

GROUP FOR THE STUDY OF IRISH HISTORIC SETTLEMENT NEWSLETTER

IRELAND

No. 25

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Annual Outing 2021

South Donegal

(See pages 37 and 38 for details)

€5 (Free to members)



Group
for the Study
of
Irish Historic Settlement

President's Welcome

Warmest greetings to all our members and friends !

When last I welcomed you a year ago we had been overtaken by our first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. A year on, its impact has been considerable. For people and societies life has changed dramatically and all forward planning has become provisional. Fortunately, the vaccination programme is providing renewed hope for the future and I am excited at the prospect of seeing you all again soon.

Our Newsletter normally includes papers from the previous conference but this year these have been replaced by a series on the theme of 'Sickness and Settlement'. We hope this series will provide some historical perspective for the times we live in. I think the articles demonstrate the human ability to overcome serious illness and survive. They also highlight the combined approach of spiritual and physical healing in medieval times. This approach informed the architectural design and form of hospital buildings and infirmaries run by Religious Orders in medieval Ireland – in particular, St. John the Baptist Hospital in Newtown Trim considered one of the best, extant examples of a medieval hospital in Ireland.

We see that same approach to healing in the role of holy wells and the significance of sacred water as an integral element of religious observation and practice, for care and wellness. We are currently witnessing a renaissance of interest in holy wells highlighted in such television programmes as John Creedon's *Atlas of Ireland* series. The *Hidden Heritage of Holy Wells* initiative also came out of the COVID-19 lockdown, another dividend!

Huge thanks to the contributors to this edition of the Newsletter; to Charles Doherty for his mammoth work as editor and to all the committee and loyal members who have been so supportive over the year.

Sadly, we lost one of our dearest and constant friends when Michael O'Hanrahan passed away this year. Our sympathy and best wishes go out to Mary and her family. Let's share many wonderful memories of time spent in his company over many past conferences when we come together again.

Geraldine Stout (President) May 2021
geraldinestout56@gmail.com

Margaret Mac Curtain (1929–2020)

Settlement was always important to Margaret Mac Curtain. As an historian, she tried to find out the details of the bitter family conflict that drove her father's family from Mount Collins, the Limerick village that poet Bernard O'Donoghue described in her poem "Pilgrims" as "A hilly village of narrow bridges / over a stony river," to a small freehold in Knockawarriga. As the daughter of a *cigire scoile* in the first generation of the Irish Free State, the family moved every four or five years around southwestern Munster. Aside from the years spent in her beloved Spa, north of Tralee, where she attended the Mercy Sisters' Moyderwell School, she yearned to be part of a settled community.



Photograph courtesy of Dr Michael Laffan, Professor Emeritus,
University College Dublin

Born in Cork in 1929, the family returned to the city in time for the children to attend University College Cork. To be a Mac Curtain in Cork in the 1940s was to be identified with the nationalist history of the city. Her father was a member of Cork's 1st Brigade of the IRA. Margaret took First Class Honors in English, Irish and History. She was awarded the Graduates' Gold Medal for her academic achievement and the Peel Memorial Award for her academic achievement and for her contribution to student life. With her Sliabh Luachra roots and her Ring Irish, she was elected President of *An Cumann Gaelach* and later the intercollegiate President of *An Comhchaidreamh*. As an undergraduate, she studied history with James Hogan. Like her mentor, Mac Curtain would also teach history, write history and make history.

After earning her Higher Diploma in Education from UCC, Mac Curtain entered the Dominican Novitiate in Kerdiffstown, Co. Kildare. She explained that her vocation was "a way of containing a developed sense of reflectiveness about the transcendent nature of reality." She was one of the last generation of Irish women who chose religious life.

She began her teaching career as Sister M. Benvenuta at Sion Hill, the Dominican secondary school in Blackrock, Co. Dublin. Assigned to teach history to senior students (as well as English and maths), she asked permission to study history at University College Dublin. She went to UCD after her day of full-time teaching where she earned her M.A. in Early Modern Irish History with a thesis about the Kerry Dominican Dominic O'Daly which she expanded into her Ph.D. which was awarded in 1963. Her research took her to archives in Rome during the heady days of Vatican II, to Madrid and Lisbon, research that required a knowledge of Irish, Latin, Tudor and Stuart English, Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese. She wrote her thesis and her dissertation by candlelight because the sisters' rooms in Sion Hill did not have electricity till the late 1960s. Lost for many years, her dissertation was published in 2007 as *Ambassador Extraordinaire. Daniel O'Daly (1595–1662)*. The text is currently being translated into Portuguese. In 1964, Mac Curtain was invited to join the faculty of the UCD History Department where she taught for thirty years. Almost immediately she established a reputation for academic integrity when she refused to allow John Charles McQuaid to review her notes for teaching the Counter Reformation. She said she answered to Rome not to the Archbishop of Dublin.

The decade of the 1970s was a decade of change for Mac Curtain. She returned from Rome and Vatican II and took back her given name and opted for subdued, secular clothes; however, Vatican II brought an end to traditional community life and its idealism and intellectual companionship. Sisters moved to smaller houses or to independent living. I believe during those years she found a compensatory community with the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement. Years later she spoke fondly of their conferences and field trips. She became President of the Group in 1977 and served until 1981. It

was the first of a number of elective offices. During her term as President of the Group, she led occupiers, on behalf of the Group, into the Wood Quay site in the failed efforts to preserve the remains of Viking Dublin.

Later in the decade, Mac Curtain was asked by her Order to be the Founding Principal of Ballyfermot Senior College, now the Ballyfermot College of Further Education. Her work with the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement with its multidisciplinary approach to settlement and to community helped prepare Mac Curtain to design innovative programs for an underserved community. Ballyfermot would be her most significant educational contribution, a contribution recognized when Dublin City University awarded her an honorary degree, her sixth, in 2015. When Mac Curtain finished her term at Ballyfermot and returned to Sion Hill, she was elected Prioress. When the Chairman of the UCD History Department reassigned her teaching duties, she successfully sought an interlocutory injunction from the High Court. Her success was a victory of her intellectual independence, but she was never promoted beyond college lecturer.

Mac Curtain said that her writing agenda in the 1990s would be devoted to church, state and writing women into Irish history – especially Irish women’s spirituality. After initial reluctance on the part of the Department, Mac Curtain introduced the study of women’s history to UCD and she served as one of the senior editors of Volumes IV and V of *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Literature*. She did not, however, abandon her interest in settlement. In 1991, RTE had a series of Thomas Davis Lectures on Irish Country Towns; Mercier Press published the talks. Mac Curtain’s lecture on Ennistymon, County Clare, reflects the multidisciplinary interest in place that she took from the Group. An unfinished project at the time of her death was a book-length study of Irish medieval nunneries; however, her essay “Late Medieval Nunneries of the Irish Pale” (Kilcullihan and Grace Dieu) for the *festschrift* in honor of her friend and settlement colleague Anngret Simms offers a glimpse of what her book would have offered its reader.

When her tenure as Prioress of Sion Hill was over, Mac Curtain moved to a small house in Blackrock until she returned to community life in Dun Laoghaire where she lived for ten years until an ulcerated leg required regular treatment and she moved to Santa Sabina House, the Dominican community’s nursing home in Cabra where she had been received into the Order. She lived at Santa Sabina for two years until her death on October 5, 2020.

Maureen Murphy
Professor Emerita
Former Director of the Irish Studies Programme
Hofstra University
Long Island
New York

Former Associate Director of the Yeats International Summer School in Sligo

Michael O’Hanrahan

Michael O’Hanrahan, our past President and Secretary, died on 20 February 2021. The lockdown robbed us of an opportunity to attend his funeral where we would have been able to sympathise with his family and have the opportunity to celebrate Michael’s remarkable contribution to the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement.



