

Á I T R E A B

GROUP FOR THE STUDY OF IRISH HISTORIC SETTLEMENT

NEWSLETTER

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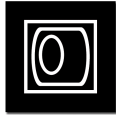
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Annual Outing 2023
Roscommon Town
(See page 51 for details)
€5 (Free to members)



Group
for the Study
of
Irish Historic Settlement

President's Welcome

Warm Greetings to members and Friends of the GSIHS.

2022 will be remembered in the Group as the year we finally managed to gather in Donegal town for our much-delayed annual conference. It was worth the wait! We were treated to a wonderful range of stimulating papers, some of which are reproduced in this Newsletter. Most of our speakers had first been invited back in 2019 and stuck with us through several re-schedulings. The sun shone down for our fieldtrips and the Central Hotel provided first-class accommodation, food and drink. The book launch in Donegal Castle was especially memorable. The conference attracted a large number of our members, keen to get back to socialising and scholarship, and we enjoyed great support from locals. I would like to specially mention Paula Harvey and the Donegal GAP Heritage and History Group for their help, advice and support.

We awarded two Niamh Crowley student bursaries to enable postgrads to attend the conference. Our bursarians, Samantha Tobias and Silvina Martin have provided an overview of the conference and the papers delivered on pp 43–4 of the Newsletter.

At the AGM I was honoured to be elected as President of the Group for the next three years and I will do my best to fill the shoes of our outgoing President, Geraldine Stout. One of Geraldine's aims as President was to hold a thematic conference on the topic of *Sea and Settlement in Ireland* and this aim was realised in November 2022 when the Group held a very successful conference on this topic in Dublin. The programme featured a wide range of papers delivered by national and international experts and early career researchers.

We are now looking forward to our annual conference in Roscommon, which promises to be a great event with a fine lineup of speakers and fieldtrips. The speakers include some of the most long-standing members of the Group as well as more recent members and invited experts. We look forward to a fruitful collaboration with the County Roscommon Historical and Archaeological Society.

As President, I would like to thank the hard-working committee and especially our treasurer, David Fleming and secretary Linda Shine. They do a huge amount to ensure that the day-to-day business of the Group, as well as the conferences run smoothly.

Finally, sincere thanks and praise to Charlie Doherty who has once again edited and designed a very informative and attractive Newsletter.

On behalf of the GSIHS committee, I look forward to welcoming you to Roscommon in May.

Margaret Murphy (President) April 2023



Figure 1. Physical Map of Donegal showing places mentioned in this article.

Articles

Brian Lacey
(Former CEO of the
Discovery Programme)

Settlement in Donegal: Mesolithic to 'Plantations'

Introduction*

Donegal was shired in 1585. Minor but important later adjustments included the transfer of Derry to plantation Londonderry. However, most of Donegal's territory had an historical integrity, derived primarily from its physical geography. It is isolated by high land and the Foyle/Finn river system to the east, and surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the north, west, and much of its south. Only a tiny strip in the extreme south was doubtful. The line was finally settled along the River Drowse. The county's NE/SW mountains makes travelling in an E-W direction difficult. Travel by boat must have been common in earlier times, both by sea and inland waterways. For example, some ancient battles only make sense if travel to them was by boat.¹

Much of Donegal is marginal for agriculture. The east side has the best land. That area is defined for much of its length by the Foyle and Finn rivers which were important for travel and settlement. The rivers are navigable for about 60 kms from the ocean for boats up to 80 tons. In addition, in the 1830s the Ordnance Survey noted that the annual flooding of the Finn spread enriching mud along its banks: a mini local parallel to the Nile floods in Egypt! This resulted in the creation of Donegal's most fertile land, its richest economy and, thus, the location of its main political and religious centres. However, as the best land, it was also intensively 'planted' by English and Scottish colonists in the seventeenth century, resulting in considerable loss both of ancient monuments and cultural memory.

Although Donegal has not benefited from major discoveries at 'development-led excavations' as elsewhere in Ireland,² we have a good knowledge of its field archaeology. In fact, 2023 is the fortieth anniversary of the publication of the *Archaeological Survey of County Donegal*, the first project of its kind in Ireland.³

There is strong evidence of human settlement in Donegal from the Mesolithic onwards. However, it is also obvious that settlement was

uneven and intermittent. Based on the relative absence of monuments in several areas, districts such as the Rosses and Gweedore may not have been permanently inhabited until post-medieval times, while mountainous areas were never settled at all. And in places such as Killymard, west of Donegal town, the absence of ringforts coupled with the placename element *coille* suggests the survival of dense woodlands into medieval times.

The Mesolithic

There is considerable evidence for settlement in Donegal during the Mesolithic — the period characterized by hunting and food-gathering instead of agriculture. When the *Archaeological Survey of County Donegal* was published in 1983, only one Mesolithic site was known. Thirty years later over fifty were known, discovered both by amateurs and professionals.⁴ Most sites were located along Loughs Swilly and Foyle and the Foyle/Finn river system.⁵ While most date to the later Mesolithic, some assemblages, such as that from Greencastle in Inishowen, probably date from before 7000BC.⁶ A collection of flint blades found at Raws Bog in east Donegal may date from the early Mesolithic (before 5500BC).⁷ A series of late Mesolithic shell middens were identified in the inner part of Lough Swilly.⁸ Excavations at Baylet on Inch Island, have shown that the Mesolithic people there collected oysters and periwinkles, hunted wild boar, and caught fish, including wrasse, whiting, and conger eels.⁹ A late Mesolithic site was partially excavated at Urrismenagh in Inishowen, in the 1960s.¹⁰ This had been a flint-working area with objects scattered on a raised beach and nearby hillocks. The beach formed c.3500BC when the water rose to its highest level in the post-Ice-Age land/sea fluctuations. Analysis of pollen showed heavy afforestation at that stage, with birch, pine, oak, alder, elm and willow all present. Most of the objects consisted of waste from worked flint beach pebbles, which probably came from the flint-rich areas of counties Antrim and Derry. They could possibly indicate that some form of Mesolithic coastal trading already existed in the region.¹¹ The site was interpreted as the location of a small flint 'industry', perhaps the part-time activity of offshore fishermen whose boats could carry cargoes of flint. Unfortunately no huts or fires were found, suggesting that the people concerned lived elsewhere. Perhaps the site was just a brief landfall where the weighty pebbles were reduced to lighter finished artifacts for on-

*Places mentioned in this article are marked on Figure 1. Physical Map of Donegal on facing page.

ward distribution inland.

Neolithic

There is more evidence for human settlement in Donegal during the Neolithic. Approximately 10% of Irish megalithic tombs are found there.¹² This demonstrates the existence of a relatively wealthy society between about 4000BC and 2000BC, which had ample surplus resources and technical knowledge to build such elaborate structures. Megalithic tombs are found in most parts of the county although their absence from the limestone lands south and west of Donegal town is particularly noteworthy. Presumably that land was densely forested at the time as suggested by the modern parish name, Killymard, mentioned above.

West of Killybegs, where the limestone gives way to the quartzite Slieve League peninsula, a small valley sloping from c.400 feet above sea level to the shore contains the remains of three court-tombs excavated in the 1960s and 1970s.¹³ Only traces of the highest (Bavan) had survived, but the original impressive forms of the other two, Croaghbeg and Shalwy, are preserved. In addition to full ‘ceremonial’ courts, the tombs have covering cairns and their burial galleries are divided into two chambers entered by formal ‘doorways’ below massive lintels. The finds from each tomb consisted of the usual range of practical and decorative objects typical of the period. Equally impressive tombs can be found further west at Malin More and Glencolumbkille, some of which are the most extraordinary of their kind in Ireland. One of the most striking Neolithic monuments in Donegal is the portal-tomb at Kilclooney, near Ardara. Its 4.2 metres long ‘birdlike’ capstone is only one of its unusual features.¹⁴ Some evidence for ‘pre-bog’ enclosures, comparable to the elaborate Céide fields of Co. Mayo on the opposite side of Donegal Bay, has also been discovered in Donegal.¹⁵ So far there are no neolithic houses but several have been excavated in adjoining Co. Derry, including a complete settlement surrounded by a palisade at Thornhill on land that was part of Donegal before the seventeenth century.

Neolithic passage-tombs occur in two ‘cemeteries’ in Donegal: at Finner/Magheracar near Bundoran, and at Kilmonaster near Castlefinn. The partially eroded tomb on a sea-cliff at Magheracar has been excavated.¹⁶ Finds included flint scrapers, potsherds, a miniature stone axe-head, fragments of a stone bead, a piece of bone with concentric semi-circular score-marks, and several other bone fragments. Archaeological ‘detective work’ by Seán Ó Nualláin in the 1960s¹⁷ brought to light the remains of a more elaborate, but largely destroyed, passage-tomb cemetery cen-

tered on the archaeologically-, historically- and mythologically-significant Croghan Hill, a ridge between the towns of Castlfinn, Lifford and Raphoe. The area, located at a significant bend on the Finn, was a focus of intense ritual and religious activity from the Neolithic period, as reflected by the ancient monuments and objects from the area, as well as an abundance of early literary references.¹⁸

The Bronze Age

There are twenty-two wedge tombs in Donegal clustered mainly in the north of the county, some in areas where mineral deposits were extracted formerly — such as the five tombs at Glentogher in north Inishowen where place-name and related evidence for mining in the past also occurs.¹⁹ About eighty burial cists have also been found in the county, most of which are likely to date to this period. Among the latter are several clusters or ‘cist cemeteries’, including at Liscooley in the Lower Finn valley.²⁰ A cairn at Killycolman, near Rathmullan, contained twenty-five cists. At Drung, in northern Inishowen, three separate cists contained, respectively, the remains of an adult male, a female, and an infant. A bronze awl, a piece of rock crystal, and a pottery ‘pygmy’ cup were also found.²¹

Spectacular Bronze Age artifacts have also been found in Donegal, including a gold lunula from Narin in the south-west, and another from Gartan in the centre. Other gold objects include six ribbon torcs from Largatreany in northwest Donegal, and fourteen from the Inishowen peninsula. Four gold rings dating 1200–800BC — at 4kgs, one of Ireland’s heaviest hoards — was found in 2018 near Convoy, east Donegal. In the absence of excavation, the exact nature of the monument known as the Beltany Stone Circle near Raphoe, one of the largest structures of its kind in Ireland, has not been ascertained, but would appear to date to the Early Bronze Age. Its diameter, extended through an ‘outlier’ stone, is aligned with the local sunrise on the winter solstice, and alignments with several related ‘events’ have also been proposed.²²

The Iron Age

Associated with the Beltany circle is a carved stone human head ‘wearing’ a diagnostic neck ornament. Six other stone heads of a type relatively rare in Ireland come from this general area of east Donegal.²³ Although difficult to date, these are often assigned to the Iron Age, from the middle of the last millennium BC down to historic times around AD500. Of definite Iron Age date is a beautiful bronze sword-hilt from Ballyshannon Harbour.²⁴ When discovered, it had a short iron blade that has since eroded.

the most powerful lords in Ulster down to the time of the Plantations. Although most of the Donegal dynasties claimed to be Uí Néill (that is descended from the legendary Niall of the Nine Hostages),³¹ probably only Cenél Cairpre in the south and continuing into Sligo really deserved that title. Conflict between them and their neighbours to the north, Cenél Conaill, lasted from the sixth to the twelfth century. The famous battle of Cúl Dreimne — in legend, ‘caused’ by the unauthorized copying of a book by Columba — was probably in actuality just

another in the long series of battles between those two kingdoms. In their heyday, Cenél Conaill were important on the ‘national’ as well as the local stage. Two, and possibly three, of the first genuinely historic individuals claimed, albeit with much exaggeration, as ‘kings of Ireland’ belonged to them: Domnall mac Áedo (d. 643), Loingsech mac Óengusso (d. 703/4) and, possibly, Diarmait mac Cerrbél (d. c.563). Two very significant clerics, Columba (d. c.593), and Adomnán (d. 704), also belonged to these exceptionally important people.



Figure 3. Generalized political map of Donegal, c. AD 725 (white at centre represents the largely uninhabited mountainous areas). The Síl Lugdach kingdom (green) has expanded to include part of the former Cenél Duach territory (thus forming what would become known as Cloghaneely) and the Cenél Conaill kingdom (yellow) has expanded to its maximum. Cenél nÉogain (blue) has begun to expand east of the Foyle (map by Robert Shaw).

But in 789 at the battle of Clóitech, a strategic crossing point on the Finn, Cenél Conaill were decisively defeated by Cenél nÉogain, restricted to their lands south of Barnesmore, and from henceforth (with one short exception) excluded from over kingship in Donegal and from wider influence on the ‘national’ scene. The only direction in which they could expand was south, into the lands of their old enemies Cenél Cairpre. Since the mid seventh and up to the beginning of the eleventh century the Erne had been the border between them. But in 1000 the expansionist Máel Ruanaid ua Maíl Doraidh became king of Cenél Conaill. Taking on all-comers including the powerful Brian Boru, Máel Ruanaid pushed across the Erne down into north Connaught. He seems to have had a particular devotion to his ancestor, Saint Columba, and among the changes he himself engineered was probably the rededication to the latter of the church at

Drumcliff. Máel Ruanaid went on pilgrimage to Rome via Clonfert and Iona in 1026 but died en route. His successors were not powerful enough to hold on to his territorial gains.

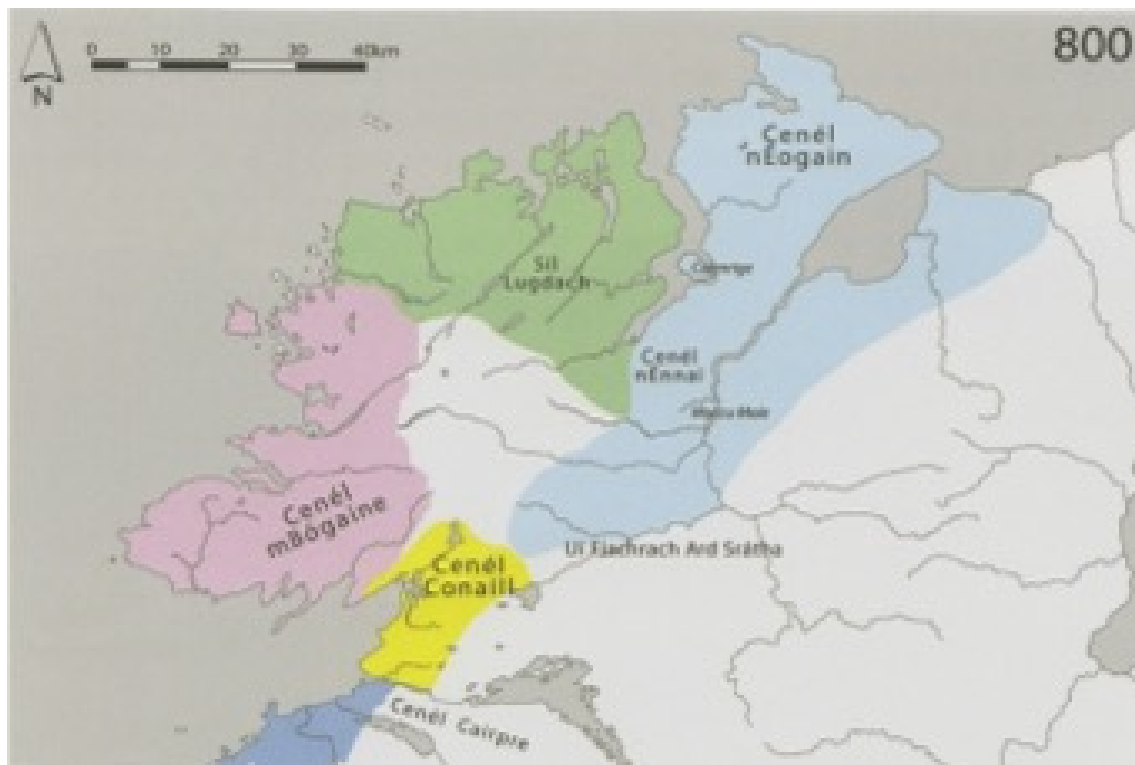
The Síl Lugdach: powerful newcomers

Meanwhile in the northwest of Donegal a new force had arisen in the form of the Síl Lugdach. Originally, a tiny and unimportant polity from the poor lands of Cloghaneely, it appears that they grew in importance and territory as allies of Cenél nÉogain, dividing with the latter the extensive lands forfeited by Cenél Conaill after 789 (see Figure 3 above and Figure 4 on page 5). This made them proprietors of the sites and churches associated with the birth and young life of Saint Columba. Like Cenél Conaill, who at least had genuine family links for doing so, the Síl Lugdach made considerable hay out of the Columban legacy alongside that of his dis-

ciple and successor Adomnán; even falsifying their genealogies to fabricate a relationship with those clerics and Cenél Conaill. Eventually in the later Middle Ages, as the O'Donnells and O'Dohertys, the Síol Lugdach would take control of the whole of Donegal, rivalling the importance even of the Cenél nEógain Mac Lochlainn and O'Neill families.

The Viking impact on Donegal was limited. Local surnames such as Mac Lochlainn and Ó Gallcobhair are often cited as remnants of Scandinavian influence, as is the name Dún na nGall itself. 'Doonan Rocks', a largely destroyed monument to the west of Donegal town has

been compared to the Viking Tynwald on the Isle of Man.³² A possibly tenth-century poem, 'Ard na scéla, a mheic na ccuach', describes intermarriage between the Vikings settled in Carrickabraghy, Inishowen, and Síol Lugdach women.³³ Several silver hoards associated with the Vikings have been found, particularly in the northern parts of the county.³⁴ There are various hints of at least temporary Viking settlements on Loughs Swilly and Foyle. But several commentators have also noted Cenél nEógain's somewhat pyrrhic success (at least from a long-term economic point of view) in keeping the Scandinavians out of their realms.



From Lacey: *Lug's forgotten Donegal Kingdom*, Plate 10.

Figure 4. Generalized political map of Donegal c.AD800 (white at centre represents the largely uninhabited mountainous areas). The power of Cenél Conaill (yellow) has collapsed north of the Barnesmore Gap. Cenél nEógain (blue) has taken over much of the former's good land in east Donegal, but has shared part of the latter with the Síol Lugdach (green), who have probably expanded as far east as what would become part of the boundary between the dioceses of Derry and Raphoe in the twelfth century (map by Robert Shaw).

The later Middle Ages

The Anglo-Normans approached Donegal from both ends. The southern incursion failed but the northern 'invasion' was longer-lasting culminating in the settling of the de Burgos in Inishowen following the collapse of the Mac Lochlainns, and the construction of the great castle of Northburgh (An Caisleán Nua > Green-castle) at the entrance to Lough Foyle.³⁵ There is also some tentative evidence that they proposed, but did not follow through, the development of Derry along the lines of Carrickfergus. They finally relinquished the peninsula in the 1330s paving the way for the take-over of the Síol Lugdach O'Dohertys. The latter ruled down to the Plantations when the peninsula was granted to Lord Deputy Chichester.

Meanwhile the Síol Lugdach O'Donnells took control of the rest of Donegal, dominating it and the surrounding territories from the thirteenth to the start of the seventeenth centuries. Along the west coast, their dependants, the Mac Suibhnes from Scotland, were settled as gallowglasses. Under the church reforms of the twelfth century and later, the diocesan structure of the county reflected the political geography of the time, particularly the dominance of the Mac Lochlainns and O'Donnells. The new continental religious orders arrived: Augustinians, Cistercians, Dominicans and Franciscans. The latter would have a major influence on the O'Donnells in a wide range of areas, particularly from the late fifteenth into the sixteenth century.

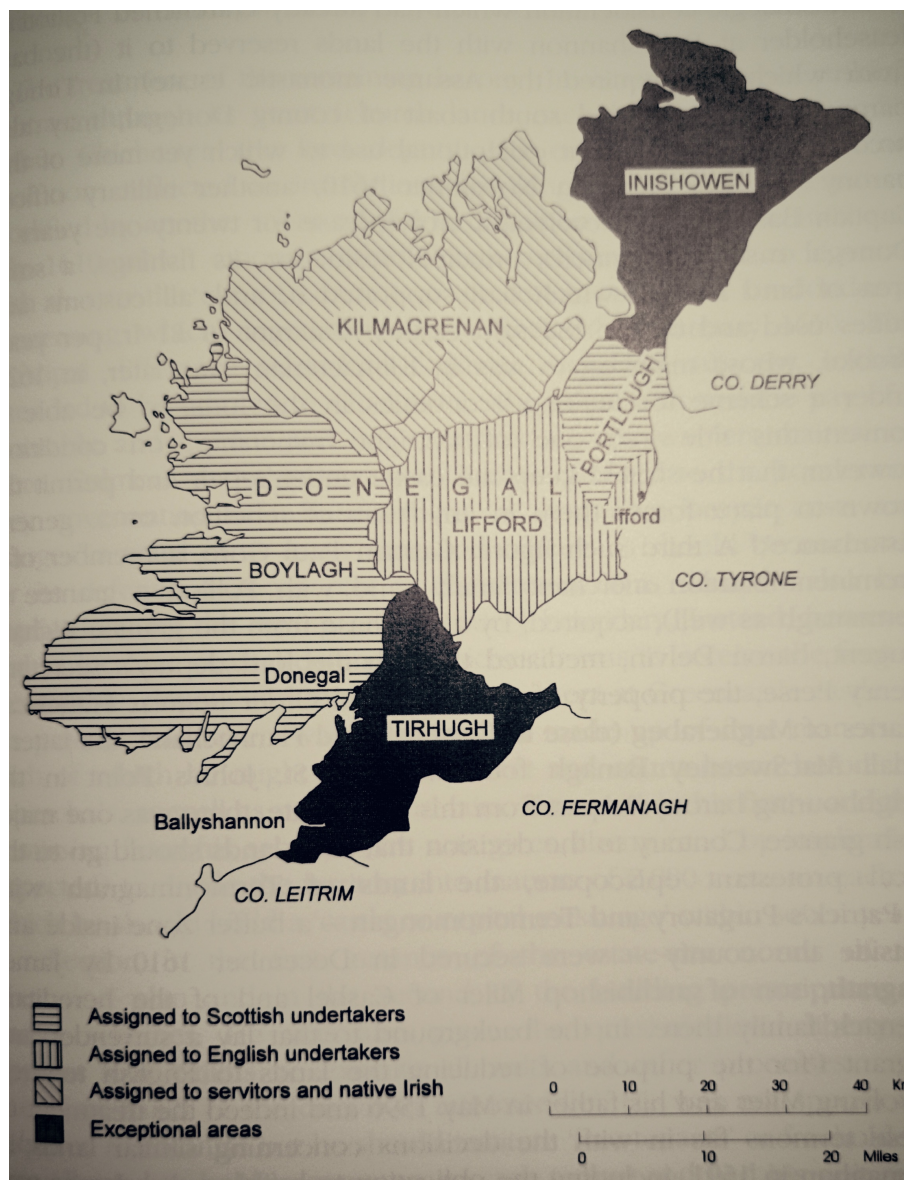


Figure 5. Plantation Donegal. From R.J. Hunter, ‘Plantation in Donegal’ in Nolan et al., *Donegal: history and society*, pp 283–324 at 287, Fig. 10.1.

