the Gaelic Irish and Old English were mostly Catholic). Wentworth’s appointment was not only damaging to the Gaelic Irish, but also to the Old English families, some of whom had been on the island since the long-gone days of the Norman Conquest in the twelfth century. Wentworth threatened, with the creation of another plantation, to take not only the lands of the Gaelic Irish but also those of the Old English. He was anti-Catholic and would seek to pass legislation which barred Catholics from serving as officers in the army among other hereditary rights. The New English, coming in from England and Scotland, given their lands by the crown, would fight to keep their newfound windfalls. However, it’s only a matter of time before the powder keg that is the kingdom explodes into all-out bloody conflict, and if you’re cunning, creative, and politic enough, you might just be able to bring yourself and your family out on top of this whole mess once it is said and done. Your battlefield here is not out in the rolling grassy fields of Queen’s County, but in the Halls of Parliament, in business dealings, and in your artistic patronage.

History did not have to go the way that it did. There is always a precarious nature to its course, filled with opportunity, loss, and the messy nuance and unpredictability that people inherently bring to the table. History wasn’t inevitable– and the individuals who lived through those times had no idea where they or their fortunes would end up, but did the best they could with the information they had. Sometimes things ended well, others in attainder and execution.

What choices will you make?

*Empire and Resistance* is a free world supplement for *Fate Core*. We like to think of it as part educational experience and part role-play. Because the game is built using the *Fate Core* system, you will need a copy of the system book to play this game. Don’t have *Fate Core*? No Problem! *Evil Hat Productions* has a digital copy of the book available on its website. This electronic version of *Fate Core* is available for a pay-what-you-like price. Which means you can feel free to try the system out for free. If, like us, you think it is worth paying for, we encourage you to stop back and contribute for more cool gaming.

# Background to the World

The year is 1640, and Charles I sits on the thrones of England, Scotland, and Ireland. His native Scotland has just begun a rebellion against the changes he and Archbishop Laud are trying to make to the Church of Scotland to make it more like the Church of England, which made the Kirk of Scotland, its ruling churchmen, very upset. This led to the Bishop’s War in 1639, which you would have heard about. You also have heard about the tensions rising in the English Parliament, between the king and the Hot Protestants (or Puritans as they are called now).

To fund his wars on the continent, Charles needed to increase taxes, but only Parliament could raise taxes on people, and Parliament wanted powers that Charles wasn’t willing to give. So, Charles found a way to 'tax' money (called 'Ship Money'), through an old legal loophole, without needing to call Parliament. This, of course, angered the members of Parliament, but there was nothing they could do…​ yet.

On top of all of these pressures, there’s a somewhat new Lord Deputy taking up residence in Dublin. The Lord Deputy rules as a proxy for the sovereign (in this case, Charles). For the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the Lords Deputy of Ireland were members of the FitzGerald family, an Old English family that came from Wales with the Cambro-Norman Invasion in the late 12th century. Lately, though, the Lords Deputy are Englishmen, and the latest is no exception.

Thomas Wentworth is a man who is generally unlikable, especially as Lord Deputy. Sent over from England in 1632, he works hard, is ruthless in completing his goals, and is steadfastly loyal to Charles. He is a double dealer - Charles promised the House of Lords (dominated by the Old English) 51 'Graces' in exchange for a massive tax hike, and Wentworth made it seem like he was going along with the prior agreement. In the first session of his Irish Parliament, held at Dublin Castle, he secured the promise of funds from the House of Lords. On his second session, though, instead of upholding Charles' agreement, he refused two of the Graces. The Graces which were granted to the Irish allowed for Catholics to hold office in the army, which they can’t do. Even if you’re from a New English family, from either Scotland or England, there are reasons to not like Wentworth or the current situation.

While your family may have benefitted from the seizure of Catholic lands (and their subsequent redistribution to Protestants), you know you can’t trust Wentworth to keep his word to you on anything - especially when it comes to the army or land. More and more people are coming from England and Scotland, which can make it more difficult to start over, and your lawful taking of the lands previously occupied by the Catholic Old English or Gaelic Irish makes it that much more dangerous for you to live there (as they tend to want to have their ancestral lands back). If you’re from a Gaelic Irish family, well, you’ve got a lot to not like, don’t you? You’re probably intermarried with an Old English family, and you both share the same faith, but the New English keep taking lands from your family and those with whom your family is allied. Unless you’re from Munster or Ulster, where the largest settlements of New English outside of Dublin are, then you probably don’t really worry much about Wentworth and his New English settlers. You go about your normal life, but you can’t completely ignore what’s happening in the Pale.