Michael’s involvement with the Group stretches back over three decades. I do not know in which year he first attended a GSIHS outing. It was probably Derry in 1989 or Ballyvaughan the following year, but he was certainly a well-established member by 1991 when he delivered the conference-opening lecture, ‘Introduction to Kilkenny’. In the following year, when difficulties arose around the organisation of our 23rd annual meeting, Michael stepped into the breach with the assistance of Kevin Whelan and Michael Gibbons, and organised the 1992 conference in Clifden. The Group was saved from extinction and Michael ensured its survival into the future by becoming Secretary.

During his period as Secretary from 1992 to 1999 the society functioned like a well-oiled machine. Michael clearly enjoyed the Society’s most demanding roll. He travelled widely, finding the most suitable accommodation for each year’s conference.

He became one of the few members of the society with a full grasp of our constitution, and enjoyed a place of honour at conference dinners. At Armagh in 2003, Michael was elected President. He was proud of the fact that he was the first person to be president of the group not to come from a university background, thus opening the path for others to follow. He served the group in that position during his three year term. I am grateful to Michael for bringing me onto the committee during his incumbency.

The Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement was extremely fortunate that Michael favoured this group with his boundless energy and intelligence. When you read about his life (see <https://www.kilkennypeople.ie>) it is a wonder that he had the time to do it. If you are like me, you felt that Michael O’Hanrahan belonged to us. How remarkable then to read that he was a founding member of a key London/Irish organisation in the 1950s, the backbone of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society and the Kilkenny Arts Week in the 1980s and 1990s. He even stood for election to the Offaly County Council (unsuccessfully, their loss!). He gave so much to society and to our Society throughout his life, always with the loving support of his elegant wife Mary and his five children. And Michael was old school in a truly delightful way. Once at a conference Michael was delayed at lunch waiting for his proper dinner. His wife Mary told me ‘Michael doesn’t do sandwiches’.

At our last dinner together in Dublin for our 50th anniversary conference I had the privilege to sit across the table from our founder, Professor Robin Glasscock, and our saviour, Michael O’Hanrahan. Most of the history of the society was encompassed by these two men. What a pleasure it was for all of us to have known Michael. At our next conference we can share our stories about him, he will be missed – but oh how much!

Matthew Stout
Dublin City University

Sickness and Settlement



Articles

Thomas C. Ivory
 (IRC Government of Ireland Scholar
 PhD candidate
 School of Archaeology,
 University College Dublin)
***The Medieval Hospital
 of St John the Baptist
 Newtown Trim, Co. Meath***

Introduction

The terms ‘hospital’ and ‘infirmery’ conjure up the concept of specialised medical care and cure in the modern mind, but in the middle ages the role played by such institutions was as much about caring for the spiritual welfare of the ill as it was caring for their physical needs, a care predicated on the salvation of the immortal soul. The medieval hospital was also a place where travellers / pilgrims could find a bed and a place to rest.

For those interested in a general starter history of the medieval hospital, one could read *The English Hospital 1070-1570* by Orme and Webster or *The Me-*

dieval Hospitals of England by Mary Rotha Clay; for those interested in more up-to-date reflections the writings of Carol Rawcliffe are very informative. For a general history of the medieval hospital in Ireland Gwynn and Hadcock’s *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland* has a section listing Hospitals and Hospices.

It would be unfair to think of the medieval hospital as primitive, as there was a concurrent tradition of leechcraft and herbology. Often these hospitals, although basic in our eyes, were places of sanctuary and care where the emphasis was simply different to that of our modern institutions – the overriding concern being primarily for the soul of the individual.

According to Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, pp 344–57) there may have been as many as 211 hospitals throughout the island, of which only a small number have extant remains. To date I have identified a possible 257 hospitals and this number does not include places where the name of a location alone suggests the presence of a hospital in the past, but is based on a combination of extant remains, written records and toponymy.



Photo: National Monuments Service

St John the Baptist Priory Hospital in Newtown Trim, Co. Meath (viewed from North).

St John the Baptist Hospital Newtown Trim

St John the Baptist Hospital in Newtown Trim is one of the best, if indeed not *the* best, extant example of a type of medieval hospital of its kind in Ireland. It is situated on the south side of the river Boyne, about a mile south-east of Trim, just across an old narrow four-arched bridge. Although the bridge has been rebuilt, Casey and Rowan (1993, p. 443) tell us part of it is late medieval. The bridge

spans the Boyne about 100 metres south of St Peter’s Cathedral and Priory. It is so narrow that on a recent visit we needed to step into one of the two alcoves on the bridge to let the single line of traffic pass. Dean Butler writing c.1854 (1978, p. 366) says that St John the Baptist was erected in the 13th century; Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, p. 215) quote, ‘In 1281 Walter, son of Alured the younger, made a grant of 40s annually: K (A).’ to this hospital.

Their reference, as indicated in their abbreviation list (p. 17), was taken from “King’s Collections’, MS., compiled by Dr. Madden, late seventeenth cen., and revised by Harris, NLI and TCD (generally as cited by Archdall)’. One wonders if the aforementioned Alured was the same person as Ailred de Palmer the wealthy merchant who founded St John the Baptist Hospital, Thomas Sreet in Dublin (another Fratres Cruciferi site), and later became its first master (McNeill 1925, pp 58–9). Hadcock (1961, p. 51) maintains that it was prior to 1225 that St John the Baptist was built. Although he cites some architectural features in the ruins to support his belief, he failed, unfortunately, to list them.

If it was built pre 1225, which would seem most likely, then it may be possible – even probable – that Simon de Rochfort was the patron of the Priory. Simon had moved to Newtown Trim when he was burnt out of Clonard by Ó Ciardha probably in retaliation for the killing of his son by ‘the English of Clonard’ in 1200 (Annals of the Four Masters, M1200.12). It was at Newtown Trim that Simon built his Cathedral of St Peter’s (Cogan 1862, p. 46) across the road from where the hospital is located. As I have stated the driving ethos in the medieval hospital at the time was the care of the soul, and as such this informs the architectural design and form of the hospital buildings and complexes. Most of the medieval hospitals in Ireland between 1169 and 1540, that is to say between the arrival of the Anglo-Normans and the Dissolution, were administered by the Church. These institutions were beginning to come closer to our understanding of hospitals, but still had some way to go to become the specialised institutions we understand today. Long before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans, Keating (the seventeenth-century historian) tells us of a house for the wounded situated in Eamhain called, *Broin Bhearg* (Keating [c.1634] 1908, pp 198–9). Keating was perhaps thinking of the legend of Princess Macha of the golden hair whose statue outside Altnagelvin Hospital in Derry is said to commemorate her establishment of one of the first hospitals in Ireland circa A.D. 300 at Emhain Macha. Whether this is fanciful or not we are aware that Gaelic society was driven by the laws and requirements of hospitality since Edel Bhreathnach tells us that a true king was to care for the weak (Bhreathnach 2014, pp 50–1). This ethos was synonymous with the idea of places of hospitality, places that the medieval person would consider hospitals. This medieval concept of the hospital is partly what explains the large number recorded by scholars in the past. This earlier understanding of hospital is why we need to appreciate what we mean by hos-

pital today and how they were viewed differently in the past. In fairness the leechcraft that was practiced at the time was more akin to herbology and lore than to medicine and science, although this statement may reflect my present-day bias. The Anglo-Normans brought with them a new concept of hospital – one with a strong element of care, probably informed by their experience on crusade, although an element of hospitality still existed, but it was still an understanding of hospitals which differs from ours. It was some of these Anglo-Normans, the military orders / hospitallers, who traced their origins to the crusades and the Holy Land that were most instrumental in the administration of hospitals in Ireland at the time.