Plantations

Following the collapse of the Gaelic lordships and the Flight of the Earls in 1607, the bulk of Donegal was confiscated by the crown and colonised by people with no local ancestry.³⁶ The good land of Tirhugh in the south was granted to Trinity College Dublin while the ‘precincts’ of Portlough and Lifford, on the equally good land of east Donegal, were assigned to Scottish

and English settlers (see Figure 5 above). The Plantations were a radical cultural shift with consequent damage and loss to the heritage, not to mention the livelihoods and way of life of the *ab origine* ‘natives’. The Gaelic population including people from other Ulster counties increasingly moved to the poor lands along the west coast, resulting in the so-called ‘congested districts’ of the nineteenth century.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ E.g. Sliab Tuath c.613 and Ircoir in 787. For Sliab Tuath see Brian Lacey, *Cenél Conaill and the Donegal kingdoms: AD 500–800* (Dublin, 2006), p. 216; for Ircoir, *ibid.*, pp 305–6.
- ² There is not a single centimetre of public railway, motorway, or gas-pipeline in the county, not to mention other infrastructural gaps. One exception was the N15 Ballyshannon bypass. Excavations in 2003–4 revealed an unrecorded medieval church and graveyard, and 1296 human burials extending over a thousand years. See Catriona J. McKenzie, Eileen M. Murphy and Colm J. Donnelly, *The science of a lost Medieval Gaelic graveyard. The Ballyhanna research project [TII Heritage 2]* (Dublin, 2015), and Catriona J. McKenzie and Eileen M. Murphy, *Life and death in Medieval Gaelic Ireland: the skeletons from Ballyhanna, Co. Donegal* (Dublin, 2018).
- ³ Brian Lacey et al., *Archaeological Survey of County Donegal: a description of the field antiquities from the Mesolithic Period to the 17th century A.D.* (Lifford, 1983). Updates and amendments since 1983 can be found online at Archaeology.ie.
- ⁴ See: Brian McNaught, ‘Early Mesolithic site discovered in Donegal’, *Donegal Annual*, 50 (1998), 64–5; Michael J. Kimball, *Human ecology and Neolithic transition in eastern County Donegal, Ireland* (Oxford, 2000).

- ⁵ Note by Peter Woodman in Brian Lacey, 'Prehistoric Archaeology of Donegal: c.7000 BC to c.AD500' in Jim Mac Laughlin and Sean Beattie (eds), *An historical, environmental and cultural atlas of County Donegal* (Cork, 2013), pp 101–6 at 101–2.
- ⁶ Laurent J. Costa, Farina Sternke and Peter C. Woodman, 'The analysis of a lithic assemblage from Eleven Ballyboes, County Donegal', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, 60 (2001), 1–8.
- ⁷ Peter C. Woodman, *The Mesolithic in Ireland: hunter-gatherers in an insular environment* (Oxford, 1978), p. 286.
- ⁸ Nicky Milner and Peter Woodman, 'Deconstructing the myths of Irish shell middens' in Nicky Milner, Oliver E. Craig and G.N. Bailey (eds), *Shell middens in Atlantic Europe* (Oxford, 2007), pp 101–10.
- ⁹ As note 5 above.
- ¹⁰ P.V. Addyman and P.D. Vernon, 'A beach pebble industry from Dunaff Bay, Inishowen, Co. Donegal', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, 29 (1966), 6–15.
- ¹¹ J.P. Mallory and T.E. McNeill, *The archaeology of Ulster: from colonization to Plantation* (Belfast, 1991), p. 49. See also Jim Mac Laughlin, *Troubled waters: a cultural and social history of Ireland's sea fisheries* (Dublin, 2010), pp 35–48 for detailed discussion of the prehistory of sea and freshwater fishing in this part of Ireland.
- ¹² Eamon Cody, *Survey of the megalithic tombs of Ireland* [vol. VI, Co. Donegal] (Dublin, 2002).
- ¹³ Laurence N.W. Flanagan, Deirdre E. Flanagan and Philip S. Doughty, 'The excavation of a court cairn at Bavan, County Donegal', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, 29 (1966), 16–38; L. Flanagan, *Annual Report of the Royal Irish Academy 1969–70; Annual Report of the Royal Irish Academy, 1970–1*.
- ¹⁴ Cody, *Megalithic tombs*, pp 96–9.
- ¹⁵ Martin A. Timoney, 'Malin More: pre-bog field wall' in Isabel Bennett (ed.), *Excavations 2002: summary accounts of archaeological excavations in Ireland* (Dublin, 2004), pp 114–5; Lacy, *Archaeological Survey*, pp 50–4.
- ¹⁶ Eamon Cody, *Magheracar, County Donegal: excavation of a passage tomb on Ireland's north-west coast* (Dublin, 2019).
- ¹⁷ Seán Ó Nualláin, 'A ruined megalithic cemetery in County Donegal and its context in the Irish Passage Grave series', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 98 (1968), 1–29.
- ¹⁸ Brian Lacey, 'The "Bend of the Finn": an archaeological landscape in east Donegal' in Conleth Manning (ed.), *From ringforts to fortified houses: studies on castles and other monuments in honour of David Sweetman* (Dublin, 2007), pp 107–17; Lacey, *Cenél Conaill*, especially pp 131–43.
- ¹⁹ Seoirse Ó Dochartaigh, *Inis Eoghain, The Island of Eoghan: the place-names of Inishowen* (Carndonagh, 2011), p. 40.
- ²⁰ Victor Buckley and Laureen Buckley, 'What did you do for Easter', *Archaeology Ireland*, 18:2 (Summer, 2004), 7.
- ²¹ Etienne Rynne and C.A. Erskine, 'Bronze Age burials at Drung, county Donegal', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 93:2 (1963), 169–79.
- ²² Boyle Somerville, 'Instances of orientation in prehistoric monuments of the British Isles', *Archaeologia*, 73 (1922–3), 193–224.
- ²³ Etienne Rynne, 'Celtic stone idols in Ireland' in Charles Thomas (ed.), *The Iron Age in the Irish Sea province* (London, 1972), pp 86–8.
- ²⁴ Elizabeth O'Brien, 'A re-evaluation of the find-spot of, and possible context for, the anthropoid hilted sword from Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal' in Gabriel Cooney, Katharina Becker, John Coles, Michael Ryan and Susanne Sievers (eds), *Relics of old decency: archaeological studies in later prehistory — festschrift for Barry Raftery* (Dublin, 2009), pp 193–8. According to mythology, this was where the first humans in Ireland landed after Noah's flood!
- ²⁵ Elizabeth O'Brien, 'Excavation of a multi-period burial site at Ballymacaward, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal', *Donegal Annual*, 51 (1999), 56–61.
- ²⁶ Jacqueline Cahill Wilson, Brian Lacey and Steven Mcglade, 'A possible context for Roman finds from west Donegal', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, 74 (2017–18), 26–32.
- ²⁷ Lacey, *Cenél Conaill*, pp 107–11.
- ²⁸ Brian Lacey, 'Some large hilltop and hill-slope enclosures in County Donegal' in Cooney et al., *Relics of old decency*, pp 499–506.
- ²⁹ Ludwig Bieler, *The Patrician texts in the Book of Armagh* (Dublin, 1979), pp 158–61. This is the same route — and probably the same actual track — as the modern N15.
- ³⁰ Much of what follows is explained in Lacey, *Cenél Conaill*. See also the maps [reproduced in this article] indicating political change from c.550 to 800 in Brian Lacey, *Lug's forgotten Donegal Kingdom: the archaeology, history and folklore of the Sí Lugdach of Cloghaneely* (Dublin, 2012), between pp 70 and 71.
- ³¹ The dynastic name Uí Néill should not be confused with the surname O'Neill (itself Uí Néill in the plural in Irish) which derives from the historical Niall Glúndubh who died in 919.
- ³² Tomás G. Ó Canann, 'Carraig an Dúnáin: probable Ua Canannáin inauguration site', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 93 (2003), 36–67 at 40.
- ³³ For the poem's content and dispute about its date see, Lacey, *Lug's forgotten Donegal Kingdom*, pp 47–51.
- ³⁴ See for instance, John Sheehan and Maeve Sikora, 'Lurgabrack, Co. Donegal: a Viking Age hoard of Scoto-Scandinavian silver', *The Journal of Irish Archaeology*, 28 (2019), 103–18.
- ³⁵ For a description of this castle and other late medieval architectural monuments see Lacy, *Archaeological Survey*. For the general history see Katharine Simms, *Gaelic Ulster in the Middle Ages: history, culture and society* (Dublin, 2020).
- ³⁶ For the Plantations period see R.J. Hunter, 'Plantation in Donegal' in William Nolan, Liam Ronayne and Máiread Dunlevy (eds), *Donegal: history and society. Interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin, 1995), pp 283–324; *ibid.*, Kevin McKenny, 'British settler society in Donegal c.1625–1685', pp 325–56.



Figure 1 The salmon leap at Ballyshannon from Richard Twiss, *A Tour in Ireland in 1775* (Dublin, 1776), frontispiece. James Hardiman Library, University of Galway. This engraving depicts maritime traffic in Donegal Bay as well as the beginning of the development of the residential and commercial area known as The Port (later, West Port) on the south bank of the Erne estuary.

Dr Angela Byrne
(Author of *Irish Historic Towns Atlas:
Ballyshannon*
[forthcoming])

*Trade and migration
in nineteenth-
century Ballyshannon*

Introduction

Located on the estuary of the River Erne in Donegal Bay, the largest bay in Europe, Ballyshannon has a long history of maritime trade and migration. The town has its origins as a ford over the River Erne and as a medieval harbour. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Ballyshannon was a small but thriving port town that received imports of timber, coal, slate and rock salt, and exported butter and fresh and salted fish. It was also the point of embarkation (often via Sligo) for generations of Irish migrants to North America. The port declined in the 1930s, but the town's historic maritime and trading connections remain in evidence: quays, two railway lines, an icehouse, warehouses, hotels, and bonded yards and stores. While the number of migrants who departed from Ballyshannon was small compared to the bigger ports of Belfast, Derry or Sligo, the transit of people and goods left imprints on the built environment and infrastructure, as well as the town's economic and cultural life.

Migration and trade at Ballyshannon port

International trade is recorded at Ballyshannon from the early fifteenth century, when Bristol merchants put in at the harbour to trade for salmon.¹ By the mid-sixteenth century, the Ó Domhnaill was referred to as 'the king of fish' for the extent of the family's trade in that commodity, which they exchanged for Continental wines for entertaining at the castle they had built at Ballyshannon in 1423.² Butter, timber and salmon were exported to the Continent in the late seventeenth century; from the eighteenth century, the extensive local salt works were used to prepare fish for export to England and the Mediterranean while local merchants Tom Barton and Alexander Murray had great success importing wine and spirits.³ Ballyshannon had been granted a market in 1608⁴ but this occupied informal space until the buoyancy of the local economy in the eighteenth century prompted the erection of the market house at the convergence of Market Street and Castle Street in 1760.⁵ A boathouse, fish store and curing house dating to at least the late eigh-

teenth century sat in the estuary on the small island of Inis Saimer (see Figure 1 opposite), a short distance from the main quay which was located at the western end of The Mall, one of the town's principal streets. By 1824, Pigot's directory would report that Ballyshannon was 'a thriving well built town' that exported fresh fish packed in ice to Liverpool and salted fish to the Mediterranean. The Ordnance Survey 'fair plan' (1836) records the infrastructure of maritime trade present in the town: a custom house, several piers and slips, and an icehouse located near the quays on the north side of the Erne estuary. Other early nineteenth-century sources record the presence of salt manufactories, riverside warehouses, bonded yard and stores, an excise office and revenue police barrack.

The town's long-established international trading links formed an important context for the movement of people. Timber was one of the most-traded commodities at Ballyshannon port, and timber yards sat along both banks of the estuary in the nineteenth century. Timber ships emptied of their cargo returned across the Atlantic carrying steerage passengers as ballast, an affordable means of migration for many. Migration was an established part of Irish life well before the Great Famine and Ulster folk comprised a particularly important element of the eighteenth and early nineteenth-century outflows to North America. They accounted for 35 per cent of all Irish settlers in British North America and a study of the 1851 Census of New Brunswick found that just over half of all the Irish in the province had come from Ulster.⁶ Between 1815 and 1845 Canada was an attractive option for Irish migrants — an estimated 40,977 left Irish ports for the country in 1831 — and they became the country's largest English-speaking minority.⁷

Canada features prominently in the records of ship's arrivals and departures from Ballyshannon. In the 1830s and 1840s newspapers carried regular advertisements for fares from Ballyshannon to Saint John, New Brunswick, as well as regular reports of migrant sailings.⁸ A small but steady stream of migrants left Ballyshannon for Saint John and Quebec in the 1820s–1840s. For example, the brig *Mayflower* plied the Quebec–Ballyshannon route every summer except one (1832) in the years between 1828 and 1834. In May 1833 the *Ballyshannon Herald* reported:

'On Monday morning last, this beautiful vessel [the *Mayflower*] cleared out of our Harbour with passengers for Quebec. She had, we understand, her full compliment, all of whom appeared in high spirits on leaving their native shore. [...] Many mechanics

have gone out in her to seek that support denied to them at home — while we regret to see such a useful class of persons leaving

Ireland — we rejoice that there is an asylum for them where their labours will be compensated.⁹

	1842	1843		1842	1843
Ballyshannon	34	113	New Ross	653	164
Baltimore	198	88	Newry	1547	389
Belfast	4636	3130	Sligo	2897	866
Bantry	—	20	Tralee	498	131
Cork	1875	417	Westport	898	140
Donegal	871	302	Wexford	244	15
Dublin	2081	953	Waterford	1291	320
Galway	409	78	Youghal	24	47
Killala	392	494	Limerick	4021	1840
Larne	277	—	Newport	424	—
Derry	2200	1126			
Steerage					
	25,470	9,633			
Cabin					
	62	95			
Total					
	25,532	9,728			

Table 1 ‘Names of ports in Ireland from which emigration came [to Quebec] during the years 1842 and 1843’ from *The Vindicator*, 22 May 1843.

In spring 1836 the *Jane* left for Quebec carrying 100 farmers and mechanics.¹⁰ In March 1837 the *Impartial Reporter* published an advertisement for fares aboard the *Elizabeth*, sailing from Ballyshannon to Saint John.¹¹ On 17 September 1841 the *Caroline* arrived safely at Saint John from Ballyshannon and plied the route again the following summer.¹² In 1843 the Emigration Department at Quebec published arrivals figures that were reprinted in Irish newspapers (**Table 1** above). At just 34, Ballyshannon provided the second-lowest number of migrants in 1842 after Youghal’s 24 (which had three times the population Ballyshannon had), but the figure increased sharply to 113 in the following year. These are just examples of the small but steady migrant traffic from Ballyshannon. A comprehensive study of ships’ lists, announcements and advertisements in newspapers, and port records on both sides of the Atlantic would reveal broader patterns and the full scale of this migration path, but that is beyond the scope of this paper.

While international trade had been carried on at Ballyshannon for at least 400 years, during the Great Famine people became the port’s major export. In April 1850 the *Ballyshannon Herald* reported:

‘Our town was thronged this week with persons proceeding to Donegal and Derry, to embark for America, from this county and the counties of Leitrim and Fermanagh;

most of them appeared to belong to the respectable class of farmers and traders; the numerous cars of excellent furniture which they were taking with them proved that they were in comparatively comfortable circumstances, but, dreading the further distress of Ireland, they resolved on leaving their native country, before their all was gone.’

In addition to activity at the port itself, Ballyshannon’s location on the main coastal routeway between Sligo and Derry made it a place of transience; crowds passed through the town while making their way on foot to those larger ports. Ballyshannon was also an administrative centre serving the wider hinterland of south Donegal, west Fermanagh and north Leitrim; it thus became a focal point for those seeking indoor relief. Completed in 1842 on the town’s southern edge, the workhouse was designed to accommodate 600 but during the Famine was home to up to 900 residents.¹³ The new institution was not equal to the demands of the crisis. Conditions were wretched; open sewers ran through the yards and disease was rife.¹⁴ Hundreds of inmates died — over 300 in 1847 alone — and a paupers’ graveyard was opened on the site of the former cholera burial ground on the north side of the river, near St Anne’s Church.¹⁵ In January 1848 the workhouse was described as ‘one vast infirmary’.¹⁶ Nineteen teenage inmates were assisted to emigrate to Sydney in late 1848 under the so-called ‘Earl Grey’ orphans’ scheme.¹⁷ Other assisted

migrants from the town in the period included members of the local Methodist congregation. The Methodist Conferences in Ireland reported in 1849 that of a congregation of 488, thirty-two had emigrated from Ballyshannon in that

year; in 1850, twelve left out of a total of 490.¹⁸ The memory of these events has been recorded locally with the erection of a ‘Famine orphan’ memorial in 2014 at the site of the former workhouse.



Figure 2. View of Ballyshannon, 1806, by Richard Hoare. By permission of the Royal Irish Academy © RIA .

The built environment of transience

Ballyshannon’s built environment suggests the extent to which this relatively small port and market town was a place of transience. The Mall — known previously as Dirty Causeway and Fish Lane¹⁹ — led westward to the quays and icehouse from the north–south axis of Main Street. Of the town’s several quays, the principal one was Mall Quay, built on the site of an earlier quay by local philanthropist Dr Simon Sheil in around 1835.²⁰ The extant remains of large warehouses erected on The Mall, along West Port and near the quays indicate the thriving trade that once was carried on in the town. The open spaces that the quays once occupied on the north bank of the Erne are now recreational spaces.

The town was home to a number of hotels, including Dorrian’s Imperial Hotel (est. 1781) and Coburn’s Commercial Hotel (est. 1834; closed 1860s). The most notable hotels were located on the north side of the river in the heart of the town along the main north–south routeway;

buildings of higher rateable valuation were concentrated in this part of the town. Pigot’s directory listed three inns in 1824; there were of course also lower boarding-houses or informal accommodations to cater to the less well-off. The presence of hotels (as opposed to more modest inns) points to Ballyshannon’s status as a tourist destination. It is perhaps difficult now to appreciate the fact that the Falls of Assaroe and the salmon leap rivalled the Lakes of Killarney until their destruction in 1946 for the Erne hydro-electric scheme. In 1806, the town received a mixed review from well-known English travel writer Richard Colt Hoare:

‘a more dirty inn, and worse attendance, I never met with either abroad or at home: the rooms and beds teemed with every kind of vermin, and a dirty barefooted wench acted as our *femme de chambre* and waiter [...] Ballyshannon, however, with all its *disagremens*, is worthy of a visit; for, close to the town, the river falling precipitely over a ridge of black rocks, forms a grand cataract

at the spot where it discharges its waters into the sea.²¹

Hoare's sketch of the Falls of Assaroe presents the town in a much more attractive light, however, depicting the old mill and the developing 'Purt' or West Port to the south of the river (see Figure 2 on page 11).

Despite the successes of some local merchants and the town's place on the tourist circuit, natural deficiencies in the geography of the port and harbour limited any further possibilities of development: the miles of rapids on the Erne²² and the troublesome sand bar sitting across the mouth of the estuary that limited access by larger vessels. The sand bar is recorded in some of the earliest sources for Ballyshannon, including Bartlett's map of 1602–3 and the 1654 Civil Survey.²³ It was a matter of public interest from the late eighteenth to late nineteenth century. Archibald Murray, one of the most prominent local merchants, commissioned a survey of the channel in 1778 but his proposed improvements were not made.²⁴ The Commissioners of Public Works recommended remedial works, but attempts at improvement — including an investment of £5,000 by the Conolly Estate — were unsuccessful.²⁵ Indeed, the sand bar also presented a hazard to migrants departing Ballyshannon, damaging a number of passenger vessels during the Famine years.²⁶ Despite continued calls for remedial works, Ballyshannon port's decline was final by the 1950s.

The development of the railways from 1857 further reduced activity at Ballyshannon port, so that migrants and goods came instead to be transported by rail to the larger ports of Sligo and Derry. The Great Northern Railway connection to Derry provided access to faster, more

comfortable Atlantic crossings by steamship until its closure in 1957. Ballyshannon's second railway line, the Donegal Railway Company narrow gauge extension was relatively short-lived, operating from 1905 to 1960. The two rail terminals were separated by the Erne, hampering the trade possibilities that might otherwise have arisen from the presence of two lines in a relatively small port town.