## Politics and Family

You are a member of a family of some power in Ireland. You may be a part of a successful **merchant** family seeking to build its power and prosperity in the midst of these chaotic times. You have cash, but that alone will only get you so far. The ruling aristocracy still sees you as nothing more than part of the rabble.

Perhaps you are the member of an **Old English** family that sees itself as one of the rightful members of the Irish aristocracy, as you have been for centuries. This is a challenging time for the Old English whose identity is permanently tied to their Catholic faith. The increased hostility of the English Crown and the influx of these New English, who are for the most part not Catholic, brings hint of rising risk to Catholics in Ireland.

The **Gaelic Irish** families have seen this happen before, when the Old English arrived. As a child of an Gaelic family, you would chafe at claims or rule made by the English, old and new alike, but you would also be aware of the limits of your family’s power.

Would you seek to restore your family’s claims or would you find ways to negotiate that keep your family name alive in the midst of this very new Ireland? Of course, you could also be a member of the **New English**. As part of a family that has moved from England or Scotland to Ireland in hopes of finding more wealth and better options for power and expansion, you would see this new land as a mix of opportunity and risk. Whatever you choose, you will find yourself forced to navigate between the differing goals and interests of these factions and those of the Irish people. Your success relies on your ability to navigate conflicting loyalties without over-reaching. How you choose to position yourself, the people you choose to support, and the way you engage artists to communicate your message will all have a significant impact on your success and failure.

These are dangerous times for Ireland. Discontent is simmering just below the surface. Can you and your fellow players find a way to prevent an all-out explosion, or is war an inevitable outcome?

# Creating A Character for *Empire and Resistance*

*“The past is a foreign country, they do things differently there” – L.P. Hartley*

While *Empire and Resistance* relies on *Fate Core* (see Chapter 3 for character creation details) for much of its character creation, there are a few specifics that are necessary for the development of a player character. The rules below outline how character creation works for *Empire and Resistance*.

Part of the challenge and fun of playing in a historical world is trying to stay true to the lived experiences of actual, real people. As a player, part of your job then will be to conduct outside research to make your character and to understand the world a bit more. There is a list of resources at the end of the Source Book that will point you in the right direction. Key terms to focus on will be *early modern, Wars of the Three Kingdoms, social history, cultural history, economic history, genealogy, and of course Ireland.*

## Family Creation

As in much of early modern life, your character and the options available to them are heavily defined by your family. This means that the first step in defining your character requires that you define your family. *Empire and Resistance* focuses on characters who leverage political and economic power, and the family was the core of a person’s political strength and power. Families were also a limiting factor. Each family will have a certain set of expectations, loyalty, and service. Refusing these could leave your character with no support in a very harsh and unforgiving world. Your family offers you a certain level of access to the halls of power. This means one of two things: your family is part of the aristocracy, or your family has made significant money as part of a new and rising merchant class. In either case, your family name is a part of how the world sees you. Your family, both name and reputation, proceeds you. You cannot easily escape it.

Because of the importance of the family on the development of your character, it is important to think about who your family is as a part of who your character is. Family creation, however, is different from character creation. While a character’s goals and behaviors are often influenced and sometimes constrained by their families, it is important to remember that these families have their own goals and interests. Your character is in a world where, much like ours, families can help or hinder the individuals who belong to them. A family’s power and the issues it faces stand outside of the character, but may also feature heavily within the character’s own story. Keep this in mind as you develop your family.

Family creation sets the stage for your character. Think of your character’s family as the prologue to your character. Ask yourself where your family came from? Are you a child of displaced aristocrats, or part of the up-and-coming merchant bourgeoise? These background elements can act as aspects for the family, but they may also give you a chance to develop more complex and interesting aspects for your character.

As with all elements of FATE play, remember that family creation is part of the game. While characters’ families are not required to have linked backgrounds, it can be helpful in creating an invested party of players. Families rarely came to success and power on their own. The alliances between player characters families can open up new avenues for play in the three kingdoms.

This is also a great opportunity to engage in research to find out more about some of the families who made their home in the ‘wild’ lands outside of the Pale, or the also wild lands inside of it.

Family creation does have a lot in common with standard *Fate Core* character creation. There are a few key differences, however. A step-by-step outline is provided below.

