

**GROUP FOR THE STUDY OF
IRISH HISTORIC SETTLEMENT**

NEWSLETTER 1984

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CONTENTS

	Page
G.S.I.H.S.	1
The Annual Conference, 1983	3
Review of publications:	
1. Geography (1980-83) (Dr. B.J. Graham)	5
2. History (1978-80) (Dr. T.B. Barry)	9
3. Archaeology (1978-80) (Dr. T.B. Barry)	12
The Annual Conference, 1982: statement	15

GROUP FOR THE STUDY OF IRISH HISTORIC SETTLEMENT(founded 1969)Aims:

1. To produce and circulate useful information concerning Irish historic settlement.
2. To promote and co-ordinate studies of particular aspects of settlement.
3. To express opinions on matters of historic settlement which are of national and local concern and, where necessary, to press for action.

Information

The formation of the Group stems from the belief that the study of settlement is inter-disciplinary and that there is a great need for a group to act as a focus for everyone in this field, including economic and social historians, archaeologists, geographers, architects, surveyors, planners, school teachers, students, and all others who, as active members of local societies, have an interest in the subject. The name of the Group is left deliberately wide so that all shades of interest, rural and urban, may be included. The programme of the Group includes the production and circulation of an annual Newsletter and an annual weekend conference to focus attention on a particular theme and area.

Membership

Membership (annual subscription £3.00) is open to all who are prepared to support the aims of the Group. Enquiries should be sent to the Hon. Secretary who will be pleased to send further information. Bankers' order forms are available from the Hon. Treasurer for those members who would prefer to pay their subscriptions by this method. Members receive all publications of the Group.

Publications Policy

Publication of the traditional typed Bulletin of the Group has been suspended by the committee. Instead it is being replaced by a more modest annual Newsletter. The resources saved will, it is planned, be used to publish a series of printed monographs on various aspects of Irish settlement by authors who are recognised authorities in their field. Arrangements for this new and more ambitious publishing policy are currently being finalised and a full report will be made to the annual general meeting. It is expected that the first of the Group's monographs will appear in 1984.

G.S.I.H.S. Officers and Committee, 1983-84

President	:	Dr. B.J. Graham
Hon. Vice Presidents	:	Dr. R.E. Glasscock Mr. P. Healy Mr. B.S.C. Wilson
Hon. Secretaries	:	Dr. T.B. Barry Dr. M. McCurtain
Hon. Treasurer	:	Ms. Niamh Crowley
Hon. Editor	:	Mr. H. Murtagh
Committee	:	Dr. R. Buchanan Dr. A. Simms Mrs. J. Enright Mr. P. Kerrigan Mr. N. Ross

Current Membership : 250

Communication

All communications should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Dr. T.B. Barry, Department of Medieval History, Trinity College, Dublin 2 with the exception of subscriptions which should be sent to Ms. N. Crowley, Prospect Lodge, Kilcohan, Waterford. Limited backnumbers of Bulletins 1 - 6 (1970-83) are available from the Hon. Treasurer at a cost of £1.00 per copy (including postage).

5.

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE : 1983

'Settlement in the Louth Region' : 29 April - 1 May

The Imperial Hotel, Dundalk, was the venue chosen for the lectures and for the annual dinner, with an attendance of around forty members and friends for the weekend. Professor F.J. Byrne of U.C.D., who has close family connections with the town, gave a wide-ranging and informative lecture on the early Irish history of the area on the Friday night. He concentrated upon the dynastic rivalries between the great Irish families for control of Louth, and how this was taken advantage of by the Anglo-Normans when they conquered the area in the late twelfth century. He also guided us through the monastic politics of the eight and ninth centuries when abbots were usually great secular leaders of different regions.