Conclusions

In 1879, Hugh Allingham — half-brother of the poet, William — closed his history of Ballyshannon with these words: 'Since 1831 many hundreds of persons have left our town for America and other foreign countries, some few have returned, but by far the greater number have found new homes across the seas. However great their success, they seldom forget the old town of their early days or The Winding Banks of Erne.'²⁷ Shortly afterwards, in 1894, the well-known Irish writer Katherine Tynan published *Farewell to Ballyshannon*, the story of a twelve-year-old migrant named Johnny inspired by William Allingham's ballad, *Adieu to Ballyshanny*. Tynan and William Allingham's creative writing, and Hugh Allingham's local history, are just part of the cultural testimony recording the extent to which Ballyshannon and the surrounding region was ravaged by emigration in the nineteenth century. The town's population has been in steady decline since the Famine period and only modest increases have been observed in recent Census years. The dilapidated warehouses that line the banks of the Erne and the bare expanse of Mall Quay are lasting notices to Ballyshannon's erstwhile place in the lively Atlantic and Mediterranean maritime routes.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Darren Mac Eiteagáin, 'The Renaissance and the late medieval lordship of Tír Chonaill 1461–1555' in William Nolan, Liam Ronayne and Máiread Dunleavy (eds), *Donegal: history and society* (Dublin, 1995), pp 203–28 at 206–7.
- ² *Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts, 1515–74* (London, 1867), p. 308.
- ³ John B. Cunningham, 'The port of Ballyshannon', *Donegal Annual*, 52 (2000), 7–37 at 9–11; Business letters of George Macartney, Belfast merchant, 1672–81, PRONI MIC19/2; Hugh Allingham, *Ballyshannon: its history and antiquities; with some account of the surrounding neighbourhood* (Ballyshannon, 1879), pp 126–7, 103.
- ⁴ 'MS Rawlinson A.237, Bodleian Library, Oxford', *Analecta Hibernica*, 3 (1931), 151–218 at 184.
- ⁵ Allingham, *Ballyshannon*, p. 54.
- ⁶ Robert J. Grace, 'A demographic and social profile of Quebec City's Irish populations, 1842–1861', *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 23:1 (2003), 55–84 at 81 note 29; Deirdre Mageean, 'Nineteenth-century Irish emigration: a study using passenger lists' in P.J. Drudy (ed.), *The Irish in America: emigration, assimilation, and impact* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 41; Peter M. Toner, 'The origins of the New Brunswick Irish, 1851', *Journal of Canadian Studies /Revue d'études canadiennes*, 23:1–2 (1988), 104–119 at 108.
- ⁷ Donald Harman Akenson, 'The historiography of the Irish in the United States' in Patrick O'Sullivan (ed.), *The Irish world wide: the Irish in the new communities* (Leicester, 1992), p. 112; Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, *Irish emigration and Canadian settlement: patterns, links, and letters* (Toronto and Buffalo, 1990), p. 4.
- ⁸ *Report of emigration commissioners*. HC 1831–2 (260), 303[1], p. 24; Allingham, *Ballyshannon*, p. 103.
- ⁹ *Ballyshannon Herald*, 10 May 1833.
- ¹⁰ Allingham, *Ballyshannon*, p. 103.
- ¹¹ *Impartial Reporter*, 9 Mar. 1837.
- ¹² *Belfast News Letter*, 26 Oct. 1841, 22 July 1842.
- ¹³ Dictionary of Irish Architects online; *Ballyshannon Herald*, 2 Apr. 1847.
- ¹⁴ *Papers relating to proceedings for relief of distress, and state of unions and workhouses in Ireland, 1848*. HC 1847–8 (919, 955, 999), LIV.313, LV.1, LVI.1., pp 35, 36, 40.
- ¹⁵ *National inventory of architectural heritage: an introduction to the architectural heritage of County Donegal* (Dublin, 2007). Survey available at www.buildingsofireland.ie.
- ¹⁶ *Papers relating to proceedings for relief of distress*, p. 42.
- ¹⁷ Trevor McClaughlin, *Barefoot and pregnant? Irish famine orphans in Australia* (2 vols, Melbourne [2001]), vol. 2, pp 158–68.
- ¹⁸ Irish Methodist emigration 1849 from Minutes of the Methodist Conferences in Ireland, Dublin, 27 June 1849, pp 428–30; Irish Methodist emigration 1850 from Minutes of the Methodist Conferences in Ireland, Dublin, 26 June 1850, pp 472–4. Available at Irish Emigration Database.
- ¹⁹ Fish Lane is first recorded in the Registry of Deeds (427/478/279787) in 1787; Dirty Causeway is recorded in Allingham, *Ballyshannon*, p. 99.
- ²⁰ *First report of the commissioners of inquiry into the state of the Irish fisheries* (London, 1837), p. 221; Ballyshannon harbour commissioners, minute books, 1887–1962. Donegal County Archives, HC/1/1/1, 1 Feb. 1888.
- ²¹ Richard Colt Hoare, *Journal of a tour in Ireland, AD 1806* (London, 1807), p. 188.
- ²² Cunningham, 'The port of Ballyshannon', 7.
- ²³ *Civil Survey*, vol. iii, p. 56.
- ²⁴ Cunningham, 'The port of Ballyshannon', 10–11; Robert Crawford, 'The harbour of Ballyshannon' [1885], *Donegal Annual*, 6:2 (1965), 164.
- ²⁵ *Ballyshannon Herald*, 3 Jan. 1834; *Third annual report from the board of public works in Ireland*. HC 1835 (76), pp 24–5.
- ²⁶ *Belfast Commercial Chronicle*, 5 Sept. 1846, 14 June 1847, 24 Jan. 1848.
- ²⁷ Allingham, *Ballyshannon*, p. 137.



Detail of John Rocque's 1760 map of Ireland (David Rumsey Map Collection, David Rumsey Map Center, Stanford Libraries).

Land Settlement in seventeenth-century Wicklow

Therese Hicks

Introduction

While engaged in researching a local church ruin just west of Newtownmountkennedy, where I live, I became curious as to whether or not the Kennedy estate papers could shed any light on the subject of my interest. It was obvious that the building had benefitted from landlord assistance. With persistence and luck, I was led to the NLI, where these papers are a subset of the Wicklow Papers, the documents of the earls of Wicklow. They are written in secretary hand. After overcoming that hurdle, I entered into the world of seventeenth-century Dublin and Wicklow. As it turned out, that ruin was well after the time of the Kennedys, but their story then took up my attention for the following eight years.

With the addition of much reading of contemporary and secondary sources, the story of these Kennedys gradually took shape. Their ancestors most probably moved from Tipperary to Dublin in the first half of the sixteenth century. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, they had done very well as merchants and had been accepted among the ranks of Dublin aldermen. Most likely cousins of that branch, of more modest middle-class means, they then shifted into careers in the law courts. Robert Kennedy (c.1584–1668) established himself and his family on St Nicholas Street, a short lane between the market cross and St Nicholas Gate, which led to a bridge over the Poddle. He had broken ties with his father by taking the Oath of Supremacy.

Urban renewal in seventeenth-century Dublin

In 1597, Dublin had been devastated by the explosion of 140 barrels of gunpowder on the quay. Houses along the river were blown away, and there were very few buildings within the walls that escaped significant damage. However, what were probably, at that time, simple wattle and daub thatched cottages on St Nicholas Street would have been little affected as they were on the opposite, down side, of the ridge on which Dublin is built. In the Kennedy papers, there are receipts for the purchase of an amount of large wood beams in 1619–21. As a number of Robert's houses are described as 'recently built', it seems clear that Robert Kennedy was engaged in urban renewal. Cagework houses of at least two stories would have given the east side of the street a decidedly improved look.

This Robert was making his money as a chamberlain in the court of the Exchequer and later would secure the post of chief remembrancer. His office was just over the hill in the Christchurch complex, where the Four Courts had moved in 1608. While the pay was modest, the opportunity for bribes and insider dealing was immense, as the bonanza of acquiring Irish property by those in the Buckingham 'connection' was in full flight. Sir James Carroll and Sir William Parsons saw to it that there were opportunities to do him favours, as he in turn facilitated the need for documents to further their property investments.

With an eye to more expansion within the walls of Dublin, Kennedy then married Constance Sulliard, the granddaughter of Ralph Sankey, an alderman, who, along with George, probably his brother, had interests in more St Nicholas Street houses as well as a large property behind them, Jenefields Inns. Over the years, Robert and his son, Richard, gained all the houses on the east side of this street. Later, they tore down a few, and built a mansion on the site of Jenefields Inns, with a lawn extending to St Nicholas Street. This family thus contributed to the development of real estate within the city of Dublin.

Land ownership change in Newcastle Barony in the 1620s and 1630s

More significant, however, is Robert Kennedy's contribution to the settlement of Newcastle Barony in Co. Wicklow. The O'Byrnes of the littoral and low hills of east Wicklow had long since been supporters of the Dublin colonial government. Although Henry VIII had considered it, they were never offered 'surrender and regrant' and so remained freeholders. With the increasing monetisation of the economy, the landholders in this area found themselves short of cash to maintain their lifestyle as gentlemen. Years of harvest failures only added to their distress.

The earliest documents in the Kennedy papers, from the 1590s, attest to small mortgages exchanged among the O'Byrnes of this area. They were of the Kilmurry, Kiltimon, and Downes septs. (The Kilmurry sept was not one of the four which elected the O'Byrne, but the documents contain

references to the head of a sept in that townland.) These exchanges continued to happen through 1629.

In 1615, Farrell O’Cullen bought a significant amount of O’Byrne land, including Ballygarny. That townland, along with Cooledoyle, which was its opposite across a small river, was the site of much older settlement. The Anglo-Normans had built a motte on the hill above the stream, as well as a mill nearby. A row of small cottages was then constructed for workers of the mill. This became a ‘newtown’. Farrell also bought land from a relative in the Ashford area. The O’Cullens were initially the traditional physicians of the Kavanaghs, and so of the professional class. However, it is unclear why Farrell O’Cullen had the money with which to purchase land at this time.

The first time Robert Kennedy is seen functioning in this area, is in 1618 when he is a witness for Sir William Parsons’ lease to an O’Byrne man in Kilmurry. Parsons was one of Kennedy’s main promoters. He had been investing in this area of Wicklow for a few years, and gained a lot of land along the coast. In addition, Kennedy was a brother-in-law to Peirce Talbot of Rathdown whose tower house was just north of what would become Greystones.

By the early 1620s, a few men from Dublin with money had begun to offer the O’Byrnes mortgages for their land, and ownership started to shift. Coincidentally, Robert Kennedy had come into a large amount of money in this time period, and by 1625, began to buy out the earlier investors, and to expand his holdings in the area. He used a trust, headed by Parsons, in order to do this. It included Parsons’ son and other relatives, Dublin aldermen, and a brother-in-law who was a recently arrived Welshman.

Robert Kennedy started by targeting Farrell O’Cullen. Some of the reasons for this maybe that by this time he held a significant amount of land in Newcastle parish, and, secondly, the motte on Ballygarny provided the site upon which a tower house would later be constructed, giving Kennedy a residence in this townland. (The original wooden structure had long since vanished.) O’Cullen had also taken out two Staple loans, which made him particularly vulnerable financially. These Staple loans were for hundreds of pounds, significantly more than any amount previously borrowed by the men in this part of Wicklow. Kennedy gained 5,100 acres of O’Cullen’s land by 1627. He rented it back to him, but O’Cullen gave up the lease a few years later, unable to make the rent. During this same time period, Kennedy had also acquired 220 acres in southwest Co. Dublin.

After securing this initial lot of O’Cullen’s land, Kennedy then proceeded to gather up the many small parcels within the Kilmurry and Monalin townlands. Next, he focused his efforts on the O’Byrnes of the Downes. Then in 1630, Kennedy went after O’Cullen’s remaining 1,000 acres. Lastly, Kennedy began negotiations with James O’Byrne of Kiltimon for the townland of Ballynahinch, previously known as Ballymacandrick. By 1633, Kennedy had concluded his purchase of this townland. By 1639, Kennedy completed his purchases of the land he was to hold for many decades in Newcastle Barony, in the parishes of Newcastle, Delgany, and Killiskey.

The Kennedy estate papers also give us an insight into how Robert operated in his dealing with the O’Byrnes. James O’Byrne’s complaint to Wentworth in 1637 lays out his method.

‘Robert Kennedy Esq hear[d] [I] had mortgaged to Robte Clooney . . . 3000 acres good Land, arable and pasture. [He,] unknown to [me,] purchased Clooney’s interest and knowing [me] to be in want of moneyes offered to give [me] £60 more . . . [for] Certaine Lands in the countie which [he] promised and undertook that both himself and his Feofees should make good to [me and my] heires for ever as by his deed bearing date the 6th of October 1630 . . . Kennedy promised at any tyme upon demand to give [me] £300 at 5 per cent for and towards any purchase he could make, and that hee would take and accept [my] eldest Sonn, and breed him as carefully and tenderly as his owne both at school and else wheare, and accept him as his owne Sonn, make him one of his Clearkes in his office (hee being then the kings cheife Remembrancer in the Exchequer), and would be such a friend to [me] and [my] children as he never would see [me] or [my] children to want or bee unprovided for as the witnesses then present will justifie . . . [T]heise faire inticeing promises [of] which he hath not performed any parte [despite] being often thereto demanded. Kennedy soe circumvented [me] as [I] hath got an assurance from [him,] of [my] Lands being worth at least £300 and hath made an insufficient and fraudulent Convenance of [my] Lands in Exchange[,] the most parte of them being not [my] own but others proper Inheritance; and kept [away] from [me] soe as [I] could neither get Lands, possession or parcel thereof haveing earnestly sent[,] since that contract desired true and reall confirmation of the deed of Exchange.

...

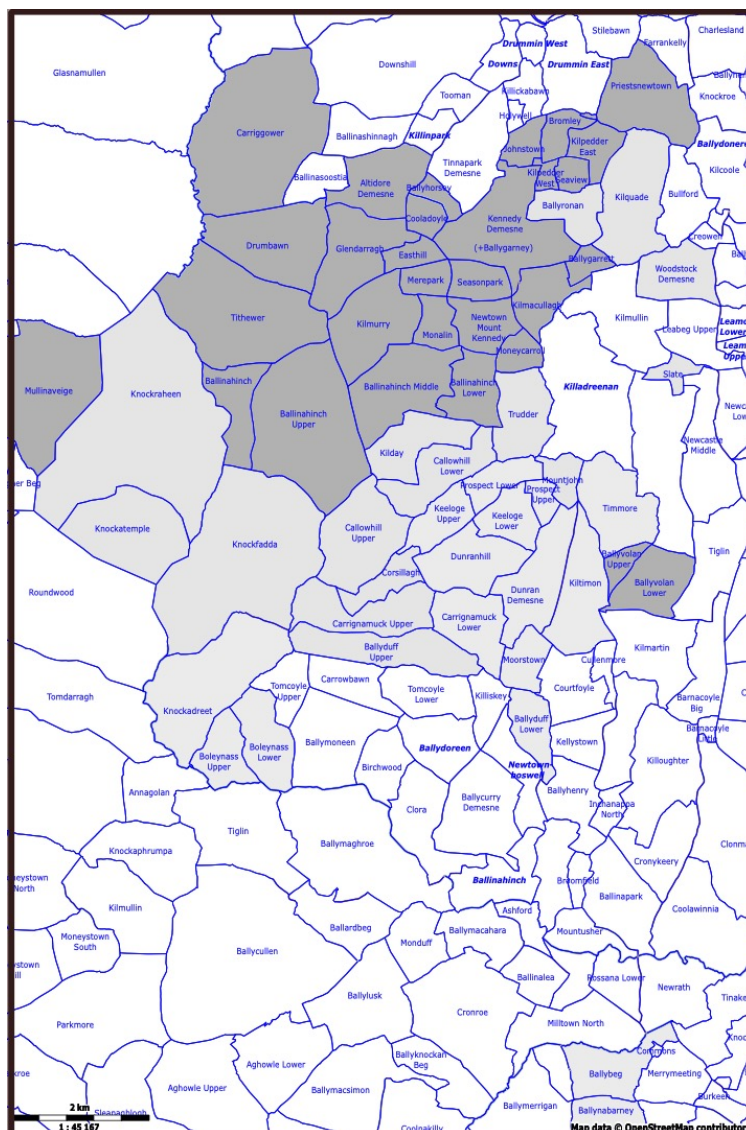
May it please your Lordship to command the said Robte Kennedy forthwith to . . . performe his agreement and promises in regard hee hath gotten [my] whole estate into his hands whereby [me, my] wife and 13 orphans are utterly undone.'

Kennedy's reply to O'Cullen is to simply deny that he did or said any of what O'Cullen reported.

Robert Kennedys' initial estate amounted to 6,500 acres. In the 1660s, as a reward for his son Richard's participation in the restoration of Charles II, he was awarded land that resulted in the doubling of their holdings in Wicklow, which were made into the manor of Mount Kennedy, and Robert Kennedy made a baronet. We are unusually fortunate to have documents which outline how the long-established landowners in Co. Wicklow were relieved of their land.

For a recently published history of the Kennedys of Mount Kennedy see:

Therese Hicks, *No mere Irish. The Kennedys of Mount Kennedy* (Wordwell, 2022). [Wordwell , 2022. 169p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN: 978-1-913934-76-7. €25.]



Map of the townlands in Kennedy's manor. The darker area is the original 6,500 acres, and the lighter shading is the additional area that his son Richard acquired. Those townland names in bold italics are lands acquired earlier, but which evidently were sold before the manor was made. This map was drawn by Brian Hollinshead of Open Street Mapping.



Doon Fort December 2022

Gail Park Photography

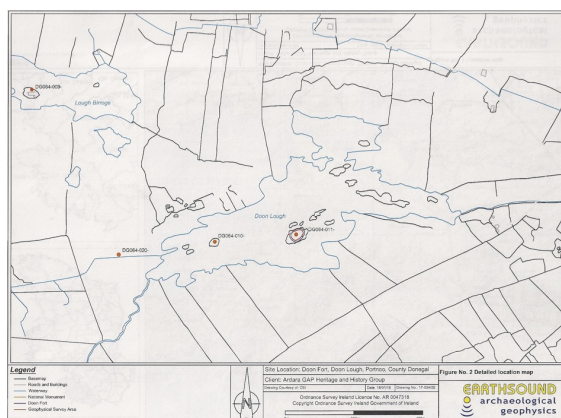
Doon Fort Project, Co. Donegal
Paula Harvey
on behalf of
Donegal G.A.P. Heritage and History Group

Introduction

The Donegal G.A.P. (Glenties, Ardara, Portnoo) Heritage and History Group was established in 2016 to research, develop, protect and promote the built, natural and cultural legacies of the greater area. That includes areas of geological and geographical importance. Our remit also extends to an appreciation and understanding of areas of wildlife and natural biodiversity for everyone. Over the course of the years we have organised two major annual events, that of our *Warp and Weft of Heritage* weekends and our Spanish Armada re-enactment walks and living history events in commemoration of the crew and Captain Don Alonso de Levya of *La Duquesa Santa Ana* which was shipwrecked off Rosbeg, most of whom subsequently lost their lives following the shipwreck of *La Girona* off Lacada Point, Co. Antrim in October 1588. We have been engaged in many more heritage related activities and programmes including the PEACE IV Cross Border Heritage project.



Location of Doon Fort



Location of Doon fort in Doon Lough

Adopt a Monument Scheme

Within a few months of our beginnings, the Heritage Council launched their Adopt a Monument Scheme and knowing the importance and fragile state of Doon Fort, we submitted our application. We were selected as one of the first five to be adopted into the scheme and this provided us with opportunities to apply for grants that would enable us to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan, to carry out significant surveys, and, ultimately, to secure funding for the conservation of Doon Fort and research to better understand the monument. The massive drystone fortification of Doon Fort is the only monument of its class in Ireland (Western Stone Forts), that is situated on an island in the middle of a lake. Our aim is to bring the monument, its landscape setting, and other monuments in the vicinity from the periphery into the heart of our community. Collaboration with the Adopt a Monument Scheme is the vital cog in the protection, preservation and promotion of this heritage site. The scheme also provides us with opportunities to work collaboratively and participate in community development to highlight Donegal's hidden heritage.

As we outlined in our presentation at the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement's conference in Donegal Town in May 2022, we listed the various streams of funding for the Doon Fort project since 2016. Most of the grants came from the Heritage Council — but we also received funding from Donegal County Council and LEADER, the latter for the significant study to investigate the biodiversity, hydromorphology, underwater archaeology and biosecurity of Loughadoon. This followed on from the geophysical, topographical and photogrammetry surveys of the island on which Doon Fort is located.

Western Stone Forts

Our presentation looked not only at Doon Fort but also where it fits into the whole of the (UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List 2010) Western Stone Forts which are a series of significant and massive drystone walled fortified enclosures that have an important part to play in later prehistory

and early historic Ireland. Amongst the most famous are the stone forts on the Aran Islands, Co. Galway. This group, consisting of seven forts, is followed by individual and loosely defined groups in peninsulas of Co. Kerry, the Burren region of Co. Clare, two each in Sligo and Mayo and in Co. Donegal at An Grianán of Aileach and Doon Fort. In all there are thirty forts and they were the focus of a Discovery Programme research project with excavations at Dún Aonghusa and Dún Eoghanaughta providing rich information. The visual impact of Dún Aonghusa and its impressive architecture link it to other massive drystone monuments found along the Atlantic coast of Europe. The earliest date for this monument is c.800 BC (LBA) and it was in use up through the late medieval period. These dates and other information from the Aran Island excavations will be useful when trying to put a date on Doon Fort as well as attempting to explain its unique lacustrine location. Claire Cotter considered these large prominent stone forts along the Atlantic seaboard of Ireland from Grianán Ailigh in Co. Donegal to Staigue in Co. Kerry as a distinct sub-set of cashels, many of which are multi-period sites whose surviving remains represent phases of re-modelling and re-building over a long period of time. These large substantial sites are considered to be the residence of a local king or chief, and William O'Brien, Nick Hogan, and Tomás Ó Carragáin have separately recently referred to these as 'royal cashels'.

The main morphological features of Western Stone Forts include impressive drystone walls with heights ranging from c.2.00m to c.5.00m (6ft–16ft), entered through a narrow gateway or passage which generally has sloping sides from the base to the upper limits, terraces on the inside walls, internal flights of stairs leading to a parapeted wall top and internal or intra-mural passages. A number of sites have similar internal structures. There is a wide variety of setting and location within this group of monuments.