### Guide to Family Creation

1. Pick your family’s name.
2. Create your family’s concept.
3. Identify your family’s trouble.
4. Determine your family’s reputation and assets.
5. Select your family’s influences.

#### Step 1: Pick Your Family’s Name

A family name is important. Not only is it a part of your character’s name, but it connects your character to the history and lineage of the land around them. Family names were very important in Early Modern Ireland. A family name allowed others to quickly identify where a person fit in the social order, and often dictated how that person was treated by the rest of the society.

While there are no particular rules for family names, it is strongly suggested that you select names that match with family background and concept you select. While *Empire and Resistance* is a fictional game, it is based on a time that was very real and had very specific naming conventions. Deciding on family and character names that match with the setting will allow for easier play within the existing structure of the game world.

Names in the early modern world, while incredibly important, were also quite fluid. For example, Catalina de Trastamara, hija de la Catolica (Isabel y Fernando), was the first wife of King Henry VIII, and was also well known as Catherine of Aragon. She signed her name frequently as Kateryn, Katherina, Katharine, or Katerine. Queen Henrietta Maria, who was queen of England, Scotland, and Ireland during the period of our game, signed her name using her native French spelling "Henriette Marie" but was also known widely in England as "Mary." Names, and how you craft/spell them, were contextual in the early modern period, and this can be reflected in how your character introduces him or herself to others. While you may be from a powerful Gaelic Irish family, you could introduce yourself in a more English manner, depending on the circumstances of the situation in which you find yourself. Especially if you need to ingratiate yourself with some powerful English elites. You may choose to only use your Gaelic name as well - it’s up to you. However, there could be consequences in the game should you not 'read the room' accurately and adopt a style that doesn’t fit with the situation.

**Gaelic Family Names**

Gaelic Irish names tended to follow a patronymic naming system - meaning that your surname is derived from your father’s given name, or if you have another well-known relative, you would include their name in yours instead.

If you’re playing a male character: If your given name is Padraig (Patrick) and your father’s name was Niall (Neal) then your name could be Padraig Mac Niall, or Patrick, son of Neal. If an older ancestor is more well known, you could also just choose to use their name (as a substitute, in addition, or whenever the situation called for it) as your surname as well - so if you had a great-grandfather, Cathal, who had served well in a battle and became renown for it, then you could use his name to harken back to that family glory - so Padraig O’Cathal, or Patrick, descendant of Charles.

If you’re playing a female character: While typically you would use your father’s name as your surname, just as a male character would, you would instead of using "O" to denote son of, since you’re not a son, you would use "Ni." For example, Aoife Ni Niall, for Eva, daughter of Neal. If an older ancestor was more well known, you would use "Nic" to denote that - so Aoife Nic Cathal, or Eva, descendant of Charles. Women also had the choice to adopt their husband’s surname, should they so desire (with slight variations). So if Aoife married a man who used the surname Mac Cailean, she could be named Bean Mhic Cailean, or Wife of the Son of Collin. If he used the surname O’Cailean, then she would be Bean Ui Cailean, or wife of the descendant of Collin. You could always omit the 'Bean' as it would be implied with your use of "Ui" or "Mhic" that you were married.

If you decide to make your family more matriarchal, that also works! You can craft a family story of an ancestor who did something memorable and use HER name as your surname, just as you would for a male ancestor. It’s up to you!

Example Gaelic Given/Surnames:

Male

Aodh, Bran, Cailean, Conall, Cormac, Diarmaid, Domhnall, Fergus, Maolcholm, Niall, Ros, Torna

Female

Aine, Aoife, Brighid, Ciara, Deirdre, Eithne, Fiona, Grainne, Riona, Una

**Old English Family Names**

If your family is Old English, then they may have come over with the Norman Invasion of Ireland in the 12th century. These families would have been the same as some who participated in the Norman Invasion of England in 1066 when William the Conqueror took the throne after the Battle of Hastings. Many of these, then, would have Norman/French origins, such as the FitzGeralds ("Fitz" meaning "son of") or the Butlers. While "FitzGerald" sounds like it would be a patronymic naming system, like the Gaelic Irish, these families simply used it as a surname, and kept it the same from generation to generation. These families would have been created as earls of various counties in Ireland, and would have intermarried between themselves and the more powerful of the Gaelic Irish families. Much like Gaelic Irish, you probably would go by two or more names, either variant spellings of your Christian (English) name, or perhaps an equivalent Gaelic name (again, depending on the circumstances).