The series of lectures on the Saturday morning was begun by Dr. R. Buchanan of the Institute of Irish Studies, Q.U.B., when in a lecture illustrated by slides he introduced us to the Cooley Peninsula. He stressed the importance of the area as a staging post for the Anglo-Norman conquest of Ulster, with the castles and settlements of Carlingford and Greencastle providing important bases on either shore of Carlingford Lough. The second lecture on Early Christian settlement and the souterrains of Louth was given by Mr. P. Gosling of U.C.G., a native of Dundalk. He concluded that of the 306 known souterrains in the county, 56% had no surface trace of any other type of settlement associated with them. This was probably the direct result of the high destruction rate of monuments in Co. Louth. He also examined all the principal theories for the functions of souterrains in the country and decided that in Louth, because of the existence of 'creeps' and obstructions in nearly all of them, that they must have been used as refuges in the unsettled centuries before the Norman conquest.

The final lecture was by Mr. Liam de Paor of U.C.D., a past president of the Group, who provided us with a masterly summary of the literary and historical evidence that survives for Faughart, ranging from the Táin, through Lives of St. Brigid of the seventh and ninth centuries, to the historical records of the defeat and resulting beheading of Edward Bruce there in 1318. This lecture provided an extremely important link with the afternoon's excursions which started at Faughart itself. After the church and nearby motte were visited the party travelled on to the historic port of Carlingford with its impressive castle and other monuments of its medieval past. This excursion was led by Mr. Noel Ross of the Co. Louth

Archaeological and Historical Society and by Mr. Paul Gosling. The day was rounded off by our annual dinner in the hotel.

The final day was taken up with two more field trips and with the annual general meeting. The morning outing was to Castletown to view the impressive motte and the nearby substantial tower house. That in the afternoon was to visit several good examples of souterrains, such as the complex one at Donaghmore and another, smaller one, excavated by Mr. Paul Gosling, the leader of the Sunday outings, which was located in the industrial estate in the south of Dundalk.

The Group would like to thank Mr. Noel Ross and Mr. Paul Gosling, as well as the other local enthusiasts, for their help in organising the conference.

Dr. T.B. Barry
Hon. Joint Secretary.

REVIEW OF PUBLICATIONS : 1. GEOGRAPHY (1980-83)BRIAN J. GRAHAM

As always it is difficult to define where history and archaeology end and historical geography begins so I make no attempt here to restrict myself to papers which have appeared in geographical journals. In addition, coverage is by no means comprehensive, being rather biased towards Ulster. History, archaeology and geography inevitably overlap in their concern with settlement although it frequently appears that the more radical reappraisals and ideas on the subject do emanate from geographers, a generalization which is however by no means exclusive. Recent archaeological work on Ireland still appears to be rigidly preoccupied with its concern for the empirical as epitomised in the title of 'Landscape archaeology in Ireland', eds. T. Reeves-Smith and F. Hammond, British Archaeological Reports, No. 116, 1983. Indeed the editors point to the limitations of such an approach and bemoan 'Irish conservatism and complacency', pointing out the failure of archaeologists in the island to embrace the so-called 'New Archaeology'. This may in fact be something of a blessing given the positivistic excesses of that development but the volume does make the limitations of the discipline excessively clear and underlines the continuing necessity of studying settlement on a multi-disciplinary basis.

The weaknesses of landscape archaeology (or to put it another way the limitations of the landscape as a historical source) are neatly demonstrated by a series of three papers by Gillian Barrett which display how consistently distributional analyses produce interesting and difficult questions. These papers discuss the ring-fort distribution, perhaps one of the most inexplicable and enduring of Irish settlement problems. Specifically, Dr. Barrett points to the wealth of information which can be gained from vertical air photographs, interestingly noting that the recent survey of the Republic is not very useful for settlement studies, being too high and therefore on too small a scale (Aerial Archaeology, vol. 6, 1980, pp 27-38). In fact the long-available but unfortunately spatially limited Ministry of Defence coverage dating from the 1940s is ideal for settlement study. This paper convincingly demonstrates that arguments based both on field survey and on distributions culled from the nineteenth century Ordnance Survey Six Inch maps are inevitably diminished by the partial nature of those distributions. In 'Problems of spatial and temporal continuity of rural settlement in Ireland, A.D. 400 to 1169' (Jn. of Historical Geography, vol. 8, 1982, pp 245-