Historical evidence

It may be that the island on which Doon Fort is built is the place, 'Oilean Lermogha situated in Loch Senmogha in Tír Ainmirech mic Tuathail Bb. 51; Fir. 158.', mentioned by Hogan in his *Onomasticon Goedelicum*¹ and again by the Rev. P. Ó Gallachóir in an article in the *Donegal Annual*.² Hogan's references are to the Book of Ballymote and to Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh's, *Leabhar Mór Na nGenealach*. The Book of Ballymote³ has two references of interest. The first is found in the genealogy of Enda Bogaine (who gave his name to the barony of Banagh) son of Conall Gulban on f. 51 v^ob 16–20:

Tuathal son of Ainmire. Lermogha from whom is named Oilen Lermogha upon Loch Senmogha in Tír Ainmirech son of Tuathal. Ciarán and Gillagán were the two other sons of Bresle i.e. Breaslán was his name first and Maíl Brigde and Diarmait were the three sons of Lermogha.

The second reference is on f. 140 r^oa 22: Tuath Senmogad, possibly meaning something like 'People or kingdom of ancient/long-lasting bondage'. The heading of this section states that it was taken from the Book of Glendalough.⁴ That book no longer exists but there are frequent references to it in various sources. Its relationship with the twelfth-century manuscript Rawlinson B 502 has been discussed (it has been argued that they are one and the same). The text in which it is found, therefore, goes back to at least the twelfth century and is a list of the *aitheach-thuatha* (ancient rent-paying/tributary peoples or kingdoms).⁵ Eoin MacNeill suggested that one of these lists 'bears evidence, linguistic and topographical, of having been composed at a very early date, in the eighth century at latest.'⁶

The O Clery genealogies also have a similar record:

Tuathal mac do Ainmire, et mac do Tuathal Lermagh, a quo oilen Lermagha for loch Sencha i tir Ainmirech mic Tuathail; Breislen a chedainm Lermagha; mac side Tuathail.⁷

Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh, writing in the mid seventeenth century also has a similar account in his book of genealogies revealing just how confused traditions about the place were:

¹ Edmund Hogan, *Onomasticon Goedelicum* (Dublin, 1910), p. 18.

² Ath. P. Ó Gallchair, 'Muintir Ghallchobhair', *Donegal Annual*, 13 (1973), 295–315.

³ Manuscript 23 P 12 in the library of the Royal Irish Academy dating to the 14th–15th century. It is in Irish Script on Screen: https://www.isos.dias.ie/RIA/RIA_MS_23_P_12.html

⁴ Anmand na n-Athac[h]thuath 7 a fodla dia rer Libuir Glinne Da Locha inso, 'The names of the aitheach-thuatha and their divisions according to the Book of Glendalough.'

⁵ For a text of the tract see: Toirdhealbhaich Ó Raithbheartaigh, *Genealogical Tracts I* (Dublin, 1932), p. 107.

⁶ Ó Raithbheartaigh, *Genealogical Tracts*, 'Introduction' by Eoin MacNeill, pp vi–vii.

⁷ Séamus Pender, 'The O Clery Book of Genealogies', *Analecta Hibernica*, 18 (1951), 3, §§12–14.

Conaing, from whom are Uí Bhreisléin, i.e. the chieftains: three sons of Breisléan, whose name was first Breaslán, or Breasalán, and to whom Maol Brighde and Diarmuid were brothers, s. Learmhogh (from whom is named Oiléan Léarmhogha on Loch Seancha in Tír Ainmhireach mheic Shéadna, or Oiléan Learmhogha or Loch Seanmhogha in Tír Ainmhireach mheic Thuathail, . . .).⁸

As can be seen there was confusion between the small territory of Tír Ainmhireach mheic Thuathail and the larger and more famous Tír Ainmhireach mheic Shéadna represented by the barony of Tirhugh in south Donegal. Ainmire son of Sétna, king of Cenél Conaill and high-king of Ireland was killed in 569.

Lochlann McGill pointed out that *Tír Ainmhireach mheic Thuathail* was mentioned in the O Clery genealogies:⁹

Tír Ainmire at-beror frisin mbloidh tire o Ghaothbera co h-abhainn Fiadha, et tír Boghuine ó abainn Fiadha co h-Eidhnicch.¹⁰

Tír Ainmire is called from the portion of land from Gweebarra to Owenea, and Tír Boghuine from Owenea to Eany Water.

As McGill discovered, this was the ancient name for the territory that lay between the Owenea River and the Gweebarra River. He is surely right when he states:

In my opinion *Oilean Lermogha* was the name for the early fortified island in Loughadon, the latter being formerly known as *Loch Senmogha*. The lake derived its ancient name in association with the early population group who lived in this area and who were called the Tuath Senmogha.¹¹

The Breslins were of Cenél Conaill stock and their name became associated with the area when they moved into it. The site is more commonly associated with the O'Boyle dynasty, but their presence here sometime in the fifteenth century may have involved the occupation of an older tribal centre and used by the O'Boyles to enhance their status through a connection with an earlier kingship, either the Tuath Senmogha and/or the Breslins or both. Doon Fort was first depicted in 1602–3 by Richard Bartlett in 'A Generale Description of Ulster' which shows a round island 'Enesh O'Boil' in the centre of a three-pronged lake in the O'Boyle lands.¹² Bartlett's maps were focused on strongholds and were a strategic record of the Irish landscape at the time of the 1600–3 campaign which suggests that Doon Fort was occupied and fortified at that time. Some stories are lost in the mists of time and some are waiting to re-emerge.

Stone Monuments Decay Study

From a study of historical photographs such as the Lawrence Collection we can see the condition of Doon Fort c.1900. Substantial collapses were visible on the north and north-west, at the entrance on the south-east side, and with the wall top in poor condition. Further degradation had occurred before the 1954 reconstruction works funded by Bord Fáilte and administered by Donegal County Council. Doon Fort was one of sixteen stone monuments assessed as part of an unpublished 2002 Stone Monuments Decay Study of monuments along the Atlantic seaboard in Ireland in counties Cork, Kerry and Donegal. The study provides a 'snapshot' of the condition of Doon Fort in 2002. The key threats to the fort at that time were considered to be invasive plants and structural failure. By 2017 part of the drystone wall (60m²) had collapsed and there was a thick growth of ivy (170m²) covering a large portion of walls which was undermining the entire structure. The collapses at the fort seen in historic photographs were said to be damage caused by landlords and locals alike; and according to the landowner, searching for "tunnels and treasure". Ivy cutting prior to the first scientific surveys of Doon Fort was necessary and vital in order to gain maximum results.

The site was to be investigated using three techniques: magnetometer, earth resistance and electromagnetic induction. A photogrammetry survey was also commissioned. We were fortunate in that we had over sixty volunteers working over a three-and-a-half-week period carefully removing the ivy from the walls and also from the fort, using an 'ivy boat', to a lakeshore disposal area. The surveys revealed a unique landscape within the walls of the fort which represents multiple habitation phases which have been rebuilt on foundations of former features. Several possible structures

⁸ Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh, *Leabhar Mór Na nGenealach. The Great Book of Irish Genealogies compiled (1645–66)*. Edited by Nollaig Ó Muraíle (Dublin, 2003) p. 359, §§158.6–7.

⁹ Lochlann McGill, *In Conall's footsteps* (Dingle, 1992), pp 123–31 at 127–8.

¹⁰ Pender, 'The O Clery Book of Genealogies', 27 §406.

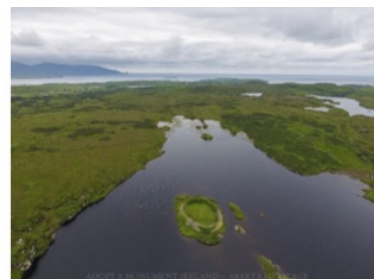
¹¹ McGill, *In Conall's footsteps*, p. 128.

¹² See: <https://digital-library.qub.ac.uk/digital/collection/p15979coll8/id/156/rec/3>

have been identified as well as associated habitation evidence. Amongst them is a rectangular structure with possible internal sub-divisions located in the south-west part of the fort. A circular structure was revealed in the north-east sector. Both this and the rectangular structure appear to be surrounded by enclosing fences. Large numbers of linear, curvilinear and rectilinear features suggest the presence of other structures or internal divisions in the fort. Pits and postholes may relate to a wide variety of human habitation/industrial activity of various phases of occupation. There are also indications of two further intra-mural passages, one near the double staircase and the other near the north-east staircase.



Doon Fort
Pre Ivy Cutting 2016
Post Ivy Cutting 2017



Doon Fort in its cultural context

Maybe we, or future generations will find answers to the real story of Doon Fort. We are working to highlight the rightful recognition of the monument as a significant Western Stone Fort along Fáilte Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way by putting the fort into its cultural context. Being part of the Adopt a Monument Scheme emphasises the historical significance of monuments and their landscape setting, and provides us with a platform for multi-disciplinary research that will be the backbone of this area's heritage. Tadgh O'Keefe's argument that larger pre-Anglo-Norman fortified places such as Beal Boru, Co. Clare warrants reconsideration as an example of early insular castle-building may apply to Doon Fort. It sits well with O'Keefe's re-evaluation as it has been variously described as a 'cashel' but also as an elite or royal residence. In this light, an important research question in order to understand the significance of the place, is whether Doon Fort represents the end/culmination of the early medieval cashel-building tradition, and/or whether it represents the beginning/transition to an insular tradition of castle-building in Ireland? Radiocarbon dates from the LEADER funded project provide a date of c.7737 cal BP at the transition from grey clay at the base of the core (presumably glacial) to organic lake mud, to estimate when organic sediment began to accumulate in the lake basin. This is late since, normally, organics begin to accumulate straight away after the ice has retreated. A light brown gritty layer in the core looked interesting, and returned a date of 1101 AD. It may relate to a disturbance in the catchment area just before this date. It is interesting to speculate that it might relate to the construction of the fort. Equally it could relate to some other activity such as the remodelling of the wall structure.

Conservation

In 2022, we secured funding for the conservation of the collapsed section of the wall through the Community Monuments Fund. Dedalus Architecture were the project managers and Madigan Traditional Masonry undertook the stone masonry work of removal, grading and stacking the stones for reconstruction of the breach in 2023. Richard Crumlish, archaeologist, undertook the archaeological monitoring and recording of the works. It might seem a long time since we first started with the Doon Fort journey to this point, but we, as a voluntary group, have worked steadily and with due process to reach the point of realising the integrity of the fort structurally, enhancing its resilience and preparing for improved safe public access. By delivering a coherent and

historically legitimate reconstruction of the collapsed walls we will be securing its lasting legacy. Part of the remit of the Adopt a Monument Scheme is to ensure safe public access to Ireland's archaeological monuments. Doon Fort is a sensitive place and accessible only by small rowing boat and is largely hidden from view. The group's objective is to return the fort to a secure and resilient structure, ensuring that it will be enjoyed and understood as an irreplaceable source of pride and inspiration for generations to come.

Paula Harvey

Email: ardaraheritagehistory@gmail.com

Mobile: 087 9214206

Facebook: DonegalGAPHeritage



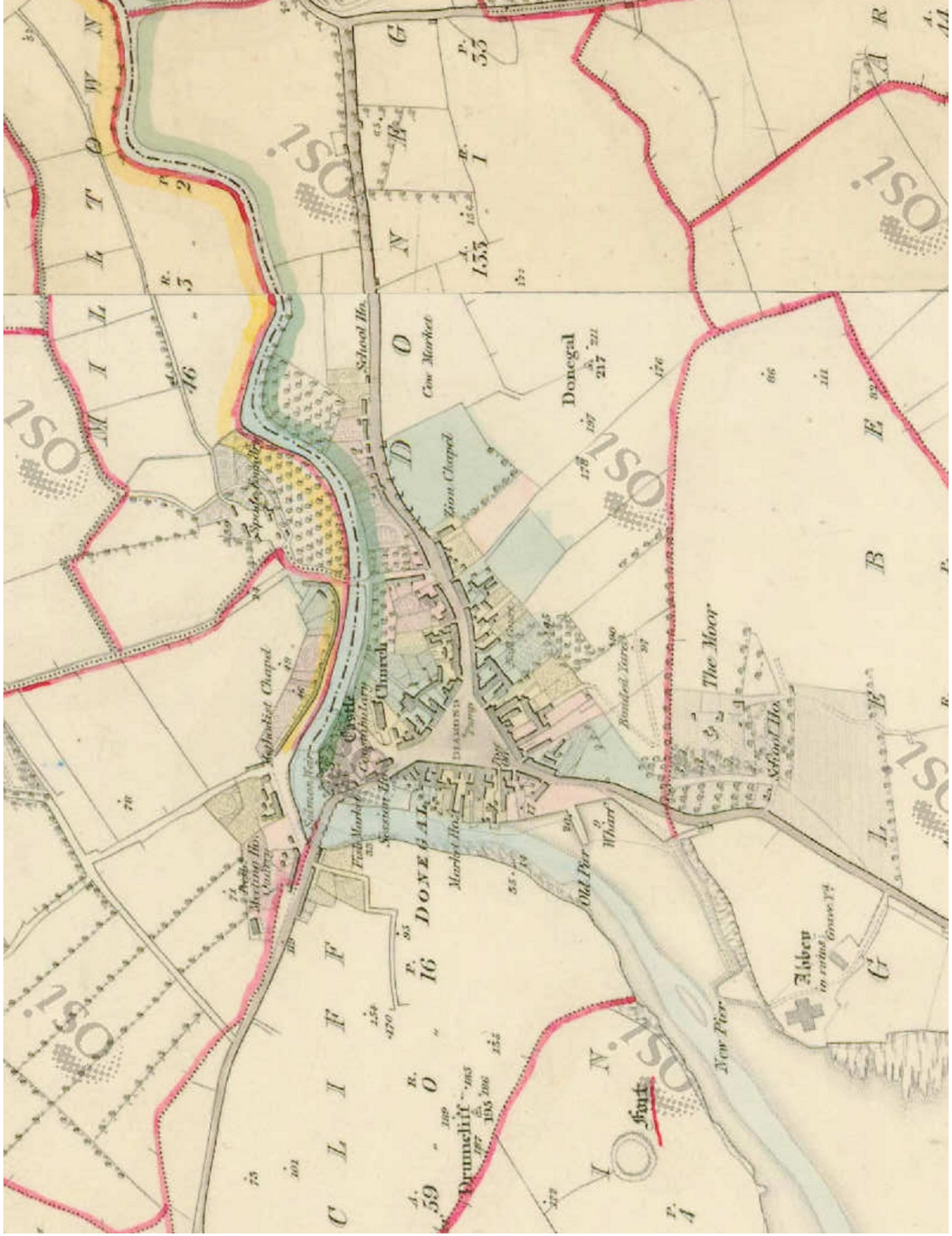


Figure 1 Donegal town in 1838, Ordnance Survey six-inch sheet, no. 93 and 94, with friary to the SW.

Anne-Julie Lafaye
(National Monuments Service,
Department of Housing, Local
Government and Heritage)

*Donegal friary: Mendicant
patronage and architecture
in late medieval Ireland*

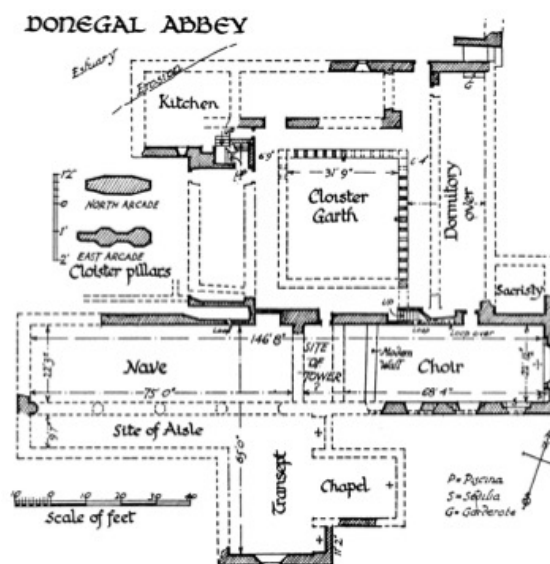
Introduction

The remains of Donegal Franciscan friary are located to the south of the town, where the River Eske joins Donegal Bay, just a short distance from the O'Donnell castle (see Figure 1 on opposite page). Only partial remains of the church, domestic buildings and cloister ar-



a) Remains of friary church
(photo: Anne-Julie Lafaye).

cade survive (Figure 2 a) and b) below), but the friary's rich history comes through a number of surviving documentary sources. Together with the remains, they help paint the picture of a wealthy and influential foundation, from the time of its establishment in 1474, through the sixteenth century and beyond the Reformation into the seventeenth century.¹ Some of the documentary sources relating to Donegal are in fact found in collections written by prominent Donegal friars, such as Mícheál Ó Cléirigh, main author of the *Annals of the Four Masters*, John Colgan, compiler of the lives of Irish saints, and Donatus Mooney, author of a history of the Irish Franciscans, the three of whom organized a huge project of saving medieval manuscripts and Irish historical traditions from their college in Louvain, in Belgium.



b) Ground plan of Donegal
Friary (c.1952, Harold Leask)

Figure 2

In this paper, based on these surviving records, the visible remains of the friary, and what we can surmise existed before its destruction, Donegal friary will serve as a case study of the interplay of mendicant architecture and patronage in late medieval Ireland, with a particular focus on the role of women, who played a significant part in the foundation of the friary. After exploring the broader place of foundations such as Donegal within the political and economic context of their time, and in the strategies of their founders beyond the concern for their afterlife, our attention will turn to female patronage and piety in late medieval Ireland, and finally to how mendicant architecture evolved in Ireland as a result of the friars' activities and relationship to the laity, with the impact of patrons, including many women, on the architecture and internal spaces of friaries.

Mendicant foundations and patrons' strategies

From the early years of the Franciscan Order, strong connections developed between the friars and their patrons. The Order's economic model, as a mendicant order, was based around donations from benefactors, to fund the construction of their friaries and to support their daily life and work. But this exchange was somehow mutual; the wealthy and powerful people who became their most generous patrons saw not only the spiritual benefits that establishing a friary or supporting a community could bring them — though of course it was an important part of it — but also identified economic and political advantages in the foundation of a mendicant friary on a territory they controlled: this was the case of Anglo-Norman lords in newly established boroughs in thirteenth and fourteenth-century Ireland.² In Castledermot for example

(Co. Kildare), the Franciscan friary was located to the south of the medieval town, mirrored to the north by the Crutched Friars' hospital of St John, thus framing the space of the borough. The precinct wall doubled up the town walls, and the friars, preaching in and out of the town, could help promote peaceful relationships between the borough and its hinterland (see Figure 4 a) on page 27).³

However, this was not only the case of early foundations in an Anglo-Norman context. In research focusing on friaries in Mayo and Sligo

in particular, a similar phenomenon was noted to take place in western Gaelic and Gaelicised lordships in the fourteenth and fifteenth century. Most mendicant friaries there were established in non-urban environments, often in the context of the Observant reform and in places that now seem fairly remote and empty. However, their position clearly followed the distribution of these late medieval lordships and areas of significant concentration of population and activity, despite their overall rural implantation (Figure 3 below).⁴

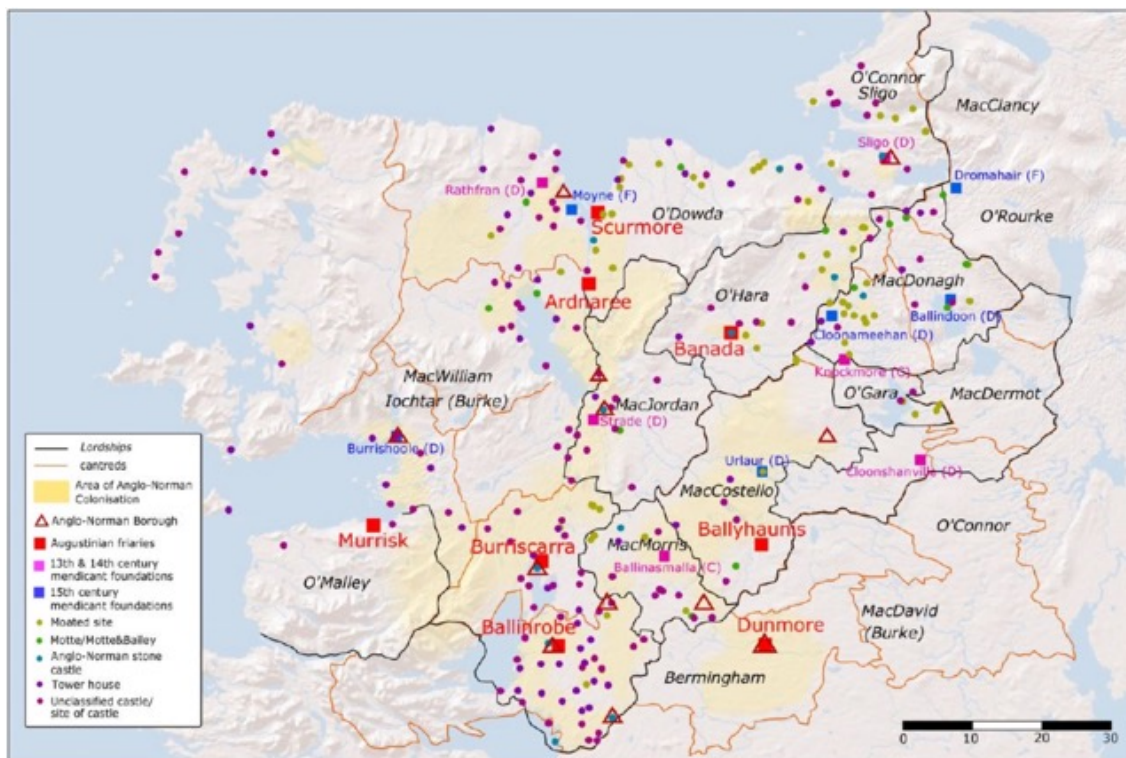


Figure 3 Map of the political geography, settlement, and mendicant foundations in Cos Mayo and Sligo, 13th–16th centuries

They took place within the sphere of influence of the local ruling families involved in establishing them — sometimes in the context of territorial extension and consolidation of their lordship, such as in Ardnaree (Co. Mayo), where the O'Dowdas captured the castle in 1371 and established an Augustinian friary before 1400, with a settlement developing that was to become Ballina, or in Kilcrea (Co. Cork), where, in 1465, just like in Donegal a Franciscan Observant friary was established and a castle was built around the same time by the local Lord of Muskerry, Cormac MacCarthy, on land recovered from the Anglo-Norman Barrets.⁵

Donegal friary and the O'Donnells

Indeed in Donegal, less than ten years after Kilcrea in 1474 Red Hugh O'Donnell built the friary and the castle near each other,⁶ in the caput of his lordship, which flourished as a politi-

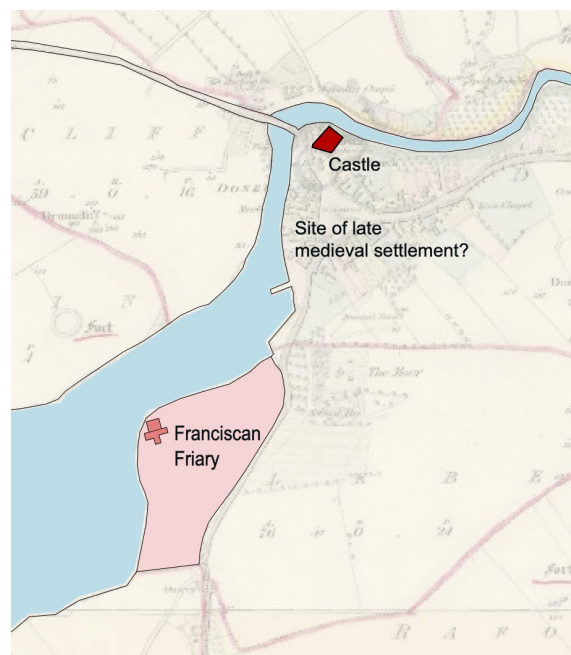
cal and economic centre thanks to its advantageous location on a navigable estuary. Donatus Mooney described the situation of the friary as a prominent dockside location, ‘so that the ships could be unloaded by the window of the friars’ refectory’, adding that grants to the friary included the control of an important fishery at the entrance of the town.⁷ Donegal would have likely developed as a settlement at that time, and while the modern layout of the town, with its triangular-shaped market place, may date to the seventeenth century incorporation of the town, it is reasonable to think that the settlement originally developed in the same area, between the castle and the friary; and so here too we have the idea of a mendicant friary framing the settled space, and this connection with the secular power (see Figure 4 b) on page 27).