Common Family Names

Butler, FitzGerald, Lacy, Melville, Neville, Percy

Given names would either be a Gaelic Irish name or an English name. Suggestions are listed below:

Male Given Names

Gerald, Edmund/Edward, Francis, Henry, John, Patrick, Peter, Robert, Thomas, William

Female Given Names

Agnes, Alice, Anne, Catherine, Elizabeth, Isabel, Joan, Lettice, Margaret, Mary

**New English Family Names**

If you come from a "New English" family then your family came from either England or Scotland (many of the "new English" came from Scotland when Ulster was planted in James' reign, but the name comes more from the Elizabethan Munster plantation). These names would tend to be more of a static surname. As such, any early modern Scottish or English family names could be used here, as would place names. While calling someone "of [insert name of place here]" is more of a medieval naming convention, that could be how your family got its name, or you could choose to be known with a name that reflects where your family came from. Clans, especially in the highlands of Scotland, were important kinship ties in the medieval and early modern periods in Scotland (think the Highlander, Duncan McCloud of the Clan McCloud). If you wanted to have your character come from the Highlands, then you could choose a clan name from which to derive your surname. A lot of these names will have the "Mac" prefix, which means "son of." Much like in other areas of Europe, England and Scotland included, sometimes your surname could come from an ancestor’s profession, so Baker, Cooper, Shoemaker, etc.

Example family names

Armstrong, Campbell, Fletcher, Galbraith, MacGregor, Macpherson, Mason, Meikle, Scott, Simpson, Webb

Merchant Family Names: While Dublin and Ireland may seem to be far away from the Continent, in reality it was a fairly well populated shipping port and was seen to be a good launching point to move to England (which is one of the main reasons why Ireland was so important to the English crown). If you wanted to play a merchant, you could be traveling from anywhere in the known world, and could from either Catholic or Protestant lands (or if you really wanted to challenge yourself, you could be from a Jewish or Muslim family). If you chose to play a merchant from a more exotic locale, you would have problems blending in, but depending on what wares you sell and how you sell them, that may not be a detriment.

#### Step 2: Family Concept

Your family concept defines your family. Just as a character’s high concept acts as a summary of the character, this is your chance to summarize your family. Be descriptive here. We suggest taking some time to review some of the real Irish families active at the time (see the resources section for more on this) and use their dynamics and structure to help guide your choices. Quite often, the family concept will also define where your family sits in the social and political hierarchy of the time. An Old English family will have a higher reputation and visibility than a merchant family, for example. As we will discuss later, increases in reputation and visibility have definite benefits and some very real drawbacks. Keep this in mind as you develop your family.

##### Examples of Family Concepts

Gaelic Irish: Get out of my country and stay out!

*We were here before the English came, and we’ll be here after. Those English are invaders and vermin and need to be pushed back across the Irish sea.*

New English Settlers with an Eye for Investment

*They told us that we were mad to settle here, and it is a little small and a little dirty. We miss London, but when we look at Dublin we do not see a small and dirty town littered with uncultured swine. Oh no, my friend, we see opportunity!*

Old English Traditionalists: Ireland is Home by Blood and Birth.

*We have lived on this land for centuries. It is in our blood and our bones. We hold the true birthright to that noble Ireland, and we will never give it up.*

Merchant Traders: You Have the Money, We Have the Product.

*Let the aristocracy chop each other’s heads off. It’s all good to us. As long as we have a port and well-managed shipping lanes, we’re rolling in coin. Might be nice to get a little respect, though.*

#### Step 3: Family Trouble

The family trouble is the second part of your family’s definition. The trouble defines the conflict your family is facing. This trouble may not be an immediate concern for the player, but it should be something that is always on the periphery. Family troubles often show up at the most inopportune times, and player characters may suddenly find themselves with far fewer options in certain situations. Family troubles may limit who your character can go to for support or alter the reputation or asset standings of your family. Family troubles can also push the character to support certain factions or families that they would otherwise not support. Family alliances were a key part of Irish politics and could be just as much a trouble as they were a boon.