Hospitaller orders

St John the Baptist Priory Hospital at Newtown Trim was run by the Fratres Cruciferi, a hospitaller order whose Irish congregation had their origins in Italy and the Holy Land. The Fratres Cruciferi were one of three hospitaller orders that came to Ireland at the time of the Anglo-Norman colonisation – the others being the far more widely known ‘The Order of the Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon’ (the Knights Templars); and ‘The Order of Knights of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem’, better known as the Knight Hospitallers. The Templars’ houses seem to have been mostly Frankhouses, lodging houses solely for the brethren while on their travels. The Knights Hospitallers ran hospitals in Ireland, like that at Kilmainham, but these, in the later stages at least, were more akin to corrodian institutions (sheltered accommodation), than our modern idea of hospital. This later use of these institutions makes it very difficult from an archaeological / architectural stance to ascertain their original forms. When one is looking at the medieval hospital one needs always to be aware of the dichotomy between our understanding of the idea of hospital and the medieval one, and to bear in mind the stronger element of hospitality in medieval cases. One also needs to be aware that these were dynamic institutions that changed form and purpose over the long period of time we are looking at.

The Fratres Cruciferi

The Cruciferi are a little-known order – their often-used motto partially explains the enigma that surrounds their order and its origins, ‘Love to be unknown and famous for nothing’ (Hayden 2013, p. 17). Although they are still in existence, they no longer have a presence on this island. However, during the medieval period, they had twenty-three sites in Ireland (Gwynn and Hadcock

1970, pp 210–16). The Crutched Friars or Croisiers in English, *Fratres Sanctae Crucis* in Latin, *Kruisbroeders* in Dutch, *Frères de Sainte-Croix* in French or the *Fratres Cruciferi* in Ireland, were all Canons Regular of St Augustine, and they appear to have developed as separate communities that shared the same roots. Hadcock (1961, p. 44) says of the Cruciferi who were active in Ireland, that they were Augustinian Hospitallers who were ‘of the same pattern as those in the Italian Congregation’ and that they were separate to their English counterparts.

The original form of St John the Baptist in Newtown Trim

Over the years with the exception of Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) and Gerald Lee (1996) who wrote on Leper hospitals in Ireland very little work has been done on medieval hospitals in Ireland. This is probably due to the lack of extant remains and that the documentation relating to the hospitals is so scarce and poor.

Luckily the footprint of one of the buildings that has remained at St John the Baptist in Newtown Trim is the church. Although not in its entirety, enough is left for us to extrapolate its original form. The church is one of the pivotal buildings in any monastic complex and from the position of the church we are able to identify the position of the other buildings using the claustral format. The church at St John the Baptist is oriented on the traditional east-west access and the space occupied by the nave and chancel is also identifiable on the ground. There are also extant four pillar bases in positions that would suggest that they were part of a rood screen. David Sweetman carried out what he termed a limited excavation in October 1981 and in the summer of 1984 during which he found the remains of what he interpreted as a rood screen and loft (Sweet-

man 1990/91). The rood screen is a feature in medieval churches that mimics the veil that divides the holy of holies in the temple at Jerusalem – the rood itself is the great cross that hangs above the screen and can be backed by a rood loft. Sometimes the rood loft can accommodate a small number of people or a choir but its original purpose was to hold candles to backlight the crucifixion scene. It is important to note that these screens seemed to be a symbolical barrier, as well as a physical one, restricting the laity; but in most cases the high altar was visible through the screens. The extant nave is very long and although the existing ‘extension’ (see figure 1 and figure 2 on page 4.) would appear to be of a later date than the original nave and chancel, its position in the complex would suggest that it may have replaced an existing structure. If so, what we may be looking at is the original site of the hospital building within the complex. We know that the care of the sick was predicated on the care of the soul and that one of the greatest medicine / foods for the soul was the Eucharist. Often the medieval hospital was arranged in such a way that the sick need not leave their beds to be able to attend the Eucharist. So, very possibly what we are looking at in Newtown Trim is a long nave where the sick were housed in a fashion similar to a monastic dormitory or infirmary, an architectural design that the *Fratres Cruciferi*, like all their hospitaller and ecclesiastical brethren would have been very familiar with. Francis Dollman (Dollman 1858, p. xiv) categorised the medieval hospitals in England into four, one of which is a Hall Infirmary style hospital. We have a different understanding of the term Hall today, so borrowing from Dollman I would suggest that Newtown Trim is very possibly an example of a Long-nave infirmary style hospital.

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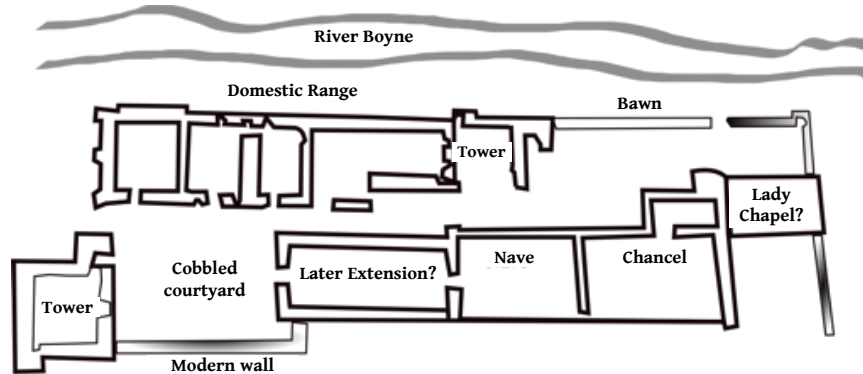
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National Monuments Service

Figure 1 St John the Baptist Priory Hospital from the West.



St. John the Baptist, Newtown Trim

Figure 2 Plan of St John the Baptist Priory Hospital adapted from Sweetman (1990/91).

Dr Geraldine Stout
(National Monuments Service)
**Social Distancing and
Cistercian Infirmaries**

Before all things and above all things care is to be had of the sick, that they be served in every deed as Christ Himself ... Let the sick themselves remember that they are served for honour of God and not to grieve the brethren who serve them with unnecessary demands.

(Rule of St Benedict, Ch. 36)

Introduction

We have all become accustomed to social distancing as a preventative measure against the spread of the Covid 19 virus during this pandemic. We have had to separate from friends and family. Separation within the community is not a new concept in the treatment of disease. It was a key feature of the layout of buildings associated with the sick from the earliest designs of infirmaries in medieval religious houses. The Rule of St Benedict instructed to 'let a separate room

be designated for the sick'. Accordingly, the infirmary block was always detached from the main conventual building. The lower order of lay brothers were further separated with their own infirmary located close to the west range, where they resided within the abbey complex.

Infirmary plans

The plan of St Gall (see figure 1 below) is an early template for the layout of medieval monasteries prepared by a monk for his abbot in the ninth century. This design of an entire monastery gave guidance to his abbot who was intending to undertake a re-build. What is remarkable about the plan is its correspondence to medieval abbey plans in the subsequent centuries. In particular, the plan shows an infirmary complex to the east of the main conventual buildings. This comprises two blocks for the infirmary and novices with a house for physicians at its north end and a house for blood-letting. The plan also shows an area of gardens set aside including a physic garden near the infirmary and lists sixteen medicinal herbs arranged in sixteen beds (Price 1982, 10–11).