While mendicant foundations have been used

as an expression of power on the part of the lords establishing them, there is no doubt that they were also an expression of their piety, and of a concern for their afterlife — mendicant friaries became the resting place of their benefactors, and Donegal was of course no exception, as it became the main place of burial for the O'Donnells of Tyrconnell. There are references in the annals to members of the family being buried there, starting with Hugh and his wife Finola or Nuala O'Brien, who established the friary so that 'the monastery might be a burial-place for themselves and their descendants'.⁸



a) Plan of medieval Castledermot



b) Donegal in the late Middle Ages

Figure 4

Female patronage and piety in late medieval Ireland

Interestingly, out of the sixty-five nunneries founded throughout the middle ages in Ireland, only four are associated with the female branch of a mendicant order, the Franciscan Order of St Clare.¹⁰ However, in recent years scholarship has become interested in exploring women's lives in the middle ages, including their spiritual life and how they expressed their piety, revealing more complexity than the sole option of taking orders as a nun and living a fully cloistered life — such as in the work of Tracy Collins and Yvonne McDermott for Ireland, Catherine Lawless for Italy, and many others.¹¹ These women's research has both inspired and informed the writing of this paper.

As mentioned in the introduction, Donegal has

a particular connection to women in its history — and it is far from alone among the Franciscan and other mendicant orders. The Annals of the Four Masters make a specific reference to Nuala O'Brien, O'Donnell's wife, as founder and benefactor.¹² But there is more: Red Hugh O'Donnell's mother Nuala O'Connor, we are told by Donatus Mooney, travelled to the vicariate chapter of the Irish Observants at Rosserilly friary and

'While the Fathers sat in council the Lady Finola, moved by zeal for the salvation of souls, appeared before them and besought them to found a convent in Donegal, for many of her subjects, she said, were perishing through lack of pious teachers [...] She spoke with such feelings and spirit that the Fathers resolved, then and there, to comply

with her petition'.¹³

It is reminiscent of another foundation story, perhaps less flattering to its protagonist (or at least meant as less flattering), that of Strade Dominican friary in Co. Mayo, according to which Basilia, daughter of Meyler de Bermingham and wife of the lord of Athlethan (Strade), is said to have organised a great banquet at which she declared she wouldn't eat nor drink until her request of transferring Strade Franciscan friary to the Dominicans was granted.¹⁴ While these stories should be taken with a grain of salt, I think their existence is a strong indication that these women did play a part in these foundations, through using the influence they had within the rather constricting limits of their gender at the time. Like Nuala O'Brien, women were sometimes named as patrons alongside their husbands, as in Adare, where the Franciscan friary was established by the earl of Kildare and his wife Johanna, who, Donatus Mooney tells us, built the church and a fourth part of the cloister at their own expense.¹⁵

With regard to Donegal, there are further patronage connections that link it to other Franciscan Observant foundations, and which involve women from the O'Brien family in particular. Hugh's wife Nuala was the daughter of Connor O'Brien of Thomond, and her sister Margaret O'Brien was involved in the foundation and construction of Creevelea Franciscan Observant friary in Dromahair in 1508, which was populated by friars from the Donegal community and in 1512 she 'died and was buried in a wooden church she built herself for the Friars Minor close by Druim-da-ethiar'.¹⁶ Meanwhile another O'Brien woman, Maire or Morina, is believed to be the donor of the Creagh-MacMahon tomb in Ennis friary, and may have commissioned other devotional images that survive in the friary, c.1470 — although unfortunately she has not been clearly identified, considering the patronage involved she was likely related to a prominent O'Brien; the O'Brien lords of Thomond were the main patrons of Ennis, and the tomb was placed in the most sought-after place of the choir, to the left of the altar in the North wall.¹⁷ Finally, the other important reference to a woman in association with Donegal concerns Hugh's wife Nuala O'Brien herself, 'the woman who won most fame of all her contemporaries for [the beauties of] her body and soul' and who, when she died, had 'spent her youthful years in charity and twenty-one years in the robe of the Third Order, practising piety and charity and good works towards God and the world', meaning she had become a Franciscan tertiary when her husband died.¹⁸

Women and the Third order Regular

The Franciscan Third Order secular was established to facilitate those who wished to pursue a religious vocation but couldn't leave their existing lives, such as married people. A Third Order regular was later established, which included life in a cloistered community — unlike male communities, evidence for the existence of Third Order regular female communities in Ireland is scant,¹⁹ but references such as the one cited above does suggest life as a tertiary was possible in late medieval Ireland for women: to live a life of prayer and devotion outside of cloistered communities, under the spiritual guidance of the local friars. In addition, there was a Third Order regular foundation just outside Donegal, about 1.5km south of the town, Magherabeg friary, which was, it seems, established by Red Hugh's father Niall Garbh O'Donnell, c.1430.²⁰ It is therefore also a possibility that Nuala may have been attached to that Third Order Regular community. Finally, there is also a 1577 reference to another O'Donnell woman, 'Maeve, the daughter of Hugh Roe O'Donnell', who 'had passed a long time in piety at Donegal and 'died there in the eighty-seventh year of her age, after having performed many good actions', which, though less clear, suggests she may also have been a tertiary.²¹

Unlike older monastic orders, the model proposed by the Franciscans and other mendicant orders offered novel ways for women to express their piety and live a religious life;²² not least through patronage, such as Hugh O'Donnell's mother and wife and his wife's sister Margaret, being both involved in the establishment of communities and the construction of friary buildings, which we will now explore in more detail. If the friars' model of religious life and their activities had an enormous influence on lay spirituality, in turn the patronage it engendered had a significant impact on the architectural and structural development of the friaries, specifically the church.

Mendicant architecture and internal spaces²³

The arrival of the friars in Ireland took place rather early in the history of the Franciscans, c.1224, and some characteristics of these early years are common to most countries where the friars settled. It often began with the grant of an existing house or building, followed by the construction of a long aisleless church, divided between the nave (the space of the laity), and the chancel (the space of the friars), by a rood screen. But, rather quickly and certainly by the end of the thirteenth century, the great success enjoyed by the friars among the laity resulted in these simple aisleless churches having to be

extended, especially the space of the nave, to receive a growing congregation, and also to allow for burials. This began with the addition of a single lateral aisle, and, based on the excavated remains of Armagh Franciscan church and the standing remains of the Waterford church, this appears to have become part of newly built churches in Ireland as early as the middle of the thirteenth century. But, while in Britain and elsewhere this often evolved into the construction of a second aisle on the other side of the nave, in Ireland the most common feature to be built was what we may call a single-armed ‘transept’, for lack of a better term, though in sources when it is mentioned it is referred to simply as a chapel: a structure that houses one or more secondary altars, with the space increasingly divided or extended by smaller chapels, which abutted the nave or the lateral aisle at its eastern end, on the side opposite to the cloister, and functioning as funerary chapels for those who had paid for them. We do find an early example of this evolution in Oxford in England, where again excavations give a good sense of the phases of construction, with a date of before 1270 for the construction of the North chapel. However — and interestingly — this is not a model that became very common there, in comparison to Ireland.

Indeed examples exist in Ireland that may have been as early as Oxford: in Buttevant Franciscan friary and in Cashel Dominican friary, the ‘chapel-transepts’ have been dated to the 1270s, and were additions to the original church; in Timoleague, they may have dated to the very first phase of construction of the friary in the early fourteenth century. In Castledermot Franciscan and Athenry Dominican friaries the stylistic similarity between the two structures is evident, revealing the mutual inspiration and emulation that took place between the Franciscan and Dominican orders.²⁴ This emulation is likely to have driven the spread of this architectural development, together with the fact that it was an arrangement best suited to the economic and social context of medieval Ireland: here were fewer patrons that could afford to fund the construction and support of private or semi-private funerary chapels, unlike in large European towns and cities, where we find a multiplication of such chapels established along the aisles of the church. By the fifteenth century, these structures, together with a central belfry tower in lieu of the screen separating nave and chancel, had become characteristic of mendicant architecture in Ireland, and were being built as an integral part of the plan of new friaries. Kilcrea and Quin (Co. Clare) for example, offer examples of the two main arrangements found in Ireland: either one large chapel

arm, or both an aisle and a chapel/transept, which is what we find in Donegal. Interestingly in Creevelea friary, founded by Nuala’s sister Margaret and populated by Donegal friars, a single chapel structure was built, as in Quin (see plans in Figure 5 on page 32).

Women’s architectural and artistic patronage

Returning to female patronage, sources show that women played a part in these developments and construction projects carrying a significant impact on the churches of the friars. In Adare, for which Donatus Mooney was able to quote a register similar to that of Athenry, Margaret Fitzgibbon (d. 1483) ‘erected the great chapel’, and one of the two ‘small chapels’ was built by Leogh de Tulcostyn and Margaret, wife of Thomas Fitzmaurice.²⁵ Such projects were not confined to the nave, and intriguingly, three separate references exist to women involved in funding large-scale construction projects in the choir of mendicant churches: in Adare ‘Joanna Mc Loughlin, widow of Fitzgibbon, added ten feet to the sanctuary, under which she directed a burial place to be formed for herself’.²⁶ In Athenry Joanna Wffler, wife of David Wyder and later Robert, ‘caused the great window over the high altar [. . .] and all the windows in the choir to be glazed’, costing more than 100 marks, to coincide with the burial of her husband, for whom she also imported a sculpted tomb ‘from over the sea’;²⁷ and in Kilkenny in 1347, ‘the Lady Isabella Palmer, who built the front of the choir of the friars, was buried’.²⁸ These examples demonstrate the particularly strong agency of these women in these projects, revealed even in the language that is used such as ‘caused to’ and ‘directed to’ — which is reminiscent of how Red Hugh’s mother Nuala was also depicted in Donegal’s foundation story.

Finally, women also expressed their piety in smaller ways, with gifts of liturgical objects and furnishing playing a prominent role, from altars to vestments to altarplates and chalices, devotional images and burial monuments, as again revealed by the Athenry register,²⁹ or also the commissioning of sculpted images such as in Ennis, where Morina O’Brien (mentioned above) is believed to have been responsible for the commissioning of two devotional images placed on either side of the central tower facing the nave: Francis displaying his stigmata, and the Man of Sorrow; and of commissioning the Creagh-MacMahon burial monument. It was adorned with five sculpted panels depicting the passion cycle, including one with a woman holding a book, perhaps a Book of Hours, and was likely used as an Easter sepulchre.³⁰

The surviving medieval registers of Athenry and Adare reveal the multiplicity of patrons and benefactors of the friars, both men and women, from various ethnic and social backgrounds — and these, rather than being exceptions, would have likely been what occurred in most foundations, including Donegal, despite its strong association with the O'Donnells. The many others buried within the friary would have almost certainly acted as benefactors to the friars — and while in Donegal, as in most late medieval friaries, the overall layout would have been planned from the outset, it is possible that multiple patrons participated in financing the construction of the complex; especially consid-

ering that it would have already been advanced enough (if not completed) by 1488 for a provincial chapter to be held there.³¹ Donegal's connection to at least two women from high nobility would have likely constituted a model for other women to become benefactors. Certainly the success of the friars in attracting donations can be gaged from Donatus Mooney's description of its possessions in the early seventeenth century, which included forty vestments in cloth of gold and silver, two ciboria and sixteen chalices, fourteen of which were 'washed with gold' — and of those, the one chalice that did survive is in fact associated with a woman, Mary Maguire, who had it made in 1633.³²

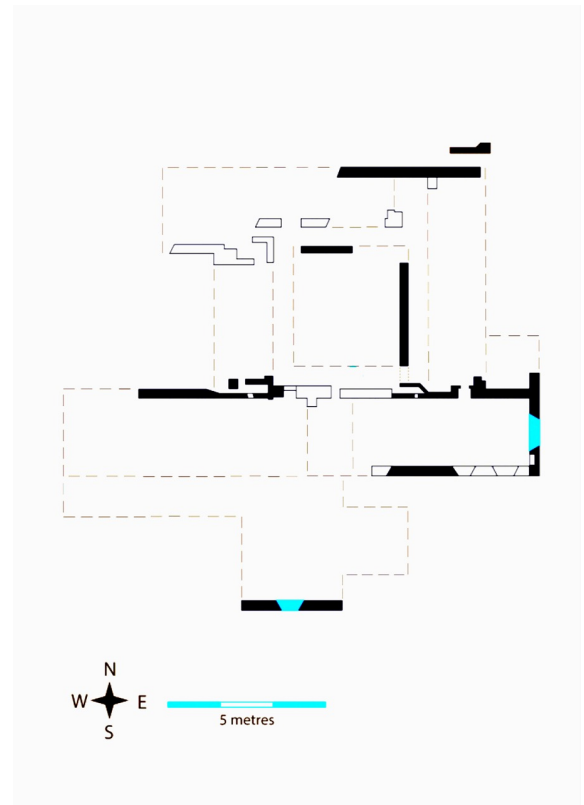
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- ⁸ O'Donovan, *Annala Rioghachta Eireann*, iv, p. 1087.
- ⁹ O'Donovan, *Annala Rioghachta Eireann*, v, p. 1423.
- ¹⁰ Tracy Collins, *Female monasticism in medieval Ireland: an archaeology* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2021), pp 82 and 475.
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- ¹⁸ A. Martin Freeman (ed), *Annála Connacht: the Annals of Connacht* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1944), p. 668.
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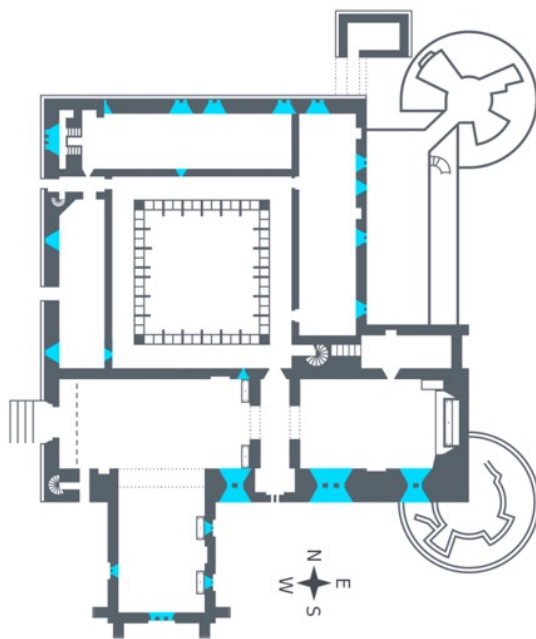
- ²⁵ Jennings, 'Brussels MS. 3947', 63.
- ²⁶ Jennings, 'Brussels MS. 3947', 64.
- ²⁷ Coleman, 'Regestum Monasterii', 207.
- ²⁸ Richard Butler (ed), *The Annals of Ireland. By Friar John Clyn, of the Convent of Friars Minors, Kilkenny* (Dublin: The Irish Archaeological Society, 1849), p. 34.
- ²⁹ McDermott, 'Women as patrons and benefactors', 242–4.
- ³⁰ Krasnodębska-D'Aughton, 'Prayer, penance and the Passion of Christ', 86–7 and 93.
- ³¹ Mac Carthy, *Annala Uladh. Annals of Ulster*, p. 333.
- ³² The inscription on the foot of the chalice reads, in Irish: 'Mary daughter of Cuconnacht Maguire, wife of Brian óg O'Rourke, caused this chalice to be made for her soul, for the friars of Donegal, in the year of our lord 1633': Michael Kenny, 'Irish secular silver, 1600–1750' in Ragnall Ó Floinn (ed), *Franciscan faith: sacred art in Ireland, AD 1600–1750* (Dublin: National Museum of Ireland & Wordwell, 2011), pp 55–67 at pp 55–6.



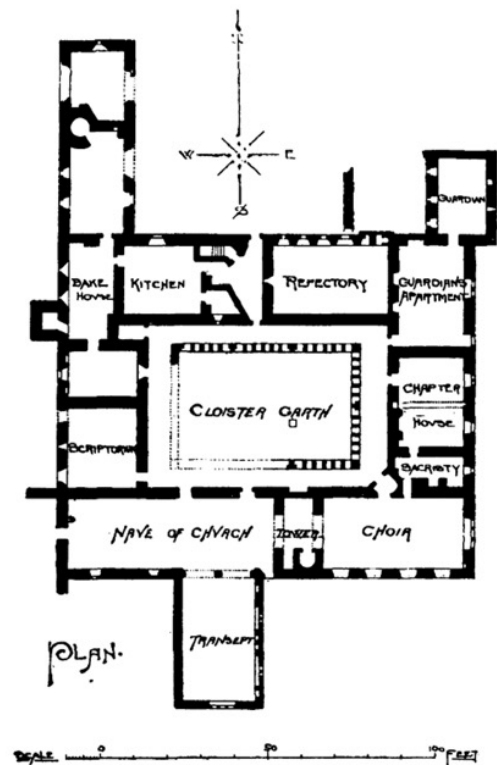
a)



b)



c)



d)

Figure 5 Ground plans of: a) Kilcrea, b) Donegal, c) Quin, d) Creevelea

Notices of recently published books

Bernadette Cunningham

This is a selection of recently published books thought likely to be of interest to readers of *Áitreabh*. Some notices are partly derived from information supplied by the publishers.

Glaciers, glens and granite: an exploration of the geology of County Wicklow

Matthew Parkes, Robert Meehan, Vincent Gallagher, Ronan Hennessy and Sarah Gatley (Wicklow: Wicklow County Council and Geological Survey Ireland, 2022. Distributed by Wordwell Books. 100p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 978056912633. €20)

This non-technical overview illustrates and explains the key features of Wicklow's geological heritage. It is based on a detailed audit of significant geological sites in the landscape of County Wicklow. Some of the places discussed are publicly accessible but others are on private land. Thus, it is not a guidebook of sites that are open to the public. Rather, the book draws on evidence from throughout the county to discuss and illustrate how the Wicklow landscape was formed, with topics ranging from the Ice Age to recent mining activity.

A field guide to the geology of Western Ireland: the birth and death of an ocean

(Springer Geology)

Edited by Paul D. Ryan

(Cham: Springer, 2022. xvi, 425p. Illus. Maps. ISBN 978303094787. €96.29)

Designed as a teaching tool, this field guide provides an introduction to the geology of western Ireland. It includes information relevant to the planning and leading of field trips focussing on specific aspects of the geology of Sligo, including the Ox Mountains, north and south Mayo, Clew Bay, and north and south Connemara. The final two chapters summarise the current tectonic interpretation of this region and outline areas for future research and the available sources of geochemical and geophysical data.

Maritime archaeology on dry land: special sites along the coasts of Britain and Ireland from the first farmers to the Atlantic Bronze Age

Richard Bradley

(Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2022. xii, 171p. Illus. maps. Pbk. ISBN 9781789258196. £35)

This book explores a series of Neolithic and Bronze Age sites in Britain and Ireland, examining the distinctiveness of coastal settlements. Among the Irish sites considered are Dún Aonghasa, Lough Gur, Dalkey Island, Downpatrick and Dundrum, Co. Down. The analysis draws on finds recorded in the nineteenth century as well as on recent fieldwork, interpreting that older documented evidence (much of it no longer visible in the landscape) in new ways. The study emphasises the important role of 'enclosed estuaries', their significance in the wider pattern of settlement, and their relationship to major monu-

ments. The book describes how the character of coastal sites changed in parallel with developments in maritime technology.