##### Examples of Family Troubles

Suspected of Treason

*Your family didn’t come to Ireland by choice. They came because of an ancestor who was suspected of plotting against the king. Whether this was true or not, there are still those who remember this and refuse to offer aid or service.*

Shifting Alliances

*When your family came to Ireland, they were strangers in a strange land. In order to survive and prosper, they built lasting alliances with many of the Old Gaelic families, and those alliances served them well. With Wentworth’s arrival, however, the Gaelic houses no longer hold much power, but they still expect your family to honor their responsibilities.*

#### Step 4: Family Influences

Each family has three primary influences that determine the rank of the family and their position and ability to act within Irish society. Three of these influences are the same for every family: reputation, assets, patronage. In addition, to these three influences, you may choose one additional influence for your family. In terms of *Fate Core* these influences act like skills and can be used as such by a player (If a player does not have the skill themselves, however, invoking a family skill requires a fate point). If a player chooses, they can link a character’s stunt to a family influence.

You will find a list of potential family influences included in the skills list below. Players will have their own version of these skills, but the family skills are always available for characters to fall back on if they have the fate points.

#### Step 5: Family Reputation, Prestige, Assets, and Wealth

Reputation and Assets are considered part of the family’s influences. They also set the base for two additional stress tracks that become very important in *Empire and Resistance*: Prestige and Wealth. A family’s reputation and assets determine the base for your character’s Prestige and Wealth stress tracks. From that set base, Prestige and Wealth may go up and down based on choices made during character creation. *See Stress Tracks and Skill section for more information.*

## Character Creation

Once your character’s family is created you can begin to develop your own character. The majority of character creation follows *Fate Core* structures. You are encouraged to tie your character’s high concept and trouble to the concerns of your family and the social milieu of the time. It’s also very important that during Phase Trios that you actively work to connect the player’s backstories to one another. Keep in mind that family relationships and social class will heavily influence the nature of these relationships and the power dynamics that draw from them.

In addition to standard *Fate Core* character creation, characters will also have a set of additional skills and two additional stress tracks to include in the *Empire and Resistance* creation process.

## Skills

Empire and Resistance builds on the Fate Core skill list by expanding social and political skill sets. Keep in mind that Empire and Resistance is NOT a game of combat (in the physical sense). It’s rarely a good thing for your character to be forced into physical combat, rather it is the skills at back alley deals, political manipulation, the leveraging of artistic propaganda and timing that will be key to your character’s and ultimately their family’s success.

These skills were crafted to match the time and setting of Empire and Resistance, but that doesn’t mean that these are the only ones available to you when crafting your character! Consult your Storyteller to see which from the Fate Core book would be applicable to your game.

Except where noted, most of the skill list in *Fate Core* handbook should be available for player use. Certain skills (like Contacts and Deceive) are highly recommended (see Chapter 5 in the *Fate Core* handbook for more information on skills).

### Influences

There are several skills in the list below that are classified as potential *family influences.*  This indicates that the skill can be selected as a family influence during family creation. Specific rules and differences between the family and player version of the skill are identified in the skill information block. It is very likely that a player may have the same skill as their family. Depending on the situation, there may be times when a player may wish to rely on family influence instead of their own skill.

### Reputation (skill, family influence)

A good name is critically important in early modern Ireland. Many families have worked through multiple generations to show how noble and honorable they are. This work offers sizable benefits. How your character’s family is viewed and the amount of respect it carries directly impacts what your character can do and the level of access your character has to the halls of power. It also limits your character. Reputation is social currency, and a character’s actions can directly impact and alter a family’s reputation in little and large ways. When that reputation is hurt, it limits all of the family members. This means that the family, itself, may step in to rein in a wayward family member if they are risking the family reputation.

Because reputation is a skill, it can be used and taken by a player. If a player’s personal prestige is somehow limited, they can spend a Fate point to use their family’s reputation rank, instead. This can be a dangerous act, however. If a player fails and the family’s reputation is harmed, they may suffer dire consequences.

#### Impacts to Prestige:

**Superb and up**: +2 to Character prestige and 1 additional Prestige Consequence. (**NOTE**: Prestige consequence is not lost if character is cut off from family assets.)

**Great**: +2 to Character prestige

**Good**: +2 to Character prestige

**Fair**: +1 to Character prestige

**Average**: +1 to Character prestige

#### Skill Uses:

**Overcome**

Reputation can be used to help you overcome challenges that depend on community or social respect. You may use your reputation in place of of a diplomacy role, but keep in mind that a failed reputation roll can lead to a loss of prestige.