260), Dr. Barrett attempts to explain the ring-fort distribution in three areas, namely southern Donegal, Dingle and Louth. To some extent this paper goes over old ground (and uses a rather old methodology) but the discussion does make it clear that there are few certainties about this ubiquitous settlement form despite the claims of archaeological orthodoxy. Finally, the same author analyses the distribution of ring-forts in Louth in more detail (Co. Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal, vol. xx, 1982, pp 77-95), discussing both human and environmental influences upon the distribution and again emphasizing the value of aerial photographs in obtaining more representative distributions of historical settlement forms.

Advancing slightly in time, the Anglo-Norman (or to be more fashionable, Anglo-French) period is still the subject of much study although few substantial works on settlement have been published recently. Settlement is obliquely and rather inadequately referred to in Robin Frame's expensive English lordship in Ireland, 1318-1361 (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1982, £19.50 stg.) which is much sounder on constitutional history. A review article by Kenneth Nicholls in Peritia, vol. 1, 1982, pp 370-403, entitled 'Anglo-French Ireland and after' contains a mass of points which range from the stimulating to the wildly inaccurate, flung together in what I hope is an effort to encourage debate, an aim in which the paper should succeed. It provides a salutary example, again contrary to previous orthodoxy, of how much information can be obtained about settlement from the medieval Irish documents. The problems lie in making sense of the information and it is often very much the case of one man's assertions. The same issue of Peritia (pp 300-328) contains a paper by Charles Doherty on 'Some aspects of hagiography as a source for Irish economic history', a topic which promises endless debate about interpretations of the evidence.

A very interesting discussion of aspects of Anglo-Norman settlement appears in Adrian Empey's 'Medieval Knocktopher : a study in manorial settlement, part one' (Old Kilkenny Review, vol. 2, no. 4., new series 1982, pp 329-342) - part two is to appear shortly. It is most useful to have such a detailed account of the settlement pattern of a Norman manor although some of the assertions might benefit from qualification. The paper also contains an entertainingly convoluted argument about the distribution of moated sites which has the advantage of being beyond any reasonable proof, one way or the other. In the Kilkenny context it is also worth mentioning the most covetable reprint of Carrigan's History and antiquities of the diocese of Ossory (Roberts Books, Kilkenny, 1981, 4 vols.) which contains an enormous amount of information, particularly on medieval settlement.

However, lest it be thought that Irish settlement studies cease in the marches of Kilkenny and Laois in the fifteenth century, let us take the customary leap across the sixteenth century, pausing only to point out P.J. Duffy's 'The territorial organization of Gaelic landownership and its transformation in Co. Monaghan' (Irish Geography, vol. 14, 1981, pp 1-26). This examines land ownership in an area that was mostly untouched by Anglo-French influences and shows that the Gaelic landholding system based on barony, ballybetagh and tate survived through the sixteenth century, only collapsing in the early years of the seventeenth century with consequently severe repercussions for the entire Gaelic social system which was of course dependent upon this economic base.

Turning to the seventeenth century, Philip Robinson has published more of his work on Ulster Plantation settlement. Usefully original is his study of 'Urbanization in North-West Ulster, 1609-1670' (Irish Geography, vol. 15, 1982, pp 35-50). This is an examination of the development of the urban hierarchy in this region for a period when data on functions become sufficiently numerous to at least discuss the concept of hierarchy. The paper makes the importance of towns as markets clear but also demonstrates that discontinuity is very characteristic in urban development in Ulster. Dr. Robinson covers rather more familiar territory in his chapter 'Plantation and colonisation : the historical background', pp 19-48 of Integration and division : geographical perspectives on the Northern Ireland problem (eds. F.W. Boal and J.N. H. Douglas, Academic Press, London, 1982). This book which in general does not have a sufficiently developed historical basis also contains a stimulating chapter by Ronnie Buchanan entitled 'The Planter and the Gael : cultural dimensions of the Northern Ireland problem' (pp 49-74) which puts forward the argument that in the context of folkculture, the concept of the two traditions cannot be substantiated. Dr. Buchanan argues that the majority of Scottish colonists found that they had to make relatively few adjustments to the folkculture which they found in Ireland.