Hunter-gatherer Ireland: making connections in an island world

Graeme Warren

(Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2022. xxii, 194p. Illus. Maps. Pbk. ISBN 9781789256819. £19.95)

Graeme Warren explores the Irish Mesolithic — the period after the end of the last Ice Age — when Ireland was home to hunter-gatherer communities, mostly from about 10,000 to 6,000 years ago. At this time, Ireland displayed striking similarities to and differences from its European neighbours — not least in terms of the ecology of the land shaped by its island status. Understanding the Mesolithic means paying attention to the animals, plants, spirits and things with which hunting and gathering groups formed kinship relationships and in collaboration with which they experienced life. The book considers the different ways in which people lived on this island in the Mesolithic era, and how we might now narrate those lives. The book closes with a reflection on hunting and gathering in Ireland today.

Excavations at Knowth, 7. The megalithic art of the passage tombs at Knowth, County Meath

By George Eogan

Archaeological editor: Elizabeth Shee Twohig

Edited by Helena King

(Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2022. 902p. Hbk. ISBN 9781911479420. €70)

The complex of passage tombs at Knowth is dated c.3200–2900 BC, and this volume presents a complete catalogue of the 390 recorded carved stones at Knowth, through descriptions, drawings and photographs. Six main styles of art have been identified and these are discussed, together with the motifs and techniques employed. The Knowth carvings constitute about 46 per cent of all such art in Ireland, and the volume sets the Knowth art in the context of the other Irish carvings, those in western and northern Britain, and also the somewhat earlier art found on megalithic tombs in Atlantic Europe.

Derrycarhoon: a later Bronze Age copper mine in south-west Ireland

(BAR International Series, 3069)

William O'Brien

(Oxford: BAR Publishing, 2022. 232p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781407359250. £54)

Derrycarhoon is the first copper mine from the later Bronze Age discovered in Ireland. This book presents the results of recent geoarchaeological survey and sample excavation of the small multi-

period mine. It describes the landscape setting, bedrock geology, mineralisation and palaeoecology. The recent history of mining at Derrycarhoon is examined, including the discovery in 1846 of so-called Danish Mines, now dated c.1300–1000 BC. The technology and operation of that prehistoric copper mine is considered, as well as its significance for the supply of metal in later Bronze Age Ireland. The wider context is explored in relation to Bronze Age settlement in the region. The local landscape of small farming communities was connected to trade networks at regional level, controlled by emerging hillfort chiefdoms at a time of growing militarism and pressures on metal supply in Ireland. The book contains specialist contributions by Lena Grandin, Nick Hogan, Kevin Kearney, Simon O'Dwyer, Zofia Stos-Gale and Richard Unitt.

Excavation of a multi-period site at Stalleen, Co. Meath: research in the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site

By Mandy Stephens

Edited by Geraldine Stout and Matthew Stout
(Julianstown: Chapel Press, 2022. 175p. illus. maps. Pbk. ISBN 9781399933155. €20)

THE excavation at Stalleen directed by Mandy Stephens in 2008 revealed a significant multi-period site with finds reaching back to the Late Mesolithic hunter-gatherers. It also revealed an early medieval enclosure that could possibly be the earliest ecclesiastical site in Ireland. There followed a period of unenclosed settlement with a post-Viking souter-rain. In the later medieval period the site was used as a Cistercian grange attached to Mellifont Abbey, and Stalleen is one of the few granges to have been archaeologically investigated. This report on the excavation includes contributions by Dermot Moore, Ian Doyle, Clare McCutcheon, Joanne Gaffrey, Fiona Beglane, Ciara Travers, S. Hamilton-Dyer and Sarah Cobain.

Animals and sacred bodies in early medieval Ireland: religion and urbanism at Clonmacnoise

John Soderberg

(Lanham & London: Lexington Books, 2022. xii, 247p. Illus. ISBN 9781793630491. \$105)

CLONMACNOISE was among the busiest, most economically complex, and intensely sacred places in early medieval Ireland. In this book, which studies the intersection between religion and the development of cities, John Soderberg argues that animals are the key to understanding Clonmacnoise's development as a thriving settlement and a sacred place. Urban settlements relied on farmers in the hinterland supplying the necessary food. The author concludes that 'the ecologies that sustained Clonmacnoise for centuries grew from cattle nurtured in a hinterland and walking to Clonmacnoise.' For a review by Charles Doherty, see *Áitreabh* no. 26 (2021/22).

The forgotten cemetery: excavations at Ranelagh, Co. Roscommon
(TII Heritage, 13)

By Shane Delaney and Eileen Murphy

Managing editor: Martin Jones

(Dublin: Transport Infrastructure Ireland, 2022. Distributed by Wordwell Books. 385p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9780911633341. €25. Digital version available on the TII website)

REALIGNMENT of the N61 in the townland of Ranelagh, close to Roscommon town, was undertaken in 2015, and was accompanied by a year-long archaeological excavation. A previously unknown enclosed settlement and burial ground were discovered, with the active use of the site extending from the fourth century down to the mid-seventeenth century. This well-illustrated volume provides detailed reports on the excavation and examination of the finds. Further ancillary reports are accessible as part of the TII digital heritage collections deposited with the Digital Repository of Ireland (www.dri.ie).

Historical Irish dairy products

Daragh Downey, Liam Downey and Derry O'Donovan

(Dublin: Wordwell Books, 2021. ix, 131p. Illus. maps. Hbk. ISBN 9781913934637. €25)

THIS book presents a chronological perspective of the evolution of dairy products in Ireland. It focuses on butter and cheese production, drawing together information from a diverse range of historical, archaeological, economic and scientific publications. The authors take a long view, exploring the development of dairy products from prehistory, through the medieval period and down to recent times. They show how the evolution of Irish dairying through the centuries has been shaped by continuous innovation in technologies.

The Book of the Skelligs

Edited by John Crowley and John Sheehan
Photography: Valerie O'Sullivan

(Cork: Cork University Press, 2022. xxviii, 332p. Illus. maps. Hbk. ISBN 9781782055396. €49)

COMBINING the perspectives of history, archaeology, cultural geography, oral tradition, literature and natural science, these essays interpret the distinctive features, both physical and human, that shape the unique character of the Skelligs. The book outlines the historical background and cultural setting of Skellig Michael's monastic remains off the southwest coast. It considers the impact of the Vikings, as well as much later developments such as the construction of lighthouses. There are over forty individual chapters and case studies on various aspects of the Skelligs, revealing how a unique cultural landscape was shaped by human activity over long periods of time. The book is well-illustrated and is designed to be an accessible but comprehensive resource for the study of the history and heritage of these special islands.

The high fortress: a guide to the Rock of Dunamase

Edited by Peigin Doyle

(Dublin: Wordwell in association with Laois County Council, 2022. 99p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781913934743. €15)

Remnants of an Anglo-Norman fortress, built over an Early Christian Irish dún, can be seen at the Rock of Dunamase, Co. Laois. It was plundered by Viking raiders in 843AD and later became the dowry of Aoife, daughter of Diarmait Mac Murchada, when she married Richard De Clare (Strongbow). Weapons and armour, buckles and spurs, gaming pieces and arrowheads, Gaelic metalwork and medieval coins, all unearthed in excavations, help to enhance our understanding of this long-contested site. There are contributions by John Feehan, Sharon Greene, Brian Hodkinson and Matthew Stout.

Ireland and the Crusades

Edited by Edward Coleman, Paul Duffy and Tadhg O’Keeffe

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022. 236p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781846828615. €55)

The term ‘crusades’ is a broad one, encompassing a disparate series of military expeditions, with the avowed intent of preserving or expanding Christianity. The crusades formed a significant aspect of moral and religious life in medieval Europe. Traditionally, Ireland’s involvement with the crusades has been seen to be slight. In recent years, however, new research has begun to refine this interpretation. This is an interdisciplinary volume of essays which re-examines Ireland’s connection to the crusading movement. Each of the editors contributes a chapter and there are other essays by Jean-Michel Picard, Maev Callan, Catherine Swift, Ciarán McDonnell, Helen J. Nicholson, Paolo Virtuani, Thomas Ivory, David McIlreavy, Dave Swift, Kathryn Hurlock, and Emer Purcell.

Highways, Kilkenny. A medieval pottery production centre in south-east Kilkenny

Emma Devine and Cóilín Ó Drisceoil

(Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2022. xvii, 278p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781789258530. £60)

Focusing on a well-preserved 14th-century pottery production centre excavated in 2006 at Highways, outside the walls of the Anglo-Norman town of Kilkenny, this book describes the kiln, workshops and working areas, as well as its products: jugs, jars, cooking-pots, money-boxes, and ridge tiles. Foremost amongst the outputs from the kiln site were high-quality, wheel-thrown, green-glazed jugs that were closely modelled on French Saintonge and Bristol Redcliffe archetypes. The authors place the production of pottery at Highways in its broader context through a review of the archaeological and historical evidence for pottery making and consumption in medieval Ireland, and an assessment of the cultural background and social status of potters in the Anglo-Norman colony. There are specialist contributions by fourteen other authors.

Dublin castle: from fortress to palace. Volume 1. Vikings to Victorians, a history of Dublin castle to 1850

By Seán Duffy, John Montague, Kevin Mulligan and Michael O’Neill

Executive editors: Ann Lynch and Conleth Manning

(Dublin: National Monuments Service, 2022.

xviii, 309p. Hbk. ISBN 9781446880715. €50)

In the first of three planned volumes on the history of Dublin Castle and the archaeological excavations carried out there between 1961 and 1987, these narrative essays tell the background story of the site of the castle from the era of Viking settlement down to 1850. A large castle was built in the early thirteenth century but was gradually replaced between the 1680s and 1770s by the buildings that currently exist on the site. The various buildings that occupied the castle site were used as the centre of English and later British government in Ireland down to 1922. The Record Tower, a large circular tower in the south-east corner of the complex, is the only remaining medieval building on the site. Seán Duffy recounts the history of the medieval castle, taking the story down to the mid-sixteenth century. John Montague examines its architectural history from 1560 to 1684, while a lengthy joint essay by Kevin Mulligan and Michael O’Neill provides an account of the castle’s architectural history and development from the late seventeenth century down to 1850. A series of appendices compiled by Con Manning provides transcripts of various descriptions of the castle ranging in date from 1585 to 1792. The attractively presented volume is in large format with numerous colour illustrations and plans.

Swords castle: digging history. Excavations 2015–17

Christine Baker

(Dublin: Wordwell Books, 2022. 352p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781913934699. €30)

Swords was once a major administrative centre, the headquarters of a vast estate belonging to the archbishop of Dublin. The year 2021 marked the 50th anniversary of the first serious investigation of the castle, when the late Tom Fanning excavated a highly decorated tiled floor, showing that this was the site of a stylish medieval residence as well as the headquarters of a manorial estate. In recent years, attention has turned to the architecture of the castle, and there have been various programmes of restoration and reconstruction. A series of excavations in the past decade, notably those carried out under the direction of Christine Baker between 2015 and 2017, are detailed in this book. The book also provides an account of the early history of Swords, along with valuable summaries of earlier excavations.

Towns on the edge in medieval Europe: the social and political order of peripheral urban communities from the twelfth to sixteenth centuries

(Proceedings of the British Academy, 244)

Edited by Matthew Frank Stevens and Roman Czaja

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022. xxxvii, 248p. Illus. maps. Hbk. ISBN 978019726301. £70)

Each of the essays in this volume is co-authored and comparative. There are studies of late medieval urban settlements in peripheral areas that were colonised from a European core. In northern Europe this periphery included Wales and Ireland, as colonised by the English, and Prussia and Livonia, as colonised mainly by Germanic and Nordic peoples.

A key tool of colonisation was the chartered town, giving citizens distinguishing legal privileges and a degree of self-regulation. The various essays reveal how the chartered town, as a legal and social-political concept, was transferred to peripheral areas by colonisers, and yet its implementation and adaptation in peripheral areas resulted in societies that did not replicate core urban forms and communities. Chapters containing Irish material are: ‘“Irishtowns” and “Welsh Streets”: ethnic enclaves within the towns of colonial Ireland and Wales in a northern-European colonial context’; ‘Urban’ legislation as an instrument for the formation and regulation of socio-economic life in 14th-century Prussian and Irish towns; ‘Shaping the public space of Danzig and Dublin, 14th–16th centuries: tensions between the common good and private use’; ‘Military affairs and community in Prussian, Livonian and Irish towns, 13th–16th centuries’; and ‘Maintaining a “special relationship”? Petitions to the crown from Irish and Welsh towns, 13th–16th centuries’.

Boyle Abbey, Co. Roscommon: conservation, architecture and archaeological excavations, 1982–2018

(Archaeological Monograph Series, 13)

Edited by Fionnbarr Moore and Geraldine Stout

(Dublin: The Stationery Office, 2022. 359p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781446880708. €30)

Research on the important religious site at Boyle Abbey since the early 1980s is drawn together in this essay collection. There are two wide-ranging contextual chapters by Geraldine Stout, a comprehensive essay on the historical background by Catriona Devane, an assessment of the architectural history of the abbey and cloistral buildings by Roger Stalley, excavation reports by Ann Lynch, Fiona Rooney, Annette Quinn, and Anne Carey, and a report on conservation and restoration of the north aisle arcade wall by Mary-Liz McCarthy, Kevin Clancy and Denis Walsh.

Rethinking medieval Ireland and beyond: lifestyles, landscapes, and settlements: essays in honour of T.B. Barry

(Explorations in Medieval Culture, 23)

Edited by Victoria L. McAlister and Linda Shine

(Leiden: Brill, 2023. 343p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 978 9004425453. €140)

Using the disciplines of history, heritage studies, archaeology, geography and political science these essays offer reappraisals of material culture and the built and natural environments in medieval Ireland. There are contributions by Robin Glasscock, Kieran O’Conor, Thomas Finan, James G. Schryver, Oliver Creighton, Robert Higham, Mary A. Valante, Margaret Murphy, John Soderberg, Conleth Manning, Victoria McAlister, Jennifer L. Immich, Calder Walton, Christiaan Corlett, Stephen H. Harrison, and Ragnhalla Ó Floinn.

Westmeath history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county
 Edited by Seamus O’Brien

(Dublin: Geography Publications, 2022. xxxiii, 900p. Illus. maps. Hbk. ISBN 9780906602980. €60)

A Rich selection of essays is provided in this Westmeath volume of the well-known Geography Publications series of county histories. There are specific studies of prehistoric barrows, medieval Gaelic assembly places, and the Anglo-Norman settlement of the region. The major ecclesiastical site at Fore is discussed as is the early topography of the town of Mullingar and surrounding area. Cartographic evidence for landscape and social change in the early modern era is addressed, while for the nineteenth century essay topics include local government, famine and emigration. The decline of aristocratic estates is traced into the twentieth century and there is a case study of a 1950s Land Commission group migration scheme from Mayo to Kiltoom, Co. Westmeath. There are 35 chapters in all, ending with an overview by Gretta Connell of Westmeath archives as sources for further historical research.

Early modern Duhallow: c.1534–1641: the crisis, decline and fall of Irish lordship

(Maynooth Studies in Local History, 156)

David Heffernan

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022. 88p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781801510295. €12.95)

Shaped by the mountainous boggy lands of Sliabh Luachra, the Duhallow region of north-west Cork was dominated by the lordships of the MacDonogh-MacCarthy, the MacAuliffes, the O’Callaghans and the O’Keeffes in the sixteenth century. By the mid-seventeenth century, however, these lordships had largely been dismantled and the region was increasingly dominated by New English settler families such as the Boyles, Percivals and Aldworths residing around new towns at Newmarket and Kanturk. This study charts the transformation of early modern Duhallow and illustrates how Irish lordship was often undermined not by direct conquest and colonization, but by a gradual process of economic, social and political erosion.

No mere Irish: the Kennedys of Mount Kennedy

Therese Hicks

(Dublin: Wordwell Books, 2022. x, 169p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781913934767. €25)

State papers relating to Mount Kennedy, County Wicklow, are preserved among the Wicklow Papers in the National Library of Ireland and are a key source for this study. The Kennedys were one of the few Gaelic lines who became thoroughly anglicized and embraced Protestantism in the seventeenth century. The story of this middle ranking family traces their acquisition of land and titles that allowed them to improve their social standing and rise to positions of influence in the early modern era.

Lough Neagh: an atlas of the natural, built and cultural heritage

Edited by William Burke, Liam Campbell and William Roulston

([Belfast]: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2022. xvii, 410p. Illus. maps. ISBN 9781913993139.

£15)

Arranged in three broad sections, ‘Natural heritage, Geology, Ecology’; ‘Built heritage, Archaeology, History’; and ‘Cultural heritage, Folklore, Community, Place’, there are 50 short chapters in this beautifully produced, well-illustrated, accessible book. It explores a diversity of interactions between the people of the Lough Neagh region and the natural, cultural and built environment from earliest times to the present. The middle section will be of most interest to readers of *Áitreabh*, with essays ranging from prehistoric archaeology through medieval Gaelic landscape and settlement to the use of the lake as a transport hub down to the mid-twentieth century.

New survey of Clare Island Volume 10: Land and freshwater fauna

Edited by John Breen, T.K. McCarthy and Éamonn Lenihan
(Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2022. 264p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781911479871. €35. PDF download available.)

The Royal Irish Academy’s *New Survey of Clare Island* is a unique multidisciplinary endeavour that together with Robert Lloyd Praeger’s first Clare Island Survey (1909–11) provides an invaluable body of research informing future conservation of the natural and built heritage of Ireland and Europe. The first Clare Island Survey of 1909–11 was the most ambitious natural history project ever undertaken in Ireland and the first major biological survey of a specific area carried out in the world. This volume of essays — the final in the ‘New Survey of Clare Island’ series — offers nuggets of ecological theory combined with descriptions of the life history of the many species found on Clare Island. The conclusions provide strong evidence of the need for increased investment in studies of Irish biodiversity to track changes arising from human activity.

No wood, no kingdom. Political ecology in the English Atlantic

Keith Plumeyers
(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021. viii, 307p. Hbk. ISBN 9780812253078. US\$49.95)

This is an environmental history of the early modern period, examining wood and timber scarcity in Ireland, Britain and the Americas in the seventeenth century. Studies of the actions of individual landholders in Ireland, Virginia, Bermuda, and Barbados, as well as the policies of governments, show that colonists experimented with different, often competing approaches to colonial woods and trees, including efforts to manage them as long-term resources, albeit ones that nonetheless brought significant transformations to the land.

Botany and gardens in early modern Ireland
Elizabethanne Boran, E. Charles Nelson and Emer Lawlor

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022. 335p. illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781801510233. €50)

This illustrated book explores sources for botany and gardening in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ireland. It investigates the work of individ-

uals such as Philip O’Sullivan Beare and Thomas Molyneux in the seventeenth century, and, for the eighteenth century, focuses on the Revd Caleb Threlkeld, whose *Synopsis stirpium Hibernicarum* (Dublin, 1726) was the first botanical book published in Ireland. Chapters shed light on the books in early eighteenth-century libraries, such as that of Dr Edward Worth and of Marsh’s Library in Dublin. The impact of the explorations of the Dutch East India Company on knowledge of the flora of distant lands, and the changing nature of eighteenth-century gardens and landscapes in Ireland are also discussed.

Digging new ground: the Irish country house garden, 1650–1900

Edited by Finola O’Kane and Robert O’Byrne
(Dublin: Irish Georgian Society, 2022. 224p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781838139032. €40)

This book investigates the history, design, and planting of the Irish country house garden from c.1650 to 1900. It was published to coincide with an exhibition hosted by the Irish Georgian Society. The various essays consider garden-making as an art form in all its dimensions, not least the relationship to contiguous buildings and natural features, as well as the colour, massing and individual habits of planting over three and a half centuries. Changes in fashion, habits of collecting, patronage, gender and networks are also investigated. Although the larger scale of landscape is considered, a primary aim is to address the smaller nature of gardens, and their many specific, often complex, design concerns. The combination of Irish, British and European influences that these gardens reveal is discussed.

House and home in Georgian Ireland: spaces and cultures of domestic life

Edited by Conor Lucey
(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022. 210p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781801510264. €50)

Essays in this volume explore the everyday character and functions of domestic spaces in Georgian Ireland. Reflecting real as opposed to ideal patterns of living, the topics range widely from maternity and hospitality to social identity and consumption. Broadening the kind of spaces typically considered for this period — embracing country piles and urban mansions, but also merchant houses, lodgings and rural cabins — this collection of essays broadens our understanding of the meanings of house and home in Ireland in the eighteenth century and beyond. There are chapters by Toby Barnard, Aisling Durcan, Melanie Hayes, Judith Hill, Claudin Kinmonth, Patricia McCarthy and Emma O’Toole.

Land surveying in Ireland, 1690–1860

Finnian Ó Cionnaith
(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022. 272p. Illus. maps. Hbk. ISBN 9781801510141. €35)

Early printed and manuscript maps of Ireland are testament to the information that earlier generations sought from the environment around them. This book investigates the key role of the land surveyor, the technical specialist who physically measured and plotted Ireland’s landscape in the century before the Ordnance Survey. Ó Cionnaith uses the ca-

reers of three prominent surveyors — Gabriel Stokes (d. 1768), Robert Gibson (d. 1761) and John Longfield (d. 1833) — as guides to the complex, competitive and vibrant world of independent commercial land measurement. He examines the work of generations of land surveyors in depicting the island's landscape whose efforts have left us with a detailed historic record of the ever-changing relationship between people and place.

Land reform in the British and Irish Isles since 1800

Edited by Shaun Evans, Tony McCarthy and Annie Tindley
(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022. xiii, 347p. Illus. ISBN 9781474487689. £90)

Building on a body of work employing comparative approaches to the 'land question' and the history of landed estates, this book offers a range of case studies drawn from Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales. Among the topics discussed are estate management and relationships between landlord and tenant; land reform agendas; landowner perspectives; and legislative programmes and their impacts. Essays of specific Irish interest are contributed by Terence Dooley, Olwen Purdue, Ciarán Reilly, Tony McCarthy and Annie Tindley, all contributing to our understanding of the contested question of 'who owned the countryside'.