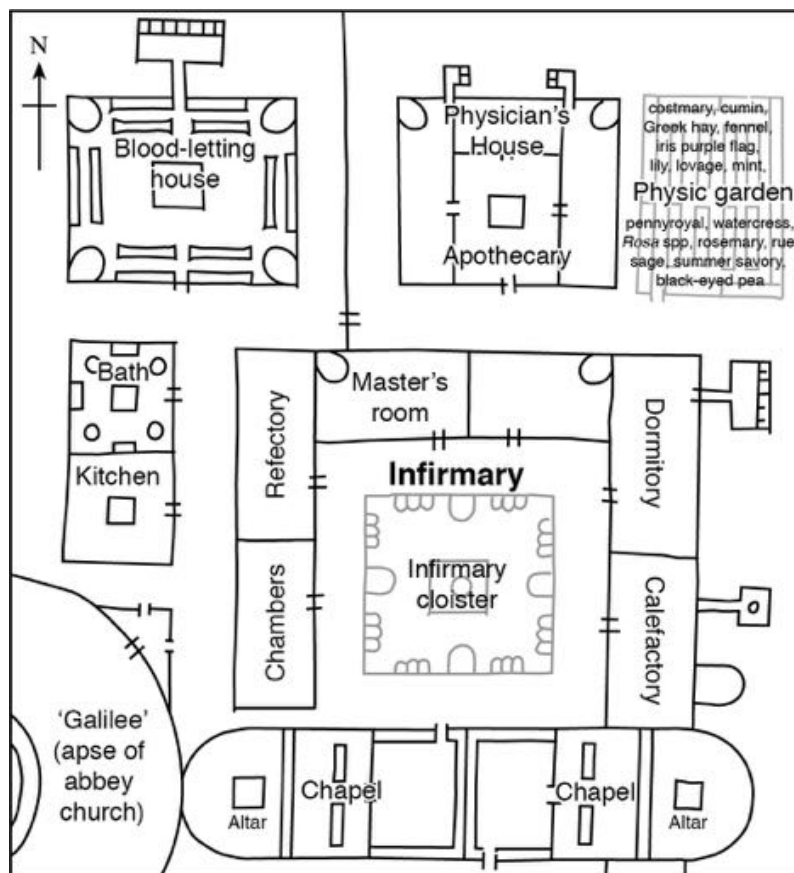


Figure 1 Detail from the plan of St Gall

Cistercian infirmaries were generally separated from the main cloister and accessed from the east range through a slype like that at St Mary's Abbey, Dublin. Infirmaries have been identified in at

least five medieval Cistercian abbeys in Ireland (see figure 2 on page 6). They are usually located to the south-east of the main cloister. The main reasons were practical, medical and spiritual (Bell

1998). The infirmary was a self-contained complex consisting of the hospital hall with ancillary rooms attached. The main structure was generally an aisled hall, with a kitchen, cellar, chapel and lodgings. The south-east wing at Mellifont Abbey contains a hall with aisles which is thought to have been the site of the medieval infirmary. The hall was divided into bays. Subsequently, the aisles were partitioned to form a row of cubicles like that at Holycross Abbey. At Mellifont, this was part of a building phase that witnessed the construction of the abbot's lodging and *necessarium* attached to the south-east of the dormer range. In the early part of the fifteenth century, the hall was broken up into rows of private chambers in

two storeys, often each having its own fireplace. At Kilcooly Abbey, Co. Tipperary, a rectangle detached building south-east of the dormer range, was probably the infirmary. South-east of the east range at Inch Abbey, Co. Down, is another long building with an oven at its south-end similar to the Kilcooly infirmary. The cloister walks to the south have disappeared, but foundations of the east and south ranges remain, as well as outlying buildings toward the river. These include an infirmary and a bakehouse with two ovens and a nearby well. The infirmary buildings at Graiguenamanagh also lie to the south-east of the main cloister (see figure 2 below).

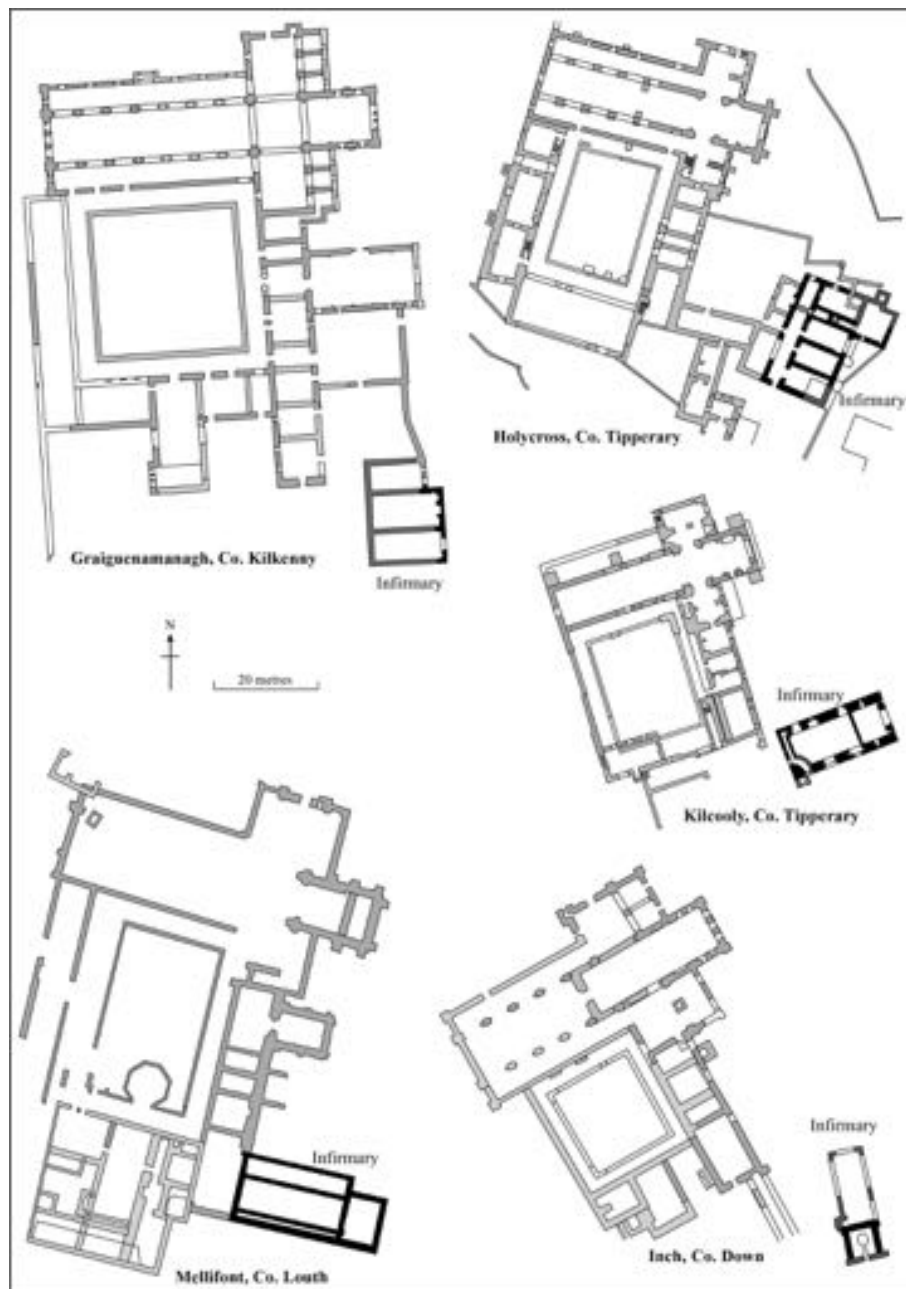


Figure 2 Comparative plans of infirmaries in Irish Cistercian abbeys

Physic garden

A garden was a normal adjunct of a monastic in-

firmary, and in some plans it is shown as partly planted with herbs. There is a local legend in

the Boyne valley that in order to join the Cistercian community at Mellifont Abbey, a monk had to bring a herbal cure and a herb with him. At least seven Irish Cistercian abbeys have gardens mentioned in the 1540 dissolution *extents* i.e. Abbeymahon, Bective, Dunbrody, Jerpoint, Mellifont, St Mary's, Dublin and Tintern (Stout and Stout 2016, 54–7). These would have, undoubtedly, included a physic garden. There are still remnants of medieval planting at some of these abbeys. At Jerpoint abbey meadow saffron crocus, used to cure gout, survives at the abbey. A flora survey of Bective abbey identified healing herbs on its walls and grounds (Foley 2016, 202–13). A medicinal garden has been reconstructed on the grounds of Grey Abbey.

Further evidence comes in the form of stone carvings depicting actual healing plants. These have been identified at the Cistercian abbey at Corcomroe, Co. Clare (Charles Nelson and Stalley 1989). The late Romanesque capitals at Corcomroe include at least five examples that appear to depict living plants. These were carved c.1205–10, half a century before naturalistic foliage came into vogue in Gothic sculpture. These include lily of the valley, which was important for its medicinal value. At the entrance to the presbytery there is a carving of an opium poppy which was used as an anaesthetic, and the east capital is carved with foxgloves, a remedy for heart complaints.