The same need for a revisionist approach to Irish history is shown in P. O'Flanagan's neatly titled 'Rural settlement south of the River Bride in counties Cork and Waterford : the surveyor's evidence, 1716-1851' (Irish Geography, vol. 15, 1982, pp 51-69). The writer uses estate and valuation maps to analyse the activities of residents on the Lismore estates, noting that the sources indicate rather more complex tenant-landlord relationships than are sometimes admitted to. Interestingly, the estate maps proved to be a very limited source for fieldscapes.

A similar argument about tenants and landlords is advanced by Des McCourt in his chapter on 'The decline of rundale, 1750-1850' pp 119-139 in Plantation to partition : essays in Ulster history in honour of J.L. McCracken, ed. P. Roebuck, (Blackstaff, Belfast, 1981). McCourt puts forward the argument that agrarian reform and rundale with its concomitant subdivision were irreconcilable poles. Rundale had to disappear to permit reform which was essential again demonstrating as Dr. McCourt points out, the need to re-assess the received wisdom on aspects of recent agrarian history. The same book contains two other chapters which relate to settlement but both are disappointing. W.H. Crawford in 'The evolution of Ulster towns, 1750-1850' (pp 140-156) says little that is new about the towns and never effectively relates them to the very general points which he makes about social and economic structures. D.S. McNeice's 'Industrial villages of Ulster 1800-1900' (pp 172-190) promises much on a topic which is little researched but it rapidly declines into a case study of Gilford in Co. Down, accompanied by the pious hope of so many Irish settlement studies that the unique will illustrate general trends which of course it never will.

Finally, I should mention two recent books on Ireland's second city if only to prove that Belfast has some history. Belfast : the making of the city, 1800-1914 by J.C. Beckett et al (Appletree, Belfast, 1983) has the advantage of being available in paperback but is rather uneven, the varying abilities of the authors being a little too apparent. Jonathan Bardon's Belfast : an illustrated history (Blackstaff, Belfast, 1982) has as the title suggests more pictures and is probably a more entertaining book for the general reader. It is however more expensive at £12.50 stg.

REVIEW OF PUBLICATIONS : 2. HISTORY (1977-1980)DR. T.B. BARRY

It is difficult to know whether The Irish World, edited by Brian De Breffny (1977) should be reviewed in this section or under the heading of 'Archaeology'. But as it is sub-titled 'The history and cultural achievements of the Irish people' it is probably better to discuss it here. The book itself, 296 pages long with 340 illustrations, 62 in colour, has been very well produced by Thames and Hudson and represented good value when it was first published at £10.50 in the U.K. There are two chapters which will be of major interest to our readers, 'The early Irish Church' by Kathleen Hughes (pp 47-70) and 'The long Middle Ages' by Roger Stalley (pp 71-98). Kathleen Hughes assess the impact of St. Patrick on the Irish Church and the rise of monastic learning. Then she examines the Scandinavian onslaught on the Church in the ninth and tenth centuries. From the settlement point of view her concluding section on life in an Irish monastery is of especial interest because of her discussion on the population size, the lay-out and the industries concentrated in some of the larger foundations. Roger Stalley then examines the ecclesiastical and artistic development of the medieval church, the initial settlement of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland with the construction of stone castles and the growth of inland towns, and concludes with a discussion on the social and economic conditions of Ireland in the later Middle Ages.