The granite coast: Dún Laoghaire, Sandycove, Dalkey

Peter Pearson
(Dublin: O'Brien Press, 2022. 246p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781788493543. €35)

The story of the development of the natural harbour at Dún Laoghaire, begun in 1816, is told in this well-illustrated book. The author traces the growth of this significant seaport town, which saw the development of large Victorian houses and villas but also the emergence of slum areas. The nearby coastal villages of Sandycove and Dalkey are also discussed.

The townland names of County Longford

Seán Murphy
(Carrigtwohill: Lettertec, [2022]. xxvi, 350p. Pbk. ISBN 9781914488467. No price given)

Arranged alphabetically by townland name this is a detailed guide to the townland names of County Longford. As with many books published in 2022 it is partly the product of research conducted during the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021, yet it successfully combines local fieldwork with research based on online databases (principally logainm.ie). The author's own judgments of the various name forms associated with each place are included, and he frequently takes issue with the name forms generated in the 1830s for use by the Ordnance Survey.

Listen to the land speak: a journey into the wisdom of what lies beneath us

Manchán Magan
(Dublin: Gill Books, 2022. 352p. Hbk. ISBN 9780717192595. €22.99)

Manchán Magan sets out on a journey, through bogs, across rivers and over mountains, to trace ancient ancestral footsteps. In his own inimitable way, he combines his journeying with a consideration of ancient myths that have shaped Irish national identity and are embedded in the strata of land that have endured through millennia.

Ireland's farthest shores: mobility, migration and settlement in the Pacific world

(History of Ireland and the Irish diaspora)
Malcolm Campbell
(Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2022. x, 291p. Illus. maps. ISBN 9780299334208. \$79.95)

This book offers new perspectives on migration and mobility in the Pacific world and of the Irish role in the establishment and maintenance of the British Empire. The author investigates the extensive transnational connections that developed among Irish immigrants and their descendants across the Pacific world, and how they helped shape the overseas places in which they settled.

The first great charity of this town: Belfast Charitable Society and its role in the developing city

Edited by Olwen Purdue
(Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2022. xv, 310p. Illus. maps. Hbk. ISBN 9781788550048. €29.95)

Belfast Charitable Society was established in 1752 to raise funds to build a poorhouse and hospital in Belfast. The foundation stone of the poorhouse was laid twenty years later. The building, Clifton House, is still a fine example of eighteenth-century architecture. During the century following the establishment of the Society, Belfast was transformed from a relatively small mercantile town into a major industrial city, a transformation that was accompanied by political upheaval and the major societal challenges associated with rapid industrialisation and urban growth. These essays examine the work of the Society, the global connections that influenced its thinking and the societal issues it sought to address. The collection offers valuable insights into the wider social, economic and political life of nineteenth-century Belfast.

Traditional architecture in Offaly: history, materials and furniture, 1800 to present day

Rachel Mc Kenna
(Tullamore: Offaly County Council, 2022. 288p. Hbk. ISBN 9781916328761. €30)

Rachel Mc Kenna approaches the study of Offaly's vernacular architecture from the perspective of a professional architect with an interest in conservation architecture. This beautifully illustrated book considers the setting of dwellings in both the rural landscape and the urban environment, explaining how much vernacular architecture, constructed by local craft workers using local materials, appears to be very closely rooted in the landscape. The book provides analysis of plan-types and of the materials used, illustrating the various types of roofs, walls, windows and doors, as well as the way the principal

rooms of a house were furnished. The final part of the book concentrates on social history since 1800 and considers many aspects of domestic food production, farming activities, turf cutting, field boundaries, and ‘cottage’ gardens, home and urban industry, pastimes, social gatherings, and travel.

The big house in Kerry: a social history

Edited by Jane O’Hea O’Keeffe

(Tralee: Irish Life and Lore, 2022. xvi, 328p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9780957461192. €39)

FOURTEEN essays on the big houses of Kerry are contained in this large format illustrated book. Places included are Tarbert House (Leslie family), Kilmorna House, Listowel (O’Mahony and Vicars families), Crotta House, Kilflynn (Ponsonby family), Ballyheigue Castle (Crosbie family), Ardferit Abbey (Crosbie family), Tralee Castle (Denny family), Churchill House, Tralee (Denny family), Oak Park, Collis Sandes House & Oakvilla, Tralee (Bate-man & Sandes families), Kilmurry House, Castle-land (Macintosh and Mahony families), Kilcole-man Abbey, Milltown (Godfrey family), Callinafercy, Milltown (Leeson Marshall family), The Reeks, Kilarney (MacGilycuddy family), Beaufort House (Mullins/de Moleyns family), Muckross House, Kilarney (Herbert family), Flesk Castle, Kilarney (Coltsmann/Cronin/MacGilycuddy families), Kilarney House (Browne family), Derryquin Castle and Askive, Sneem (Bland and Stokes families), Belleville House, Portmagee (Butler Family). There is also a chapter on burning of big houses in the early 1920s, and a chapter on ‘Creators and custodians of the Kerry landscape’.

Thomas Conolly (1823–76) of Castletown House and the social networking of power

(Maynooth Studies in Local History, 159)

Suzanne M. Pegley

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022. 99p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781801510349. €12.95)

THIS biography of Thomas Conolly acts as a prism through which to view the power of the ascendancy class in the second half of the nineteenth century. In this period the cultural hegemony of Ireland was dominated by the ascendancy class, which remained reasonably intact but was beginning to break down. Suzanne Pegley contextualises Conolly’s activities and the lifestyles of other powerful landowners in Irish society in the nineteenth century. At the core of her study is Castletown, Co. Kildare, the most important Palladian house in Ireland.

Charles Owen O’Conor, the O’Conor Don: landlordism, liberal Catholicism and unionism in nineteenth-century Ireland

Aidan Enright

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022. 244p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781801510400. €50)

CHARLES Owen O’Conor, the O’Conor Don (1838–1906), was one of the most prominent Catholic landlords and Liberal MPs of his generation. One of a long line of politically active O’Conors, he is portrayed here as a wealthy, fair-minded landlord who served as MP for his native County Roscommon between 1860 and 1880. In parliament, he supported

reforms in education, juvenile care, factory law, Sunday closing, the Irish language and landownership. However, as a loyalist, unionist and imperialist, he was out of step with the mood and aims of popular Irish nationalism, especially on the issue of home rule. He had become an increasingly marginalized figure before the end of the nineteenth century.

Burning the big house: the story of the Irish country house in a time of war and revolution

Terence Dooley
(New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2022. xiv, 350p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9780300260748. €35)

NEARLY 300 country houses were burned to the ground in Ireland during the revolutionary years from 1914 to 1923. In analysing the transformative impact of the Great War (1914–18), Terry Dooley’s book explains how these big houses became a target for political and agrarian revolutionaries. The houses were sometimes seen as symbols of conquest and colonial oppression that did not belong in the Irish landscape. Many others were attacked in pursuit of an ideal of ‘the land for the people’, with the objective of driving out their owners permanently so that the lands could be redistributed. The book evokes the exhilaration felt by revolutionaries as they seized property and overturned the established order. It details sudden acts of looting and destruction as homes were stripped of their artefacts and made uninhabitable. Many of the houses that were destroyed have disappeared from the landscape while others still stand as ghostly ruins.

Enduring ruin: environmental destruction during the Irish revolution

Justin Dolan Stover

(Dublin: UCD Press, 2022. xviii, 176p. Illus. plates. Pbk. ISBN 9781910820834. €30)

THE years of revolution and civil war in Ireland between 1916 and 1923 inflicted unprecedented damage to built-up and natural landscapes. Destruction transcended national and ideological divisions and remained a feature of Irish urban and rural landscapes years after independence, presenting an Ireland politically transformed yet physically disfigured. This book traces the militarisation of private and public spaces and considers how the destruction of monuments renegotiated Ireland’s civic spaces and colonial legacy. It examines how Crown force reprisals, agrarian disputes and sectarian division amplified Ireland’s contested spaces, and how the built and natural environment was impacted.

The burning of Knockcroghery village, Co. Roscommon, 1921

(Maynooth Studies in Local History, 155)

Regina Donlon

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022. 63p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781801510301. €12.95)

COLONEL-Commandant Thomas Stanton Lambert was assassinated near Glasson in Co. Westmeath on 20 June 1921. Hours later, the small village of Knockcroghery in south County Roscommon was set ablaze by British forces, seemingly in an act of retribution for Lambert’s murder. The burning

was an unfortunate case of mistaken identity, but it resulted in the decimation of the local economy and heralded the end of clay-pipe production in the area. This study explores the complex world of rural Ireland against the backdrop of the Irish War of Independence and demonstrates how local communities were affected by evolving national narratives.

Three castles burning: a history of Dublin in twelve streets

Donal Fallon

(Dublin: New Island Books, 2022. 306p. Pbk. ISBN 9781848408722. €17.50)

Developed originally as a set of podcasts, and now issued in book form, these microstudies of Dublin city through twelve of its streets champion the activists, workers, architects, poets, migrants, artists and merchants who have made and remade the city. The streets featured are: Henrietta Street, Watling Street, Fishamble Street, Rathmines Road Lower, South William Street, Parnell street East, James Joyce Street, Ship Street, Church Street, Eustace Street, Pearse Street (to Westland Row), and Moore Street. Combining social, cultural, industrial, commercial and political history, Fallon offers new and interesting perspectives on Ireland's capital.

Dublin from 1970 to 1990: the city transformed

Joseph Brady

(Making of Dublin City, 8)

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022. 455p. Illus. maps. Hbk. ISBN 9781846829864. €45; Pbk. ISBN 9781846829820. €24.95)

Dublin's footprint grew steadily during the 1970s with housing transforming the landscape of the west of the city, especially in Tallaght, Clondalkin and Blanchardstown. It was a time of change with the dominance of the city centre increasingly challenged by suburban shopping centres as Dubliners embraced the freedom offered by the motor car. Cars demanded more and bigger roads but it was realized

that Dublin had to control rather than fully accommodate these demands. The suburban trend in housing, shopping and jobs made the problem of decline and decay in the city centre even more acute. Dramatic change came from the late 1980s, transforming both the appearance and the social geography of the city centre. The urban environment was given greater attention, largely because the issues could no longer be avoided. The problem of how to manage the city remained as intractable as ever despite significant changes in local government structures and the need for additional public housing remained acute.

Little republics: the story of bungalow bliss

Adrian Duncan

(Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2022. 173p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781843518488. €15)

First published in 1971 and frequently enlarged and reissued, a book of house designs written and published by Jack Fitzsimons sold more than a quarter of a million copies. His straightforward plans encouraged many people throughout Ireland to embark on building their own homes. Half a century later, tracing the story decade by decade down to 2001, Adrian Duncan looks at the houses that were built using versions of Fitzsimons' designs, the materials used, and their placement in the landscape. He also reviews the nature and value of that housing stock today.

The art of place: people and landscape of County Clare

Edited by Peadar King and Anne Jones

Photographer: John Kelly

(Dublin: Liffey Press, 2022. 304p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781838359393. €35)

Placing a particular emphasis on the role of landscape and environs, this illustrated book of essays features contributions by writers and visual artists, musicians and composers, sculptors and craftspeople, photographers and filmmakers, with a focus on County Clare.

Notices of sources and guides to sources

Bernadette Cunningham

Annals of Cluain Mhic Nóis (to AD 1408) also known as Mag Eochagáin's Book ('Leabhar Conaill Mhig Eochagáin'), translated by Conall Mag Eochagáin, AD 1627, together with a remnant of 'Annals of Leacán', AD 1443–68, translated by Dubhaltach Mac Fhir Bhisigh, AD 1666.

Edited by Nollaig Ó Muraíle

(Dublin: Edmund Burke Publisher, 2022. 679p. Hbk. ISBN 9780946130511. €125)

THE various extant Irish annals are among the most important sources for the history of medieval Ireland. Among the later such compilations are the Annals of Clonmacnoise which, unusually, were produced in English rather than Irish, though the material was mostly translated from an older set of annals in the Irish language. The Annals of Clonmacnoise provide source material for the history of Ireland down to 1408. The surviving portion of another set of annals for the mid-fifteenth century, also translated into English in the seventeenth century and now known as the 'Annals of Lecan', is also included in this new edition. In each case, the content was previously accessible through nineteenth-century editions, but this new edition by place-names expert Nollaig Ó Muraíle takes account of the variant readings of multiple extant copies. Ó Muraíle systematically identifies the places mentioned in these annals and provides very detailed indexes of people and places mentioned.

Irish maritime trade in the Restoration era. The letterbook of William Hovell, 1683–1687
Edited by James O'Shea

(Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2022. xvii, 369p. Hbk. ISBN 9781906865634. €40)

WILLIAM Hovell was a prominent merchant in Cork and his letterbook provides evidence of his dealings with merchants in Dublin, London and the English provinces. Hovell was involved in the export of products from the farms and fisheries of Munster, as far afield as the Mediterranean and across the Atlantic. The documents provide a fascinating window into the developing overseas trade of the port of Cork in the late seventeenth century, casting light not just on transport and shipping but also on the markets that developed for Irish food products, and the financial transactions that were necessary to sustain the trade.

Waterford's maritime world: the ledger of Walter Butler, 1750–1757

John Mannion

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022. 256p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781801510165. €45)

IN October 1750 Walter Butler, a sea captain from Waterford, purchased a ship in the port of Bordeaux and had it refitted there before loading it with wine, brandy and other French produce for

his home port in south-east Ireland. Renamed the *Catherine* after his wife, the ship spent the winter in Waterford where Butler and his men prepared for a voyage to Newfoundland. She departed for the fishery in April 1751 with passengers (seasonal migrants) and salt provisions, returning home in the autumn. Over the next six years the *Catherine* completed three more round trips to Newfoundland as well as voyages to London, Tenby, Dublin, Cork, Lisbon, Cadiz and Seville. Butler's account of the *Catherine* survives among the Prize Papers of the High Court of Admiralty. The ledger records everyday economic exchanges with merchants, traders, artisans and labourers in Waterford city and in the ports and fishing harbours visited by the *Catherine* overseas, in England, Wales, France, Iberia and in Newfoundland.

The Irish religious censuses of the 1760s: Catholics and Protestants in eighteenth-century Ireland

Compiled and edited by Brian Gurrin, Kerby A. Miller, and Liam Kennedy

(Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2022. xxiv, 496p. Maps. ISBN 9781906865290. €80)

PARISH-level data published here draw on the hearth-tax census of 1764–5 and the established church ecclesiastical census of 1766. Hearth-tax material survives for 21 counties, while the ecclesiastical census contains material from all 32 counties. The extant evidence, drawn from a variety of fragmentary sources, is published for 1,400 parishes, and sometimes includes information on households. The available data are also mapped in colour for each county, providing a wealth of demographic and social information for Ireland in the mid-eighteenth century.

Great Irish households: inventories from the long eighteenth century

Edited by John Adamson

(Cambridge: John Adamson, 2022. 435p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781898565178. £75)

THIS is an edition of surviving inventories of the contents of a variety of Irish elite houses, with the lists ranging in date from 1702/3 to 1821. This rich source material provides evidence of how the house interiors were organised and offer insights into elite lifestyles and tastes. The inventories are arranged chronologically and they relate to Lismore Castle, Co. Waterford; Kilkenny Castle; Dublin Castle; Bishop's house, Elphin, Co. Roscommon; Captain Balfour's Dublin town house; Hillsborough Castle, Co. Down; Kilrush House, Co. Kilkenny; No 10 Henrietta Street, Dublin; Morristown Lattin, Co. Kildare; Baronscourt, Co. Tyrone; Castlecomer House, Co. Kilkenny; Killadoon, Co. Kildare; Shelton Abbey, Co. Wicklow; Carton House, Co. Kildare; Newbridge House, Co. Dublin; and Mount Stewart, Co. Down.

A selection of key electronic resources for Irish archaeology, historical geography and architectural history

Bernadette Cunningham

This is a selection of some key online resources for Irish archaeology, local history, historical geography and architectural history that may be of particular interest to readers of *Áitreabh*.

Archaeology The National Monuments Service provides a wealth of authoritative archaeological information on this website, much of it derived from decades of research on sites and monuments the length and breadth of Ireland. Data previously published in print format in county-by-county *Archaeological Inventories* can now be accessed on the ‘historic environment viewer’ on this site. <https://www.archaeology.ie>

Buildings of Ireland Database of over 65,000 buildings and gardens documented by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). The website also includes digitised versions of county booklets previously published in print format. <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie>

Down Survey A digital version of a key late seventeenth-century historical and cartographic source for many Irish counties excluding Connacht. <http://downsurvey.tcd.ie>

Excavations Authoritative short reports on Irish archaeological excavations. The reports are uploaded by licensed archaeologists onto this fully searchable free website. The database includes the content of reports published annually in print from 1969 to 2010 as well as those reports published online since 2011. <https://excavations.ie>

Griffith’s Valuation Griffith’s Valuation is among the useful mid-nineteenth-century historical sources that can be accessed freely on this site. <http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/>

HeritageMaps A special data-viewer of built, cultural and natural heritage, compiled by the Heritage Council using datasets drawn from state agencies and local authorities. <http://heritagemaps.ie>

Irish Historic Towns Atlas (IHTA) Digital editions of some of the Irish Historic Towns Atlas series are available online, as well as prototype GIS-based digital atlases for Derry/Londonderry, Dungarvan and Galway. <https://www.ria.ie/research-projects/irish-historic-towns-atlas/ihta-digital>

Irish History Online The national bibliography for Irish history. <https://www.ria.ie/irish-history-online>

LandedEstates A comprehensive resource guide to the landed estates of Connacht and Munster, c. 1700–1914. <http://www.landedestates.ie>

Logainm The national place-names database. The data has recently been expanded to include street-names (currently in English only). There is also a crowd-sourcing (*meitheal*) element of this project, where information on local place-names can be uploaded. This is on a separate part of the website: <https://meitheal.logainm.ie/ga/> <https://www.logainm.ie/en/>

Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) The Irish national mapping agency website includes a section on historic maps. <https://www.osi.ie/products/professional-mapping/historical-mapping/>

Paddi The bibliography for Irish architecture, listing publications on all aspects of the built environment and environmental planning in Ireland, north and south. <https://www.paddi.net>

Place Names Northern Ireland An authoritative guide to the origin and meaning of over 30,000 place-names in Northern Ireland. Includes a searchable database of current and historic place-names and a map depicting townland and parish boundaries. <http://www.placenamesni.org>

PRONI Historical maps viewer Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and Land and Property Services Northern Ireland have combined their resources to provide access to historical maps. The viewer displays county, parish and townland boundaries and includes information on sites, buildings and landmarks of historical interest. It provides access to historical Ordnance Survey maps for Northern Ireland counties as well as modern base maps. <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/about-proni-historical-maps-viewer>

UCD open source maps Downloadable versions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century historic maps in UCD Library. <https://digital.ucd.ie/view/ivrla:426>



Historic Settlement: Atlantic South Donegal *Report on the Forty-Ninth Annual Regional Conference of the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, Donegal Town, 6–8th May 2022*

The forty-ninth annual conference of the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement in association with The Donegal GAP Heritage and History Group was held in Donegal Town, Co. Donegal. Since this was the first conference after the start of the pandemic, members of the group and attendees of the conference gathered in the Central Hotel at the ‘Diamond’, the chosen event venue, in anticipation of the conference talks. Experts from the disciplines of archaeology, geography, and history discussed the historical settlement of Atlantic South Donegal over the course of the weekend.

Friday 6 May 2022

After registration and a first short opportunity to chat, Brian Lacey, former CEO of the Discovery Programme, launched the conference as the keynote speaker with his talk on *Settlement in South Donegal from prehistoric to medieval times*. He elaborated on Donegal’s settlement patterns and of the persistence of boundary and conflict zones based on monument distribution as well as geographical-archaeological key features. Highlighting the impact of topography and landscape, Brian gave an overview over the county of choice for the GSIHS annual conference from prehistory to Medieval times. His excellent talk was followed by an evening of chat, drink, and animated discussion.

Saturday 7 May 2022

Saturday morning was dedicated to talks while a fieldtrip was scheduled in the afternoon that had everyone crossing their fingers for the weather to hold.

Charlie Doherty of the School of History and Archives at UCD (retired) discussed archaeological findings in south Donegal indicating their provenance and mythological context. A central example presented was an anthropomorphic bronze sword-hilt which was imported from Northwest France and later deposited in the river Erne. The natural and cultural environment of this finding suggests a ceremonial use of the sword and indicates the external relations of South Donegal in the Early Middle Ages. Charlie connected history, legend, and archaeology in his captivating account.

The second speaker of the day, Paul MacCotter of the School of History at UCC introduced us in his talk to the term *túath*. Elaborating the changing meanings of the term over time, *túath* is not only a territorial designation but is also associated with a particular social group: it implies the authority of a local lord and links the community to their jurisdiction. *Túatha* territories in South Donegal can be reconstructed because their boundaries show a strong persistence in the landscape, which is currently a work in progress.

In the following talk, Anne-Julie Lafaye from the National Monuments Service introduced the Franciscan friary in Donegal town. The talk had three main foci: the patronage of Franciscan friaries in medieval Ireland, the role of female patronage, and the impact of mendicant orders in Irish society. Franciscan friaries in Ireland were often built in conjunction with a castle, while the patrons retained control of resources and used the friary as a burial ground. Women in particular seemed to be attracted to mendicant orders, of which they became benefactors. The fascinating lecture also referred to the mutual architectural influences between Franciscans and Dominicans.

Paula Harvey, Director of Donegal GAP Heritage and History CLG, presented the Doon Fort Project. Since 2016, Paula led efforts to conserve the stone fort, which is part of the ‘Adopt a Monument’ scheme from the Heritage Council. Probably dating to the 9th century, Doon Fort is situated on an island, mostly hidden from the public eye, but Paula brought its morphology and history to life. She described the aims and objectives of the project group, which included

scientific surveys of the fort and surrounding area, a mobile exhibit and vegetation removal. Excited to see Doon Fort in person, everyone was looking forward to the fieldtrip.