**Create an Advantage**

Reputation can provide advantages to characters in social and political situations. The use of the characters reputation of their family name will often provide an advantage in certain scenes. This is the most common way to use reputation.

**Attack**

Reputation is not used to attack.

**Defend**

Reputation is not typically used to defend. When an action leads to a loss of prestige, the character may use their family reputation (for the cost of a Fate point) to resist the loss. If the roll is failed, the player must take an additional prestige consequence related to their family.

Reputation rolls are impacted by the Prestige stress track. If a player is forced to take a prestige consequence, that consequence can be freely invoked on any reputation rolls.

### Prestige (Stress Track)

A player’s personal reputation directly impacts their prestige stress track. This stress track enables players access higher levels of power (like the House of Lords in Parliament) or better artists who seek your patronage.

These tracks are cumulative, a family’s reputation will add boxes to the prestige track, as will an individual character’s reputation.

\*Keep in mind that a player’s Prestige Track starts at zero which means that any strike to prestige requires a consequence (see page 50-51 in *Fate Core* for more information on stress and consequences). Family and personal reputation skills drive the size of the prestige track.

**Example**

William Branneth, a member of the New English, has been unable to stop rumors that he is a Catholic sympathizer. These rumors were started by the matriarch of another New English family who wanted to make sure that her son gained access to the same parcel of land that William was hoping to get. The matriarch used an author she patronizes to write broadsides suggesting that William was a Catholic sympathizer. The author is one of some repute which provides a +3 to the matriarch’s roll. She rolls a +2 which gives her a +5 total. Because this is a public patron attack, William must rely on his reputation to resist the gossip. William has a good reputation (+3). Unfortunately, he rolls very poorly and ends up with a 0. William’s prestige track currently has four stress boxes (+2 for his good reputation and +2 for his good family’s reputation). Because the matriarch succeeded by five shifts he is forced to use his 4-point stress box and his 1-point stress box. William’s reputation is still OK but his prestige has taken a battering.

###  Assets

(This replaces the “Resources” section in Fate Core)

Your character’s family has access to some level of power, and power in the early modern era (much like power today) implies a greater level of access to gold and land. At this point in time in Ireland, access to land was controversial. The New English were deeded lands from the King/Lord Deputy that were traditionally owned by the Gaelic Irish or Old English. This was particularly a problem for the Old English who were Catholic.

A family’s assets are a starting point for a player, and provide a boost to their personal wealth track. If a player character’s wealth is momentarily depleted, they can spend a fate point to use their family’s wealth. That said, the family may not be too pleased by an overaggressive use of its coffers and can cut off that character from future access to their funds. This would effectively lower a character’s wealth by the same number it usually adds.

#### Benefits to Personal Wealth (Family benefits are lost if character is cut off)

**Superb and up**: +2 to Character wealth and 1 additional Wealth Consequence. (**NOTE**: Wealth consequence is not lost if character is cut off from family assets.)

**Great**: +2 to Character wealth

**Good**: +2 to Character wealth

**Fair**: +1 to Character wealth

**Average**: +1 to Character wealth

#### Skill Uses:

**Overcome**

This is probably the primary use of the asset skill. You use assets to pay your way out of a situation or to solve a problem by throwing money at it.

**Create an Advantage**

 Assets can be used to open doors for negotiation to provide access to certain people or places and used to improve attitudes and opinions of you in a variety of circumstances (like buying a round for the whole pub). Much like the *Resources* skill that *Assets* replaces, you can use *Assets* to claim that you have access to or have an item on hand.

**Attack**

This skill isn’t the best for physical attacks, but could be used to create an advantage for yourself or your allies.

**Defend**

This skill isn’t the best for defense. See “Overcome.”

### Wealth (Stress Track)

Your character’s wealth is an indication of your character’s ability to access funds for purchase of goods and services as well as land and patronage. Your character must make an assets check when attempting a large purchase (for a Fate Point they can use their family’s assets instead). If they fail, they may still purchase the item but they take that many shifts to their wealth stress track.

Wealth stress tracks start at 0 and are cumulative based on the family and player’s asset ranks.

### Patronage (skill, family influence)

Patronage was important to wealthier and noble families in the early modern period as a means of exerting influence through the arts as well as amassing a great library or collection. In this context, patronage, as a skill, is tied to how many or what qualities of artist you can gainfully employ at a given time (so this is also tied to your wealth assets). As a patron, you can employ artists and commission them to create specific works that can be used to attack another’s reputation or to defend or bolster your own, among other things.