Cistercian medicine

The Cistercians had a reputation for their care of the sick, and their libraries included texts on medicine. Any member of the community who was sick or injured was sent to the infirmary, where he was tended to by the infirmarer and his helpers. There were detailed twelfth-century Cistercian regulations regarding the use of the infirmary space. The appropriate conduct of a Cistercian infirmary patient together with the duties of the infirmarer and his helpers were articulated in the Order's customary *Ecclesiastica Officia*. Those staying in the infirmary followed a less rigid way of life and were permitted better foods. The inhabitants of the infirmary were separated from the life of the abbey. This separation from the main cloister in Cistercian abbeys allowed for a relaxation of monastic discipline without disturbing the main body of the community. Patients were not allowed go to the abbey church. In 1262 it was also legislated that there should be a separate chalice for the sick. The ill could only talk to the infirmarer and to the cellarer, who served the food.

The Rule of St Benedict (Ch. 36) insisted that 'before all things and above all things care must be

taken of the sick, and let them be served by an attendant who is God fearing, attentive and concerned'. This was the infirmarer (or server of the sick), who was a monastic official of some prominence. The infirmarer had his own separate hall close to the Infirmary. His duties were laid down in the usages of the Order. He would have had at least one servant to assist him. He was to light a candle for matins and bring with him the necessary books from the daily recitation of the Office of Our lady. He was to ensure that each new patient had an eating bowl and a drinking flagon, and meat might be eaten by patients in the infirmary (Williams 1998, 251).

In addition to sick monks, the infirmarer would have cared for those recuperating from bloodletting, as well as older members of the community who required greater comfort and a more fortifying diet. According to the Rule of Saint Benedict, all monks except the weak and the sick were forbidden to eat the flesh of quadrupeds but monks who had undergone the periodical blood-letting usually ate meat for a few days, often in a hall set apart from the refectory for this purpose.

The customary of the Cistercian Order discusses the infirmarer's managerial duties in some detail, but says little about his medical knowledge. The infirmarer, and no doubt others in the abbey, was probably well-versed in herbal remedies and used herbs from the abbey's herb garden. He would also have administered medicinal compounds including '*pulvis vitalis*', a powder which was intended to promote vitality and strength, and an exotic powder against 'pestilence' (*pulvis pestilenciae*), which consisted of sanders wood, basil seeds, Armenian bole, cinnamon, dittany, gentian and tormentil roots, citron and sorrel seeds, pearls, sapphires and (the difficult to acquire) bone of a stag's heart (Cistercians in Yorkshire Project).

Bloodletting

The Plan of St Gall shows a blood-letting house (see figure 1 on page 5). Blood-letting was a regular feature of monastic life as a means of encouraging good physical and mental health (see figure 3 on page 8). The monks were routinely bled, in groups, as it was believed this kept them in good health. Bloodletting was a preventative and restorative treatment frequently administered. It was thought that this restored balance to the body, sharpened the senses and cleared the brain. Bloodletting in Cistercian abbeys, as in other religious houses, was a routine part of life. As a matter of course monks were bled several times a year, to keep them in optimum health, or so it was believed. The monks were bloodlet in batches at least four times a year – February, April, June and

September but there was to be no bloodletting at harvest, when everyone was needed to help in the fields, or on feast days when the entire community was expected to participate in all the services. Any member of the community who was ill might receive extra bleedings to restore his health. The practice of blood-letting was also a disciplinary tool. In the infirmary the disorder of the cosmos was mirrored in the tempestuous bodies of sick monks. The infirmary was the site where the disorder of the physical body was resolved. Monks were known to faint during the process or even die – such as the abbot O Mailbrenainn in Boyle Abbey who died in 1225 as a result of bloodletting

(AC, ALC, AFM). To help regain their strength one pound of white bread was allowed to them and for three days they were excused from reading, work and choir and might lie on their beds in the dorter or sit in the cloister or chapter house.

Conclusions

While it is now clear that bloodletting was counter-productive, the policy of segregating the sick from the well was sound medical procedure. Short of available vaccines, it remains the primary approach to disease control practised in our current difficulties.

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Figure 3 Manuscript illustration of blood-letting (British Library)

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***Ripple Effects: Engaging with
Ireland's Heritage of Holy Wells
during a Global Lockdown***

*'...Believe that a further shore is reachable from here.
Believe in miracles and cures and healing wells...'*

(The Cure at Troy, Seamus Heaney)

Introduction

'Sacred waters' and civilisation have been natural bedfellows for a long time. From antiquity, and across cultures, water has been associated with the representation of life, and was used as an allegory for fertility, nourishment, purification, reflection, motion, metamorphosis – even otherworldliness. From biblical floods, and baptisms by St John in the River Jordan, to the Delphic Oracle or Narcissus' obsession with his adoring reflection

in Greek mythology – the significance of water, particularly 'sacred water' has formed an integral element of religious observation and practice, for healing and wellness. Many have met their end in watery graves, and some of Europe's most spectacular Bronze and Iron Age hoards have been recovered from deep wet locales – especially in Ireland. The Loughnashade Horns (for example) were recovered from the site immediately adjacent to *Emain Macha* or Navan Fort, the ancient seat of Ulster. Water has served as the muse for a plethora of literary and poetic musings from W.B. Yeats to Seamus Heaney. It is the mainstay of many of Ireland's popular myths and legends, as found in the *Dindshenchas*, 'lore of notable places', dating to the 10th and 11th centuries, that attributes the sources of the Boyne and the Shannon to magical wells; in the *Ulster* and *Fenian Cycles*; in the myth of the *Salmon of Knowledge*; and in the tale of the *Children of Lir*. Its importance continues to echo through our modern health practitioners' continued suggestions to 'drink more water!' for our own wellness.



Photo: Rachel Tracey

Figure 1 Dungiven Priory's Wart Well

Around the globe, water has always played, and continues to play, a predominant role in our considered lifecycles, our tales from the cradle to the grave. Water transcends language, ethnicity, and religious creed. The cleansing and sa-

cred properties of water extend far beyond basic ablutions, to spiritual redemption, supernatural devotion, miraculous remedies, saintly devotion and prayer. Watery places, especially holy wells, have been seen as portals or gateways opening

into other worlds and underworlds, all ultimately bringing one closer to some higher power. People have found solace in water across the globe – from the sacred Hindu traditions of bathing in the River Ganges in India (to purify the body and soul), to present-day Marian pilgrimage to the healing grottos of Lourdes in the Pyrenees, or in the holy water fonts of Waterford’s Mount Melleray. Sacred, imbued bodies of water have long fascinated cultures and peoples the world over, from Herodotus in the fifth century BC, extolling the remedial magic waters of the mythical *Fountain of Youth* to the legends of the Lady of the Lake presenting the sword Excalibur to Arthur and transporting him to Avalon.

Well, Well, Well! – The What’s, Why’s and Where’s of Ireland’s Holy Wells

Holy wells are a phenomenon known from all over Europe, but there would appear to be a particular concentration in Britain and Ireland. Their origins are obscure. Debate lingers around arguments for possible pre-Christian – pagan – foundations, converted for Christian use, or as a form of modern ritual devotion arising in the Post-Reformation period, as covert continuance of suppressed Catholic religious practice (see Carroll 1999, Ray 2014, McCormick 2017 for further in-depth discussions).