The members who attended our annual conference in Waterford in 1979 will remember the stimulating lecture given by Professor Lydon on Waterford City in the later Middle Ages. He has expanded this for publication in Decies, the journal of the Old Waterford Society, as the first paper in a series covering different aspects of the history of Waterford and its hinterland from 1200 - 1500. In all six papers have been published in this series in three numbers of the journal, from September 1979 to May 1980. The editors of Decies also promise that more contributions will be published in future. Professor Lydon's 'The city of Waterford in the later Middle Ages' in Decies 12 (September 1979), 5-15, is a scholarly examination of the importance of the city of Waterford in the Lordship of Ireland. He critically surveys all the surviving letters and petitions by the citizens of Waterford to the king complaining of the decay and destruction of their city in the later Middle Ages which followed the decades of prosperity of

the thirteenth century. It would also appear that there is some evidence of improvement in the trade of Waterford in the fifteenth century after the economic contractions of the previous century. But the city also became much more isolated then because of the break-down in the power and authority of the central government in Dublin.

In the same issue Eamonn McEneaney writes on 'Waterford and New Ross trade competition c. 1300', Decies 12 (September 1979), 15-24. This article follows on well from the preceding one as Professor Lydon specifically mentions the quarrel between Waterford and New Ross in the thirteenth century as one of the contributory factors for the decline in the fortunes of the port of Waterford. McEneaney describes the way in which the burgesses of New Ross enlisted the help of de Clare, de Valence and Roger Bigod in its fight against Waterford's trading monopoly. He also discusses the effectiveness of Waterford's monopoly and the ways in which it was protected and enforced by Edward 1 because of the facility with which he could collect his revenues from the city officials.

The series is continued by Adrian Empey with an article, 'County Waterford in the thirteenth century' in Decies 13 (January 1980), 6-16. Despite the author's modesty that his study is 'not based on a thorough examination of all available printed sources, and, ... does not take into consideration a large body of Irish exchequer manuscript records' (p.14) it does give a comprehensive insight into the Anglo-Norman settlement pattern in the county. In his well-researched and methodical examination of this settlement Empey describes the process by which the first Anglo-Normans used or modified existing Celtic or Norse land divisions for their settlements. He also discusses the changes in the medieval county boundary in the thirteenth century, its division into eight cantreds, the leasing of the honor of Dungarvan by the Crown to the Fitzgeralds of Desmond and the general manorial framework of the county.

This issue also contains another article by Eamonn McEneaney, this time on 'The government of the municipality of Waterford in the thirteenth century', Decies 13 (January 1980), 17-27. In it he examines the growth of the city and the advantages of living in a royal city exempt from various tolls and customs. But his main emphasis is on the organisation of the municipal government and the growth and development of the offices of justice, provost and mayor. The final parts of the series to appear to date are 'The Knights Templars and their houses in S.E. Ireland' by Tom Nolan, Decies 14 (May 1980), 52-60, and 'Cal-

endar of documents relating to Gaultire, c. 1250-1350' by Feardorchadh Funnell, Decies 14 (May 1980), 61-65.

Turning northwards, Katharine Simms has recently written an informative article on 'The medieval kingdom of Lough Erne' in Clogher Record IX (1977), 126-41. She traces the development of a united kingdom around the natural focus of Lough Erne from the ninth to the sixteenth century. Much of the first part of the article is taken up with assessing the impact of the Maguire family who dominated the region from the thirteenth century and who, because they were so intent on securing their own borders as well as in acquiring new lands, did not take much part in the major upheavals of the fourteenth century. Because of the survival of such documents as Sir John Davies's letter to the earl of Salisbury in 1607 Simms is able to give us an idea of the social organisation and the economic development of the area under the Maguires. It is a pity that the ancient areal measurements such as the taths, quarters and ballibetags cannot be converted into modern acreages but the evidence she discusses reveals that most of the inhabitants of the region lived a semi-nomadic type of existence.

In conclusion, in my last review (GSIHS Bulletin, No. 5. [1978], p. 36) I discussed Robin Frame's recent article on the Bruce Invasion. Now there is another article on the same historical event, 'Documents on the early stages of the Bruce Invasion of Ireland 1315-1316' by J.R.S. Phillips in Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, 79C (1980), 247-270. This is a collection of hitherto unpublished documents connected with the mission to Ireland in 1315-1316 of John de Hothum, an English administrator sent over to help organise resistance to the Scots. This evidence is of great importance to any study of the Bruce Invasion and the impact it had on the Anglo-Norman settlement of Ireland.