Saturday afternoon was dedicated to said fieldtrip by bus, led by Paula Harvey and Brian Lacey. After a short drive north and through Ardara, the first stop was Eden House, where the current owner of the property gave a fascinating account of the history of the house and its former owners. The second stop was the back garden of a private house from which Doon Fort is visible. The lake stretched out in front of us and Doon Fort's dark stones were imposing in the distance. Afterwards, we visited the impressive Kilclooney dolmen, a megalithic portal tomb with two chambers, after a short hike through sheep pastures. We finished off the fieldtrip with views of Inishkeel Island and its monastic site.

After returning to Donegal town, we flocked to Donegal Castle, where David Dickson's book, *The first Irish cities: an eighteenth-century transformation* (Yale University Press, 2021), was launched, presented by David Fleming. It gave way to the colophon of the day, the conference dinner, where many conversations were had over delicious food and drinks.

Sunday 8 May 2022

The Annual General Meeting was the opening act of the third conference day.

It was followed with the first talk of the day by Angela Byrne, an independent researcher. She assessed the impact of migration on nineteenth-century Ballyshannon in her insightful lecture. Emphasising the consequences of Ireland's mass-migration and its sharp increase in the 1830s, Angela facilitated understanding of Ballyshannon's importance as a point of departure. The city was already an important port for the movement of goods and people to and from North America, but experienced profound social, infrastructural, and economic changes.

Arlene Crampsie of the School of Geography at UCD analysed the revolutionary period in Donegal from 1912 to 1923 focusing on South Donegal settlement history and the geographies of revolutionary politics. The talk was informative about the consequences of the Ulster Plantation, the War of Independence, and the aftermath of the Treaty, in a lecture that intrigued both the Irish audience and foreign listeners.

Brendán Mac Suibhne of Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge at University of Galway discussed the characters in Brian Friel's play, *Dancing at Lughnasa* (1990), in a very personal lecture, inspired by his mother's family. Reflecting upon people and family places, such as their houses and graves, he analysed the context of settlement and society and presented a complex image of what rural society was like.

The last speaker of the conference, Barry O'Reilly of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, presented his study of hamlets in Southwest Donegal. After an initial assessment of the term 'hamlet', he proposed a model for detection and classification. Illustrating his research with several examples using different map sources including OSI maps and Google maps to show the reshaping of the land, his account highlighted changes to the landscape and the significance of the settlements.

The conference drew to a close in the early afternoon, though it was followed by the offer of a guided walking tour of Donegal by local guide Niamh Coughlan that brought the town's history to life.

We would like to thank the speakers for their time and insights, congratulate the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement for hosting such a successful Donegal Conference, and express our gratitude for the Niamh Crowley Student Bursary enabling our attendance.

Samantha Tobias

MSC World Heritage Management and Conservation, School of Archaeology, UCD

Silvina Martin

PHD candidate and IRC scholar. Department of Archaeology, UCD

Niamh Crowley Student Bursary recipients 2022

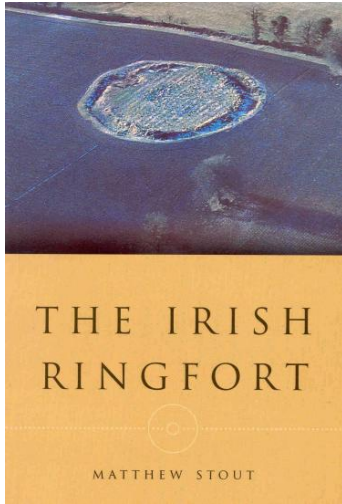
Reviews

The Irish ringfort

Matthew Stout

(Four Courts Press: Dublin, 2023) [144p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 978-1-85182-582-0, £13.45.]

THE reprint of Matthew Stout's book is of particular interest to our Group. It was the fifth in the series, *Irish Settlement Studies*, that was inaugurated by the publication in 1985 of B.J. Graham's *Anglo-Norman settlement in Ireland*. Although no longer numbered the series has continued until the present.



On re-reading this book one is struck by the sheer volume of data that was gathered, organised and analysed. In his introduction Stout set out his goal:

As it is my view that both high king and small farmer dwelt within the simple earthen or stone enclosures known collectively as ringforts, the study of this settlement form offers us our best chance to understand how all classes of secular society functioned during the Early Christian period in Ireland.

Since ringforts are the most numerous archaeological monument found in Ireland and since their distribution is island wide they provide an exceptional dataset for analysis. The first chapter deals with the morphology of the ringfort. The circular or sub-circular forms are noted, as well as the internal dimensions, the width of the enclosing banks, and the depth of the surrounding ditches. Did they have one, two or three ramparts? How did they relate to stone cashels? Did dimensions vary throughout the country? How far were they defensive? What was the nature of the entrance, and in which direction did it face? His conclusion is that:

The size and complexity of enclosing banks tell us a great deal about the relative status of the ringfort occupants, but this fact should not obscure the primary defensive role of these enclosures which clearly met the day-to-day security needs of the farming families enclosed within them.

Chapter two on chronology demonstrates convincingly the date range of these monuments, suggesting that the '[...] majority of Ireland's ringforts and crannógs were occupied and probably constructed during a three hundred year period from the beginning of the seventh-century to the end of the ninth-century AD'. Since many were multi-phase sites then it is very likely that they were contemporary with one another.

Chapter three examines the function of ringforts. While primarily for domestic use some could have been built solely as cattle enclosures. Some, at first enclosing a dwelling, may have been used later to protect farm buildings.

Chapter four looks at the economy and it is suggested that the ringfort dwellers were principally dairy farmers. The evidence for tillage and manufacturing would point to the self-sufficiency of a wealthy farming class.

Chapter five, on the environment, reveals evidence for deforestation after 300 AD as seen in soil erosion. The introduction of new technology in the form of an advanced type of plough and the use of new cereal crops point to a great expansion in agriculture in a time of climate improvement. This allowed for better health and a population increase.

Chapter six, running to sixty-one pages, is really the heart of the book. In this chapter Stout examines each area of the country in great detail. Here his skills as a geographer come into full play. Elevation, soil type, underlying rock, bog, drainage, site location, ringfort density are all analysed. Despite wide variations throughout the island it is clear that ringforts are found in areas that can support farming and (following McCormick) their distribution provides a clue to stocking rates. Ringforts and ecclesiastical sites would appear to be complementary. It is admitted that not all distribution characteristics can be explained.

Chapter seven looks at Early Christian settlement and society in light of the evidence produced in the previous chapters. This is particularly important since very good use has been made of the documentary evidence. The law tracts, in particular, are a wonderful confirmation of what has been surveyed on the ground. There is always a danger in relying on translations. For example in the late eleventh or early twelfth-century *Aislinge Meic Conglinne* there is a description of a ‘fort’. Since it refers to the Battle of Allen in 722 this would seem to allow its evidence to relate to the ringfort. It had a fosse that required a bridge. The fosse was outside a stone bank, and the top of the bank was defended by a palisade allowing Stout to disagree with the opinion of Mallory and MacNeill concerning palisades on top of banks. That matter is probably for the archaeologists to debate but this eleventh-century evidence may not be used in this case. The original text reads *dúnad*. This is not a *rath*, *lios*, or *dún* but a military fortress. The reference to a bridge across the entranceway and a palisade on the bank fits perfectly with the defences required for fortifications during military campaigns of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

When it was first published in 1997 this work set the study of the ringfort on a new trajectory. It really is the starting point for work on this topic. Matthew Stout has provided a database and has offered stimulating and thought-provoking ideas that challenge any scholar working on early Ireland. We now have the publication of Paul MacCotter on territorial and political boundaries and the contributions of various scholars in Tomás Ó Carragáin and Sam Turner’s *Making Christian landscapes* among other publications — but that is to emphasise the pioneering nature of Matthew Stout’s book. Four Courts are to be congratulated for producing this reprint. It is testimony to the value of our Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, and it is testimony also to the important contribution our former president has made to the study of early Irish history.



Excavation of a multi-period site at Stalleen, Co. Meath, by Mandy Stephens. Research in the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site

Edited by Matthew Stout and Geraldine Stout

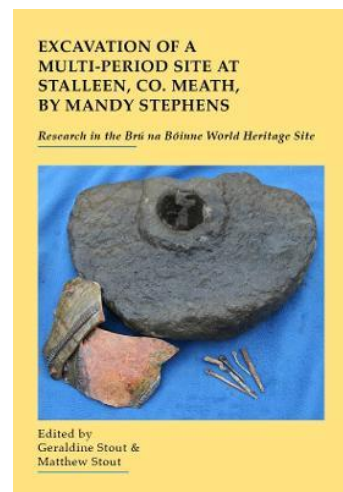
(Chapel Press: Julianstown, 2022) [vii, 182p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 978-1-3999-3315-5, £20.00.]

During the construction of a wastewater plant in the townland of Stalleen, Donore, Co. Meath archaeological material was uncovered.

This led to an excavation between 26 May and 5 September 2008 under the direction of Mandy Stephens. Since Mandy Stephens died tragically in 2016 the report of the excavation was not completed, although she had made great strides towards its production. She left an extensive archive of materials in the possession of Finola O’Carroll of CRDS Ltd. The editors of this publication have drawn upon this archive to bring the results of this exceptionally important site, situated within the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site, before the public.

The site is extraordinary. Scattered lithics of the Later Mesolithic, Neolithic/Brongé Age was evidence of the earliest human activity at the site. Human activity continued through the early medieval centuries, the high middle ages and into the early modern and modern periods. Indeed the site’s archaeological history mirrored and threw fresh light on the subtle changes in society as one age mutated into another. The first two chapters and chapter sixteen are by the editors.

Chapter three by Dermot G. Moore examines the lithics of the site, showing that they are representative of the early prehistoric period in Co. Meath. He concludes with an interesting discussion of a quartzite plough pebble — an artifact that has a date range from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. Ian W. Doyle has a detailed study of a single sherd of pottery that originated in Greece. This was a fragment of a Bi/LRA 2 amphora — a type of jug that was used to store wine or oil. ‘B ware’ arrived in Britain and Ireland during the late-fifth to mid-sixth (possibly into the seventh) centuries. Ceramic finds from sites at Colp at the mouth of the Boyne highlight the importance of the river Boyne for long-distance trade in this early



medieval period. Clare McCutcheon examines the sherds of Leinster Cooking ware, various Dublin type wares, Trim ware, and Saintonge green glazed ware that date to the late twelfth to mid fourteenth centuries. The considerable variety of post-medieval ceramics presented by Joanne Gaffrey date from the late sixteenth to the twentieth century.

Joanne Gaffrey and Fiona Beglane examine the bone finds from different periods. The bones of various animals were made into pins, needles, weaving implements such as a hand distaff, spindle whorls, handles and a 'spear' point. Two pieces of human bone, a right femur head and a portion of occipital bone (both of adults) were studied by Ciara Travers.

Joanne Gaffrey discussed the metal finds, the most interesting of which were an iron stylus of early medieval date, a Jew's harp with (remarkably) its tongue intact dating to the late twelfth to thirteenth centuries and a Dublin butcher's token minted in 1672. She also discussed clay pipes, glass and stone finds from Stalleen.

Fiona Beglane presented the mammalian faunal remains. Not surprisingly this was one of the longest chapters in the report. As she points out in her conclusions this material provides a fascinating insight into rural Co. Meath during all periods. By careful sifting of the evidence we note the gradual shift from the self-sufficient cattle husbandry of the early ecclesiastical site to the growing importance of sheep for their meat and wool. The development of a Cistercian grange at Stalleen created a centre of supply for Mellifont and the external market. Of great interest is the butchering of cats and dogs for their skins to enhance clothing. Bird and fish bones are examined by S. Hamilton-Dyer. Domestic fowl, ducks and wild birds were among the assemblage. Salmon/trout, eel, probably from the Boyne, and a herring (fresh or preserved) made up the fish remains.

Sarah Cobain examined the macrofossil and charcoal remains from Stalleen. These provided information on the cultivation of cereals — wheat and barley from the Neolithic, with the addition of oats during the Iron Age. The kilns on the site were essential for the drying of these grains in a damp climate. The waste from grain processing provided fuel. Grain and flour were consumed locally and were an important trading commodity. The lawtract *Bretha Déin Chécht* (the name sadly distorted) gave an indication of the access to food according to status within the local community. The recovered samples provided evidence of the vegetation in the local area for trees, bushes and herbs — some of which were important in medicine.

As mentioned above, the editors contributed the first two chapters on 'Typography and settlement' and 'The excavation', thus setting the scene for the detailed individual reports that follow. They also wrote the final chapter 'Discussion'. It cannot have been easy to bring another scholar's work to publication — however advanced the state in which it was left. Geraldine and Matthew Stout, however, have succeeded in producing a model report. It would have been difficult enough to distill the information from a single-period site but one that was multi-period and spanned the whole of human activity brought the difficulty to a much higher level. We are fortunate that the complementary skills of the two editors made that possible. This is in evidence in the chapters that they have contributed.

Matthew Stout has brought his geography skills (as evidenced by his work on the ringfort reviewed above) to bear on the nature of the early medieval site. The 'Sta' element in the placename is rare but belongs to a small category that is mostly confined to the east of Ireland. The oval enclosure and the find of the stylus and pottery fragment support the argument that the early site is ecclesiastical. Following a most interesting discussion on the earliest churches it is suggested that Stalleen 'may have been one of the earliest Christian foundations in Ireland'.

It is clear to see the hand of Geraldine Stout in the discussion of the material from the coming of the Cistercians onwards. Her discussion of the medieval grange in Britain and Ireland opens a window on such settlements. The gate houses and enclosures and the buildings they enclosed are described. Daily life and economy are seen in the evidence for craftworking, entertainment, communications, diet, tillage and milling, livestock and fishing, bringing the grange settlement, monks, brothers and lay people to life.

This is a wonderful publication and Geraldine and Matthew Stout (and all those who excavated and provided analyses of the finds) are to be congratulated for seeing the report on this extraordinary site to publication.

Charles Doherty (Retired)
School of History and Archives (University College Dublin)



The famous *View of Cork from Audley Place*, c.1750 by John Butts will be one of several topographical views reproduced in the forthcoming atlas, courtesy of the Crawford Art Gallery, Cork.

News from the Irish Historic Towns Atlas (IHTA), Royal Irish Academy

Sarah Gearty, Cartographic editor



At one of the first in-person events to be held in Academy House since the lifting of restrictions on 19 May 2022, where Mary Canning, PRIA (left) launched IHTA publications — *Dungarvan/Dún Garbhán* by John Martin (right); *Dublin suburbs Rathmines* by Séamas Ó Maitiú (middle) and *Drogheda c.1180 to 1900: from fortified borough to industrial port town* by Ned Mc Hugh.

Cork city has been the focus of the IHTA team for the past year. Howard Clarke and Máire Ní Laoi completed many years of research and a full draft of the text entered the editorial phase of production in December 2022. The history of the city will be covered in one part so readers can look forward to a bumper edition for Cork, with the Topographical Information giving details of c.12,500 sites in the characteristic twenty-two thematic sections that will be familiar to Atlas enthusiasts. The accompanying essay and bibliography will bring together much of the primary and secondary literature that exists for Cork and are intended to offer new avenues for research on the morphological development of the city. As the sub-title of Howard's lecture to the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society that took place in University College Cork on 9 March 2023 reflected, the Cork historic towns atlas will be a combination of 'old and new findings'.

As well as building on a rich archaeological and historical tradition in Cork, this new atlas benefits from a long cartographical record for the city that begins in 1545 and a selection of twenty-three historic maps will be reproduced in facsimile alongside a range of thematic and Ordnance Survey maps. The large-format of the IHTA allows a level of detail that complements the material presented in the pioneering *Atlas of Cork* published in 2005. Map 2, the core map that reconstructs the city in the mid-nineteenth century at a scale of 1:2500 to allow comparison with other historic town atlases (within Ireland and internationally), will present the main built-up area on one page of approximately 80 x 90 cm (folded). This map was digitised using the original Ordnance Survey town plan of 1842, itself requiring thirty-three sheets and depicting an unprecedented level of cartographical detail. Much of this has been captured in a geodatabase that is being developed in the creation of a digital atlas of the city, an initiative of the IHTA Digital Working Group that has been awarded a Heritage Council grant through their Stewardship Fund 2023, with Cork City Council and the Digital Repository of Ireland as partners.

With no. 31 *Cork/Corcaigh* nearing completion (the atlas will go to print later in 2023), we look forward to future towns in the IHTA series with Ballyshannon by Angela Byrne coming as no. 32 in the main series and Drumcondra by Ruth McManus as no. 3 in the Dublin Suburbs; and Cavan (Jonathan Cherry and Brendan Scott), Kilmainham/Inchicore (Frank Cullen), New Ross (Linda Doran), Tralee (Marc Caball) and Tullamore (Michael Byrne) all advancing towards publication. Research on Westport (Siobhán Sexton and Eamon O'Flaherty) was assisted greatly last summer by a grant from the Heritage Council to Mayo County Council. Results were presented at a workshop and walking tour in Westport as part of a series of events for Heritage Week 2022, which also included a lecture by John Martin in Dungarvan Library to mark the launch of that

fascicle locally. As part of the Maynooth University Summer Programme for Undergraduate Research (SPUR) we were joined for six-weeks in June/July 2022 by Maynooth University history student, Kevin Comiskey, who split his time between map work for Cork and research on directories in the Dublin City Libraries and Archive on Pearse Street.

The annual IHTA seminar returned to Academy House, Dawson Street in May 2022 for a series of workshops dedicated to ‘Using the atlas’ where speakers discussed their experience of the IHTA from their perspective as researchers, teachers, heritage professionals, archaeologists, architects/planners and archivists/librarians. The day culminated with a plenary lecture by David Dickson. All sessions were recorded and can be watched back online via the IHTA webpage (<https://www.ria.ie/news/irish-historic-towns-atlas-educational-resources/using-atlas-ihta-workshops-2022>). Cork city provides the subject and location for the next IHTA seminar, which will take place in 2024.

The highlight of the past year was undoubtedly the International Commission for the History of Towns (ICHT) annual conference in September 2022, which was held in Ireland for the first time in thirty-eight years and involved colleagues from fifteen countries, many of whom are involved in European Towns Atlas projects. Co-hosted by Ireland and the UK, the conference theme was ‘Crisis in Urban Order’ and was held in Maynooth University and the Royal Irish Academy before heading northwards to Derry via Kells, Co. Meath, Cavan and Enniskillen, for the final days. A flavour of the week’s activities can be found here: <https://www.ria.ie/news/irish-historic-towns-atlas/international-commission-history-towns-meeting-2022>

Keep up to date with all IHTA news via Twitter @IHTA_RIA and our webpage www.ihta.ie.



Delegates outside the Town Hall on a tour of Cavan town with Brendan Scott on the field-trip for the ICHT conference, September 2022.



Members of the Westport Historical Society looking at the town plan for Westport with Ben Callan, researcher, who joined Siobhán Sexton, Eamon O’Flaherty and Jennifer Moore in discussing IHTA matters in the Clew Bay Heritage Centre for Heritage Week 2022.

FIFTIETH REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Abbey Hotel, Roscommon Town

5–7 MAY 2023

Historic Settlement in Roscommon

*The Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement**In association with**The County Roscommon Historical and Archaeological Society***Friday 7:00–8:00 pm: Registration in Abbey Hotel****Speakers:****Keynote lecture:** Kieran O'Connor (Dept. of Archaeology, University of Galway)*The archaeology of north Roscommon from prehistory to c.1650AD*Kate Robb (John Cronin & Associates), Camilla Brännström (John Cronin & Associates)
and Richie Farrell (Project Manager, Farming Rathcroghan)*Farming an archaeological landscape: challenges, trials and future thinking*

Joe Fenwick (Dept. of Archaeology, University of Galway)

Rathra: a royal stronghold of early medieval Connacht

Daniel Curley (Manager of the Rathcroghan Visitor Centre)

The archaeology of the later medieval Ó Cellaig lords of Uí Maine and Tír Maine (1100–1600)

Harman Murtagh (Technological University of the Shannon: retired)

Anglo-Norman settlement in south Roscommon: its rise and demise

Matthew Potter (Curator, Limerick Museum)

The local State and the development of an urban network in County Roscommon since 1600

Martin A. Timoney (Independent Research Archaeologist)

Mid-North Roscommon pits and pitfields. Not again!

Mary B. Timoney (Independent Research Archaeologist)

Commemoration in the 18th and early 19th century Roscommon graveyards and churches

Brian Gurrin (Adapt Centre, Trinity College Dublin)

Settlement and population distribution in the Diocese of Elphin, 1749

Oisín Ó Drisceoil (National Famine Museum, Strokestown Park | Irish Heritage Trust)

*Strokestown House and the development of the town by the Pakenham Mahon family***Saturday 2:00 pm:** Field Trip by bus to include:

Boyle Abbey, Moygara Castle and TBC.

Saturday 7:00 pm: Wine reception and launch of:*Rethinking medieval Ireland and beyond. Essays in honor of T.B. Barry*

Edited by Victoria L. McAlister and Linda Shine

Saturday 8:15 pm: Conference dinner (Abbey Hotel)**Sunday 9:30 am:** AGM Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement (Abbey Hotel)**Sunday 2:00–4:00 pm:** Tour of Roscommon Castle and Roscommon Abbey**Conference Fee* :** €60/£55, Students* €30/£27**Individual sessions:** €30/£27**Annual membership fee:** €20/£18**Annual student membership fee:** €12/£11**Conference dinner:** €39

*Conference fee includes tea/coffee and bus for fieldtrip

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<http://irishsettlement.ie/membership/>

Application for membership of the Group can be made via the form in the web-page:

<http://irishsettlement.ie/membership/>

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Contributions are invited on topics related to historic settlement in Ireland and the Irish-sea region, the history, conservation and interpretation of the cultural landscape and on local and regional studies. These should be sent to the Editor, Mr Charles Doherty, 13 Bancroft Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, D24 YH2V; or e-mail: charles.doherty@icloud.com

Contributors are requested, where possible, to send materials, text and graphics by e-mail. For further information visit our web-site.

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