Holy wells come in many forms. Typically, they take the form of naturally occurring ground springs, or pools, ponds, collections of water in bullaun stones or in hollows of rocks, or even crevices in trees. They can be very public destinations for pilgrims. Some wells are associated with former monastic or ecclesiastical sites, with many still retaining overtly religious connotations such as the holy well at the Rock of Doon near Kilmacrennan (10 km northwest of Letterkenny, Co. Donegal) or the Patrician Struell Wells near Saul / Downpatrick in Co. Down. They can also be incredibly private places, known mostly to local communities who often desire to keep them hidden, protected spaces. Many have a specific saintly devotion, or a neo-spiritual ‘New Age’ connection. Some have been afforded better protective infrastructure or decoration by those that visit them, such as surrounding walls, steps, religious statues (Ray 2014). They often have particular chemical compositions such as high levels of iron, magnesium or sodium chloride, which are known to be beneficial in treating a range of ailments such as eye irritations, skin abrasions, anaemia and gastrointestinal pains. For instance, St Olcan’s Well at Cranfield, on the shores of Lough Neagh in Co. Antrim, has a naturally occurring gypsum crystal or ‘amber stones’ locally said to be espe-

cially sought after to aid with pregnancy and to ensure safe childbirth. Different wells had various healing abilities either through their geochemical composition or saintly association, and people would travel to obtain the curative waters they needed. St Cooley’s well at Portaferry (Co. Down) (see figure 2 on page 11) was an excellent cleanser for infected eyes. The now stagnant water from Tobar Tiarnaigh, near Clontivren in Co. Fermanagh was sought for its remedial powers against hay fever and sinusitis.

In Ireland, wells associated with saints Patrick and Brigid are some of the most popular and are found across all four of the Provinces. For example, a quick search in The Placenames Database of Ireland (logainm.ie) for *Tobar Phádraig*, ‘Patrick’s well’, yields no less than 42 results. Many well sites often have ‘pattern’ day (patron saint’s feast day) infrastructure in place to support so called ‘rounds’ of stations such as saint’s beds (often old cross slabs), crosses, megalithic monuments, and a ‘rag tree’ (McCormick 2017, 70–71; Carroll 1999, 27). Rag trees, sometimes called ‘cloutie trees’ (especially in Scotland and the Isle of Man) or ‘wishing trees’ are usually located close to most holy wells. They are often hawthorn trees, but not exclusively so, and are adorned with anything from lengths of ribbon, strips of cloth, rosary beads, religious medals, even hospital admissions bracelets and at more than one well, plaster casts from broken arms and legs have been found attached to the trees. Depending on the curative property of the particular well, visitors would dip scraps of cloth into the water which they would use to rub over affected areas and then tie the cloth to the tree. This is the case at the ‘wart well’ at Dungiven Priory (Co. Derry / Londonderry) (see figure 1 on page 9). At this site, the wart well is a bullaun stone, attributed to Saint Patrick, who supposedly knelt on the stone, leaving a deep hollow. The traditional narrative, across the Anglo-Celtic isles, is that as the rag disintegrated, the cure would be given or prayers would be answered. Naturally, the local communities around Dungiven were outraged in 2017 to discover that the rags at the wart well tree had been removed, by a still unknown perpetrator – possibly in an attempt to tidy up the priory grounds, although both the local Causeway Council and the NI Department for Communities, responsible for maintaining the grounds, have both strenuously denied removing them, stating the cultural importance that rag trees have in our landscapes.

At other sites, visitors would collect the water in bottles to take home and leave a token attached to the nearby rag tree. At home, the water may

have been boiled and consumed, or dispatched to Irish communities around the globe. Holy wells are not simply for human use. For example, in addition to offering cures for excessive eating and drinking after Christmas and Easter, the Surfeit Well (*Tobairin a'dinigh*) in Rathdrought in Co. Cork

was a popular destination for farmers around the county and beyond, to obtain the well water, rich in magnesium, to treat sick livestock (The Schools' Collection, Vol. 314, p. 3 – National Folklore Collection, UCD).



Photo: Keith Lilley

Figure 2 St Coeys Eye Well, Portaferry

The Silencing of Holy Wells

Whilst Robins and Misstear (2000, 8) have previously estimated some 200,000 wells throughout the island of Ireland, approximately 3000 of these would be considered to be 'holy'. By comparison, there would appear to be some 2000 known holy wells in England, c.1700 in Wales and over 1000 in Scotland (Ray 2014). It is important to note however, that when we talk about Ireland's holy wells, there is great disparity between those represented in the north of the island and those of the south. Whilst just under 3000 sites are known from the Republic, only 187 are represented on the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record (NISMR). A reason why the holy wells of Ireland are less visible in the north than in other parts of the island may in part be due to differences in their recording and visibility in the local landscape. This leads us to contemplate how it is that some historic holy wells continue to have a presence while others have been forgotten or neglected. The continued veneration of wells locally is in part perhaps a major factor in this, but there are other issues. In the still nascent Northern Ireland, the survey of ancient monuments, conducted by the Ancient Monuments Advisory Council for Northern Ireland mentioned a deliberate omission of 'raths, standing stones, holy wells, ruins without architectural features, unless they are remarkable either for their historical associations or for their appearances' (Oliver Davies 1941, 35). This 'official' silencing of holy wells from archaeological enquiry has deeper roots, and begins to explain gaps on maps, and this we contend has much to do with the folkloric associations of holy wells perpetuated through their ritual and medicinal uses by local people.

The Ordnance Survey (OS) maps of Ireland still record holy wells, as 'named antiquities', and so it is that some modern sheets of the 1:50,000 scale Discovery Series (for Ordnance Survey Ireland) and Discoverer Series (for Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland) are peppered with symbols accompanied by the words 'Holy Well'. Great for the holy-well researcher and field-worker to locate the sites of holy wells, but at the same time disconcerting where large expanses of map sheets across the island are devoid of any mention of a holy well, and so we need to look a bit more closely at the historic and modern OS maps of Ireland and consider further how the information they show on holy wells was gathered and compiled.

The Hidden Heritage of Ireland's Holy Wells

In the early months of summer 2020, during our first period of COVID-19 lockdowns, the authors of this article – notably an historical geographer,

an historical archaeologist, and a historical linguist, all found themselves amongst like-minded enthusiasts of Irish holy wells. The ensuing *Hidden Heritage of Holy Wells* initiative was formed through a collaboration between the Heritage Hub at Queen's University Belfast and The Northern Ireland Place Name Project (also at QUB) alongside the Ulster Place-Name Society. As part of a summer of heritage-led outreach, and wishing to raise greater public awareness and appreciation of our holy wells, particularly in the north of Ireland, the initiative connected with Dr Celeste Ray (of the University of the South in Seawannee, Tennessee), who runs the *Holy Wells County-by-County Project* – a community-generated online platform where our Irish holy wells can be recorded in a singular standalone resource, combining landscape study, history, folklore and oral history (see figure 3 on page 13). In efforts to reach out to the wider public to engage, and moreover learn more about Ireland's holy wells, responses were and very much continue to resound overwhelmingly with the sentiment of 'oh, I do love a holy well!' What is it about holy wells that cause such fascination? And why, we must ask, if they are so fascinating, are so many of them hidden in our landscapes, covered in brambles and weeds, seemingly forgotten in our townlands and neighbourhoods? The reasons are plentiful: increased industrialisation, a lack of co-ordinated study, the passing of those who knew their stories, archaeological resistance, and language shifts that have obscured names that previously would have alluded directly to a well. Luckily many of our wells remain *imbéal an phobail*, literally 'in the mouth of the people', preserved in the memories and stories of local communities, and recoverable through exploration of local placenames, particularly during periods of lockdown when physical access to our landscape was massively restricted.

Conclusion

Today, while we have to grapple with our 'gaps on maps', an opportunity presents itself for those interested in reconnecting the anthropology and archaeology of holy wells in Ireland. Not seeing the folkloric aspects of holy wells as separate from the material aspects of their remains, but instead as integral, is key to what it is that gives these sites their character and appeal. The curative, health and healing qualities of our holy wells is a defining trait that makes a well special to those who visit it and remember it – indeed it is one of the common and universal characteristics of holy and sacred wells and watering places the world over, and as mentioned, this is not something that is singularly peculiar to Ireland. Without their stories and associations, wells have no depth. Our

task, now, is surely to keep these memories alive, to recover them where they have been lost, and to repopulate our maps with holy wells, filling in those gaps left by others.