\*Keep in mind that all commissioned works require an assets check for the commission, followed by a patronage check for the artist. As a patron, you can determine who your artists are, their ranking, their skill, etc. Your patronage can be split between different artists. The combined skill of the artists cannot exceed your patronage skill.

*For example:*

Imagine you are the wife of an earl, and you want to help support your husband in his political aims by buttering up a rival earl. You want to host a lavish banquet and hire your decorator to subtly wind your husband’s house colors with the rival earl’s. Or you hire a bard who sings of your husbands’ and the rival earl’s daring exploits and virtues. You decide to do both.

You currently have fair assets (+2) but a good patronage (+3). This allows you to hire a fair decorator (+2) and an average bard (+1). You must first roll an assets check for each, which must exceed the rating of the individual artist. You succeed by three shifts on each roll, which allows you to pay both without a problem. You then roll for the decorator at +2 and the bard at +1 to determine the level of success.

#### Skill Uses:

**Overcome**

This skill is not really used to overcome an obstacle.

**Create an Advantage**

This skill is well suited to creating an advantage by leveraging arts and entertainment to shift attitudes, thoughts, and idea in your favor.

**Attack**

Quite often patrons would use their artists to attack the reputation or prestige of their rivals. Attacks made via patronage are usually focused on doing some damage to your opponents’ prestige. One of the benefits of patronage is that your opponent may be unaware of the damage to their prestige until it is too late.

**Defend**

 When you know that an attack has been made against your prestige, you can commission your artists to write, paint, etc., a defense of your virtues and good name.

### Decorum (skill)

Decorum is knowing the proper procedure and manners for any given situation. It’s one of those ‘invisible’ skills – if you do it well. If you don’t, just like the keeper in a soccer match, your lack of skill, when you fail, becomes blatantly obvious.

#### Skill Uses:

**Overcome**

Proving that you belong in a social situation is difficult – especially when you are from a different social class than the others in that said social situation. Knowing the proper rules for your first banquet at Dublin Castle or your first show down at the Werburgh Street Theatre will help you blend in to any given situation.

**Create an Advantage**

When others try to slight you using their impeccable manners, it can be frustrating. However, if you out-manner them, that’s entirely another. Use your innate nobility to sail above their under handed yet above the table attack on your honor.

**Attack**

This skill isn’t the best for physical attacks, but could be used to create an advantage for yourself or your allies.

**Defend**

This skill isn’t the best for defense. See “Overcome.”

### Diplomacy (skill)

Diplomacy is both the art of dealing with people in a sensitive and effective way, but also the skill in managing relations between different powers.

#### Skill Uses:

**Overcome**

You can use diplomacy to overcome an obstacle that is related to keeping cool in the face of an emotional or heated exchange as well as using your rhetorical prowess to achieve your goals in a verbal encounter.

**Create an Advantage**

Diplomacy would allow you to stall for time or to take action that would be most advantageous. This could be convincing a political foe that you know nothing of their schemes, or that you are willing to join in their cause. You know just how to present the information you have so that it becomes an open door, rather than a closed one.

**Attack**

This skill isn’t the best for attacks. See “Create an advantage.”

**Defend**

 This skill isn’t the best for defense. See “Overcome.”

### Sartorial Prowess (skill)

Sometimes, you say it best when you let your clothing do all the talking for you. Sartorial prowess is all about picking the right clothes for the right occasion – and making a particular statement. For example, when Mary Queen of Scots went to the scaffold for her execution, she wore a magnificent black gown, which demonstrated her queenly status. Underneath that, after the black gown was pulled away (so it wouldn’t be soiled in blood), she was wearing a crimson gown. This blood-red dress was meant to symbolize Mary’s imminent martyrdom.

Colors, jewels (cypher or otherwise), styles, and types of fabrics were incredibly important to signaling one’s social status as well as political leanings.

#### Skill Uses:

**Overcome**

Sartorial Prowess could come in particularly handy when you use your clothes to ally yourself with a particular faction, either through materials or designs (such as a tartan or iconography). In certain situations, this can help you overcome a social barrier (like not allowing a woman into a Parliamentary procedure, but by wearing the ‘right colors’ she is allowed in, or even wearing convincing men’s clothing!) or convince someone (rightly or wrongly) of your political ideologies.

