

Arthur, James (1587-1654), Dominican priest and theologian, was born into a wealthy Limerick merchant family. He was sent to Spain where in 1606 he entered the Irish Secular College in Salamanca. Later he joined the Dominicans. He attended the University of Salamanca 1610-16 and began teaching there about 1616. Already in 1626 he was recommended to *Propagande fide* by the Irish Dominican procurator as suitable for episcopal office in Ireland. In the same year he was named lector of theology at Léon and was temporarily lector in theology in Salamanca in 1627-8. He filled academic posts in other parts of Spain. In 1630 he was named regent of the *collegio de San Tommaso* in Naples and was regent of the *studium generale* in Avila in the 1630s. He was later regent of studies at the theological graduate college of San Gregorio, Valladolid and was nominated to the principal chair of theology at Coimbra University by Philip IV in 1640. It appears that while there he refused to take an oath imposed on all professors to defend the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary. He was known in Ireland. In 1632, for instance, the bishop and clergy of Limerick wanted him as coadjutor. In the early 1640s he appears to have retired to the Portuguese Dominican College in Lisbon. In 1649, Dominic O'Daly referred to him as a most discerning man who might be sent to Ireland to assess the situation there. A devoted Thomist, Arthur wrote a series of commentaries on virtually the entire *Summa Theologiae* which survived in manuscript form in Spain and Portugal entitled *Commentaria in totam fere S. Thomas de Aquino Summam*. Soon after his death, his former pupil, John Baptist de Marinis, by then master general of the order, directed Dominic O'Daly to collect and publish Arthur's manuscripts. Only one volume, it would seem, appeared, in 1655. He died at the Portuguese College of St Dominic in Lisbon on 1 February 1654.