Recording the curative and medicinal qualities of particular wells is as important as marking the site with a dot on a map. And here, the *Holy Wells County-by-County Project* (<https://ihwcbc.omeka.net>) provides us with a significant opportunity to do this for future generations, and so redress the ‘hidden heritage’ of holy wells that our maps and memoirs of the north of Ireland, particularly, have for too long forgotten. Searching out this

hidden heritage has itself ‘curative’ and healing benefits, connecting us to our roots, to localities, to memories and communities, for heritage is well-known today for its restorative and beneficial health qualities.

As Ireland continues to pull through this major health crisis with coronavirus in 2021, our reconnection with places and localities of the past has particular resonance, and importance, and holy wells, as part of our heritage landscape have a key role to play in this. The waters of holy wells still draw us, they invite us to contemplate and to reflect, on our past, our present and our futures.

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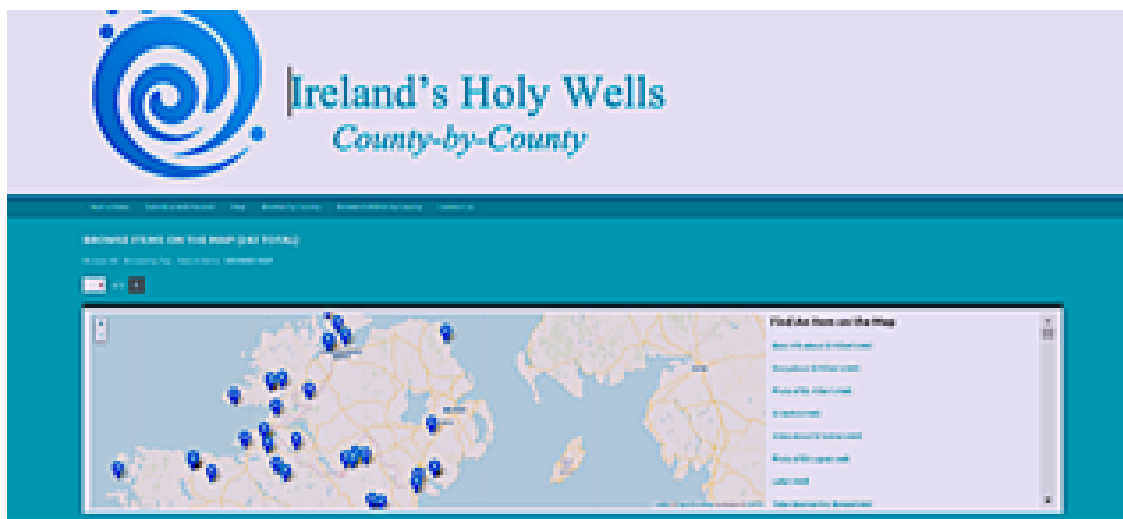


Figure 3 Holy Wells County By County Project

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The Geography and Impact of the Plague of 664

Introduction

Writing a narrative of Early Medieval Ireland is complicated by the lack of marker dates relating to political events. The ebb and flow of power makes it difficult to maintain that a single battle or death of a particular king had any long-term impact. Accordingly, the political history of Early Medieval Ireland conforms to Henry Ford’s (and many others) analysis of history as ‘just one damned thing after another’. Gearóid Mac Niocaill (1972), when faced with this challenge, struc-

tured his history of Ireland before the Vikings using plagues as marker dates. Two of his five chapters were ‘From plague to plague (549–666)’ and ‘From the great plague to the Vikings (666–c.800)’. Yet observations, like the following, show that Mac Niocaill had his own doubts about the significance of these plague events.

‘Blathmac and Diarmait, joint kings of Tara, died of the pestilence in 665, having seen several sons predecease them But their grip, and that of their adherents, on the kingship of Tara, seems to have been sufficiently firm to allow it to pass, without any notable hindrance, to Blathmac’s son Sechnasach’ (Mac Niocaill 1972, 107).

This paper examines the geography of this pandemic and seeks to assess the impact of the plague of 664–8.

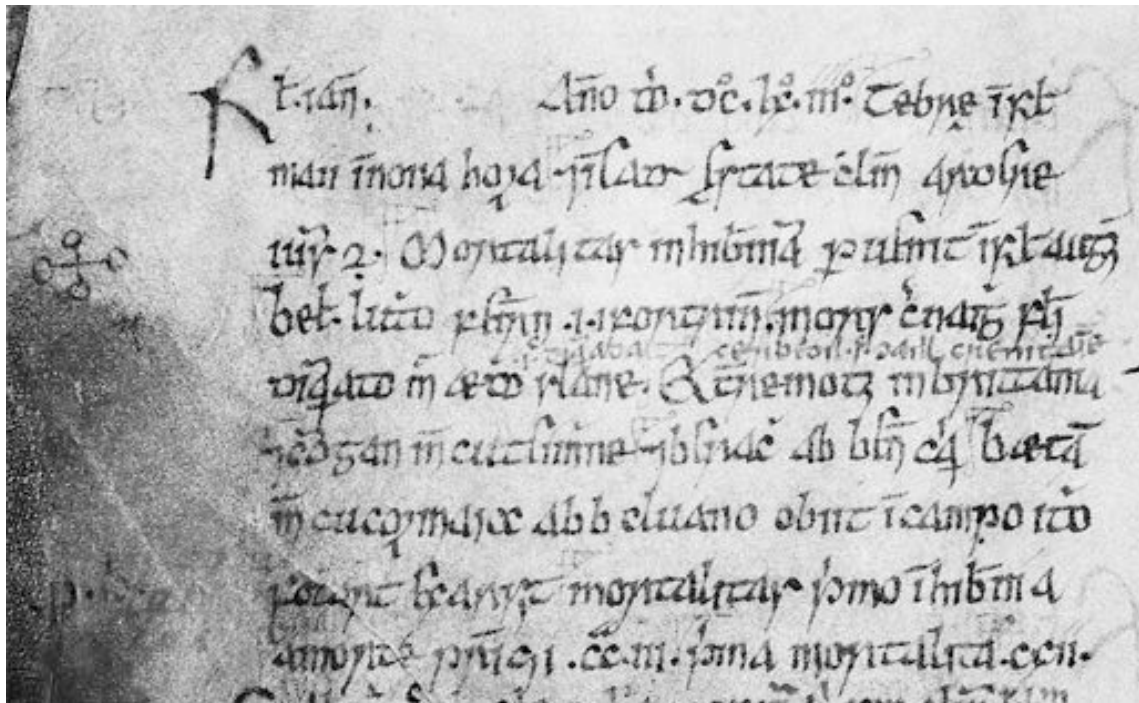


Figure 1 Extract from the annals of Ireland for 664. The cross on the left emphasises the tragedy of the ‘great mortality’.