REVIEW OF PUBLICATIONS : 3. ARCHAEOLOGY (1978-1980)DR. T.B. BARRY

The 5th edition of the late S.P. Ó Ríordáin's Antiquities of the Irish countryside was published by Methuen in 1979. This classic guide to the monuments of Ireland designed for 'the questioning man in the street' has on this occasion been revised by the late Ruaidhrí de Valera and completed by Seán Ó Nualláin. The main concern of the book, not suprisingly, is with sites of the prehistoric period. But later earthworks such as ringforts, mottes and moated sites are also discussed, although it is a pity that these sections have not been updated in the light of later research. The only other criticism that I would have of the 5th edition of this classic guide is that the opportunity seems to have been missed to include some new plates in the volume although this is understandable, in part, as an attempt to keep the price down.

With the Wood Quay controversy and the finding of the Derrynaflan Chalice still fresh in the minds of many people it is salutary to examine the destruction rates of historic monuments, and especially earthworks, in Ireland over the last century as set out in the article by Terry Barry, 'The destruction of Irish archaeological monuments' in Irish Geography, 12 (1979), 111-113. In this context it is encouraging that several government ministers have stated publicly that a new and more effective National Monuments Act will soon reach the statute books.

The excavator of the site at Wood Quay, Pat Wallace, describes the seven stages in the outward extension of the waterfront there from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries as well as discussing the considerable numbers of artefacts located during the recent excavation in 'The archaeological significance of Wood Quay, Dublin' in An Cosantoir, the Irish Defence Journal (May, 1979), 141-7. The Curriculum Development Unit have also produced a very useful book, designed to be used in schools, entitled Viking settlement to medieval Dublin, daily life 840-1540 (1978), which attempts to describe daily life in early Dublin with reference to the discoveries made during the series of recent archaeological excavations in the city and to the surviving street-scape and buildings of the period. The book is profusely illustrated, as is only to be expected in something designed for classroom usage, with photographic plates of archaeological artefacts, drawings of wattle houses and the city walls, and

several excellent aerial photographs of Dublin. One minor criticism that I would have of this book is that a few of the artist's reconstructions are somewhat fanciful such as the chimney shown at the apex of the roof of a medieval house, for which there is no archaeological evidence.

Apart from these general works on the Dublin excavations Michael Baillie has been able to construct two oak chronologies for Dublin from the excavated medieval structures, spanning the years A.D. 885-1306, and 1357-1556 in the Tree-Ring Bulletin, 37 (1977), 13-20. Hilary Murray has also drawn on the structures discovered in the Dublin excavations for her article 'Documentary evidence for domestic buildings in Ireland c. 400-1200 in the light of archaeology' in Medieval Archaeology, XXIII (1979), 81-97. As well as examining the evidence for domestic buildings, as revealed by archaeological excavation, she discusses the literary references, contemporary representations of buildings, and the stone skeuomorphs of wooden structures. Perhaps her most notable contribution to scholarship is her interpretation of difficult Old or Middle Irish texts which contain several references to buildings. It is disappointing, however, that the article lacks any illustrations as these would have made the author's task of description much easier.

Leaving aside the purely archaeological aspects of Wood Quay, there have also been two articles published recently which have attempted to recount the long saga of the fight to preserve the site by Richard Haworth in Country Life, (July 13th, 1978), 97, and by Terry Barry in Current Archaeology, 6 (1979), 209-11.

John Bradley has examined another medieval Irish town in his comprehensive article, 'The topography and layout of medieval Drogheda' in County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal, XIX, no. 2 (1978), 98-127. Although only limited archaeological excavations have taken place in Drogheda his article reveals how incidental documentary and topographical sources can be used to build up a coherent picture of the fabric of Drogheda in the Middle Ages. The article is well illustrated with maps and plans although it would have been helpful to the reader if reproductions of the two Ricciardelli paintings of Drogheda could have been included. There are also two unfortunate spelling mistakes in the plans of comparative medieval towns in north-western Europe. The text is well-footnoted except that on a few occasions the author makes very general statements without corroborative evidence being cited. An example of this is the assertion on p. 108 that 'In Ireland, as in eastern Germany and Spain, ... large numbers of colonists were brought in'. Medieval historians

have always been interested in the number of Anglo-Normans who colonised Ireland but there are, as far as I am aware, no known medieval sources which can be used to give an answer to this question. Nevertheless John Bradley has produced a scholarly piece of work which hopefully will persuade archaeologists to do similar research on other major Irish towns.