This can look like Queen Victoria crafting a women’s military tunic to wear as she inspected her armed forces regiments. Some political opponents called for her husband or another male royal to do the inspections for her, as she was a member of ‘the weaker sex.’ Instead, she had a feminized version of the same military jacket that would have been worn by a male royal crafted.

**Create an Advantage**

Knowing what to wear is just as important as how to wear it! Using your clothing to create an advantage can look like Mary above as she was garnering support for her cause and crafting her own version of the narrative OR like when Empress Matilda fled her cousin Stephen’s forces in another English Civil War (this one called “The Anarchy”). Matilda was dressed all in white as she ran out into a snowy night to escape across the Oxfordshire hills and the frozen Thames.

**Attack**

This skill isn’t the best for attacks. See “Create an advantage.”

**Defend**

 This skill isn’t the best for defense. See “Overcome.”

### Social Insight (skill)

Social Insight is the innate ability to ‘read a room.’ You know what is appropriate to say and do in any given situation, and you know whether or not you’ll have any particular impediments to achieve your goals.

#### Skill Uses:

**Overcome**

Using social insight to overcome an obstacle looks like gleaning pertinent information from the room and knowing how to act, speak, and address yourself and others in a way that is most advantageous. For example – you are a foreign merchant who needs the help of a New English lord to gain a foothold in the market. Even though you are from a Catholic kingdom, you know to talk more about the benefit to the lord in terms of financial gains, which helps you to overcome his dislike of Catholics.

**Create an Advantage**

Social Insight would allow you to gain insight on the most advantageous course of action to take with another individual or groups of individuals. Using this could look like using your skills to smooth-talk a servant of a powerful lord into penciling you in for an audience or knowing who in the room of social elites is the person you need to talk with to accomplish your goals.

**Attack**

This skill isn’t the best for attacks. See “Create an advantage.”

**Defend**

This skill isn’t the best for defense. See “Overcome.”

## Resources for early modern Dublin

Below are a series of sources to help you find more information on life in Early Modern Ireland.

### Web

There are some fantastic databases which are helpful for primary source research into Early Modern Ireland, but unfortunately they are stuck behind a paywall. Check and see if your university or public libraries subscribe to:

**Early English Books Online (EEBO):** [**https://eebo.chadwyck.com/home**](https://eebo.chadwyck.com/home)

EEBO is home to scans of early printed books that have been collected from archives all over the world. This is a great place to read what was being written and distributed at any given point in the early modern period.

**Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB):** [**http://www.oxforddnb.com/**](http://www.oxforddnb.com/)

ODNB is exactly like it sounds – a dictionary of biographies. The entries are all people who have importance to the history of Great Britain and the United Kingdom. There are biographies of officials who worked in Ireland as well as Irish men and women from our time period.

**State Papers Online 1509-1714:** [**https://www.gale.com/c/state-papers-online-part-i**](https://www.gale.com/c/state-papers-online-part-i)

SPO is a searchable database of diplomatic and state missives and documents that have been scanned and transcribed. These include the Calendar of State Papers: Ireland, which is a great resource to understand England’s relationship with Ireland at this time. The Calendars are also available via free sources such as Google Books and Archive.org from earlier transcriptions and editions, but they are more difficult to search.

* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\_of\_Ireland\_(1536%E2%80%931691)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Ireland_%281536%E2%80%931691%29)
	+ For a brief explanation of the early modern period, Tudor/Stuart, in Ireland
* <http://www.dublincastle.ie/>
	+ In the “ABOUT” section there is a brilliant short history of Dublin Castle
* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\_Wentworth,\_1st\_Earl\_of\_Strafford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Wentworth%2C_1st_Earl_of_Strafford)
	+ Brief history of our big bad, Thomas Wentworth, pay particular attention to the section “Lord Deputy of Ireland.”

### Books

* Nicholas Canny, *Making Ireland British, 1580-1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
* Mary O’Dowd, *A History of Women in Ireland, 1500-1800* (Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited, 2005).
* Mary O'Dowd, "Women and the Colonial Experience in Ireland, c. 1550-1650" in *Gendering Scottish History: An International Approach*, ed. T. Brotherstone, D. Simonton, and O. Walsh (Glasgow: Cruithne Press, 1999).
* S. J. Connolly, *Contested Island: Ireland 1460-1630* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
* Micheál Ó Siochrú and Jane Ohlmeyer, eds. *Ireland: 1641: Contexts and Reactions*. 1 edition. (Manchester University Press, 2015).