In the field of ecclesiastical settlement C.A.R. Radford has drawn upon the surviving written sources to describe the development of important pre-1100 ecclesiastical buildings in Ireland. In it he discusses the origins and date of the introduction of the wooden church, the stone church and the belltower. He also looks at the one-and-two-cell church plans in this article which is called 'The earliest Irish churches' in Ulster Journal of Archaeology, 40 (1977), 1-11. In another article in the same journal Ann Hamlin discusses 'A recently discovered enclosure at Inch Abbey, Co. Down' (U.J.A., 40 (1977), 85-8). Here the evidence of aerial photographs has revealed that the visible earthworks complex around the Cistercian abbey is only part of a much larger circuit of probably a pre-Norman monastic enclosure.

On medieval rural settlement Tom McNeill reports on his 'Excavations at Doonbought Ford, Co. Antrim' in U.J.A., 40 (1977), 63-84 where his trial excavation of a site believed to be a native version of a motte-and-bailey revealed a two-phase simple enclosure, with the first outer defences and 'cashel' soon being replaced by a polygonal mortared stone wall of 30m in diameter. He dates the occupation of the site to A.D. 1200-1300. Dealing with medieval earthworks of a slightly later date, Terry Barry has contributed a short chapter on the distribution, function and broad chronology of moated sites in Ireland in Medieval moated sites, ed. F.A. Aberg, C.B.A. Research Report No. 17 (1978), 57-59. Caoimhín Ó Danachair briefly surveys another enigmatic feature of our countryside, the tower house, in his article 'Irish Tower Houses and their regional distribution' in Béaloides, 45-47 (1977-79), 158-163. In it he poses some of the fundamental questions which will have to be answered if the chronology and function of this settlement-form is to be satisfactorily established. The article is illustrated by a dot distribution map of tower houses, our first precise guide to their distribution, which graphically illustrates how they are densely concentrated in east Co. Clare and in east Co. Limerick.

David Sweetman continues to keep up his fine publications record with two more reports on his recent excavations. In 1976 he carried out a series of test excavations on part of a complex of ditches located close to the suspected site of the early monastery at Clonard in Co. Meath. Only a few of his cuttings produced finds of archaeological interest but those that did pointed to a medieval date for the ditches which would suggest that they were not connected with the early monastic site as had previously been assumed. This report appears as 'Excavation of medieval "field boundaries" at Clonard, Co. Meath' in Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 108 (1978), 10-22. His second report, 'Archaeological excavations at Ferns Castle, County Wexford' in Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, 79C (1979), 217-245 and plates, describes the results of his excavation at Ferns from 1972-1975 which was mainly concentrated on the rock-cut fosse of this thirteenth century castle. The remains of the drawbridge structure were located in the fosse on the south side of the castle while to the east a possible entrance as well as a second, smaller rock-cut fosse were found. It is suggested by Sweetman that this second fosse could have been the remains of an earlier fortification on the site by MacMurrough. The finds were mainly of local thirteenth century pottery as well as some European imports. This report is the second in a series of excavations that David Sweetman has carried out on Anglo-Norman castles in Ireland.

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1982 : STATEMENT

On page 3 of Bulletin No. 6 the mistaken impression was given that Mr. Holland's lecture to the 1982 Conference on Norman settlement in Connacht was based on some of the results of the Galway archaeological field survey currently being undertaken with a grant from the O.P.W. In fact it was derived from his own research for an M.A. in the Department of Archaeology, U.C.G.

Dr. T.B. Barry.