Geography

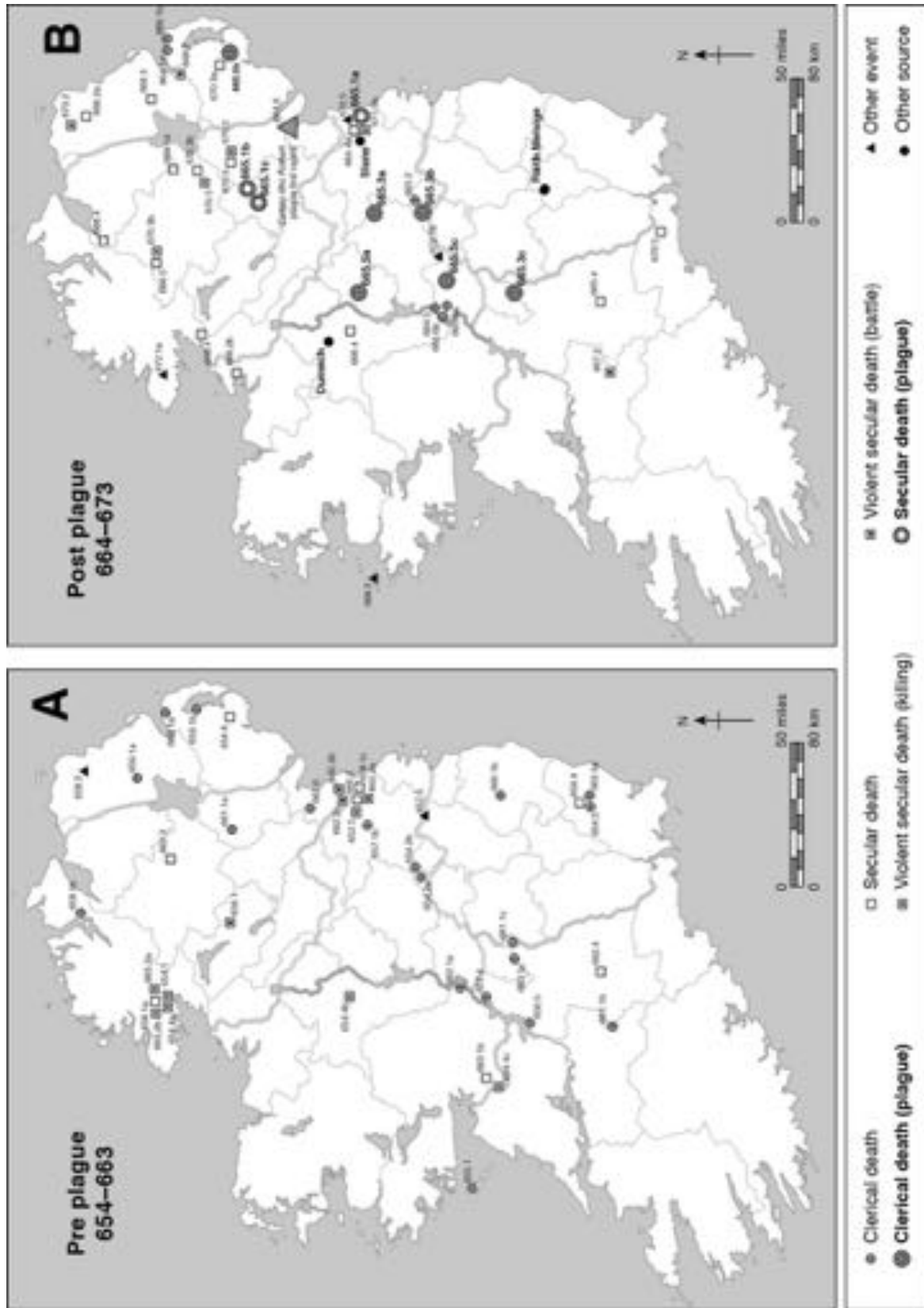
According to Adamnán’s Life of Saint Columba (Book 2, Chap. 47), the plague spread through Italy, France and Spain, Britain and Ireland, but did not penetrate into modern-day Scotland (Woods 2012). Bede records (Chap. 27) that the ‘pestilence’ first struck the south of Britain in 664, probably in May, and spread rapidly northwards: ... a sudden pestilence depopulated first the southern parts of Britain, and afterwards attacking the province of the Northumbrians, ravaged the country far and near, and destroyed a great multitude of men.

Three months later it was in Ireland, on 1st August, according to the Annals of Ulster. Bede wrote:

this plague prevailed no less disastrously in

the island of Ireland. Many of the nobility, and of the lower ranks of the English nation, were there at that time Among these were Ethelhun and Egbert ... in the monastery ... [of] Rathmelsigi [Garryhundon, nr Carlow, Co. Carlow], and having lost all their companions, who were either cut off by the plague, or dispersed into other places, were both seized by the same sickness, and grievously afflicted Ethelhun died the next night; but Egbert, throwing off his sickness, recovered and lived a long time after.

Recent studies have established that this was ‘blefed’ (bubonic plague) despite a scribe describing the pestilence as ‘buidhe chonail’ (jaundice) in later glosses in a much smaller hand (Grace 2018, 86) (see figure 1 above).



Deaths recorded in the Annals of Ulster 654-73. While the same number of deaths were recorded before and after the arrival of the plague, plague deaths and other activities show a marked north-eastern bias. Arguably, much of the south and west was unaffected by the outbreak.

The Annals of Ulster record that the plague first arrived at *Campo Itho Fothart*, or *Maigh Iotha Fothart* as it is termed in *Chronicon Scotorum* (Charles-Edwards 2006, i, 155). This place cannot be identified with certainty, but Forth in Co. Wexford is most commonly associated with the arrival of this disease. The hard-hit monastery of Ráith Melsige is where an early plague outbreak could be expected in the event of a Wexford landing. However, the geography of plague deaths in the Annals of Ulster and other references to the plague by Bede and Tírechán, shows a strong north-eastern distribution. Mide alone contains six of the eleven explicit references to plague fatalities, and this does not include the ‘natural’ deaths of three abbots of Clonmacnoise in 664–5. The northern distribution of plague deaths is also confirmed by silences in the Munster-based Annals of Inisfallen. News of the plague did not reach the compilers of this source until the following year: ‘AI666 [= 665] A great mortality’. Inisfallen’s only specific reference to a plague death is to Féichíne of Fore, 270km to the north-east. Other deaths, which the Annals of Ulster attributes to the plague, are not recorded as such in the Munster record. This provides a strong sense that the plague was a distant concern to those living in the south-west of Ireland. Should this be the case, a more likely location for the introduction of the plague into Ireland would have been the better-known Faughart near Dundalk Bay in modern Co. Louth (see figure 1B on page 15).

Impact

The mortality rate for the outbreak of 664 was very high in Britain. Half of the eight active bishops of England died (Maddicott 1997, 15). Tírechán’s account of Patrick’s time in Ireland provides us with the strongest evidence that the plague also had a devastating impact on the island of Ireland. He records that ‘many’ monasteries were hit by the plague to the extent that these weakened establishments were taken over by rival ecclesiastical authorities:

25 (2) [Patrick’s church at Tamnach] demanded nothing of the community of Dumech [Shankill, nr Elphin, Co. Roscommon] except their friendship only, but the community of Clonmacnoise claims them, as they hold forcibly many of Patrick’s places since the recent plague [*mortalitates nouissimas*] (see figure 2 on page 17).

It is difficult to quantify death rates in Ireland, but the Annals of Ulster give an indication of morbidity in pre-plague and post-plague years. In the ten years preceding the plague, forty deaths were recorded. These were evenly divided between twenty-four ecclesiastics (52%) and twenty-two royals (48%). Three-fifths of these recorded deaths were in the north and east (Mide, Ulaid and the territory of the Northern Uí Néill) (see figure 1A on page 15).

A comparable forty-one deaths were recorded in the first ten post-plague years. Accordingly, there is no evidence for excess mortality. There were, however, significant differences. Post-plague deaths were heavily biased towards royals. They comprised two-thirds (67%) of post-famine deaths against one-third (33%) belonging to the church. While only three of the royal deaths were attributed to the plague, the total of sixteen ‘natural’ deaths exceeds the ten ‘natural’ royal deaths of the pre-plague years. The focus of both death and violence shifted north-eastwards as the northern provinces accounted for five-sixths (83%) of recorded deaths in the decades following the plague’s arrival. The ratcheting-up of turmoil in this region could have been directly related to the hardship caused by the outbreak of plague.

Conclusions

This small sample from the Annals of Ulster establishes that the plague did not have as profound an impact on Ireland as the qualitative sources suggest. After all, the late-seventh century is the period in which the number of occupied ringforts reaches its maximum (Kerr and McCormick 2014, 498–9, fig. 11). Neither is there a discernible fall in farming activity (as demonstrated by pollen analysis) resulting from ‘this great mortality’ (Stout 2017, 19–22). There is nothing to suggest a sudden post-plague decline in the secular population. In economic terms, the sudden deaths of elderly, sometimes celibate, bishops and abbots had a limited impact on reproduction. Like the pandemic of our own time, the plague of 664 was, of course, a human tragedy. The loss of those held dear can be sensed in the ‘bottled-up’ recordings of the annalists. Yet the island thrived despite a recurrence of the plague in the 680s. This was, after all, Ireland’s ‘golden age’.

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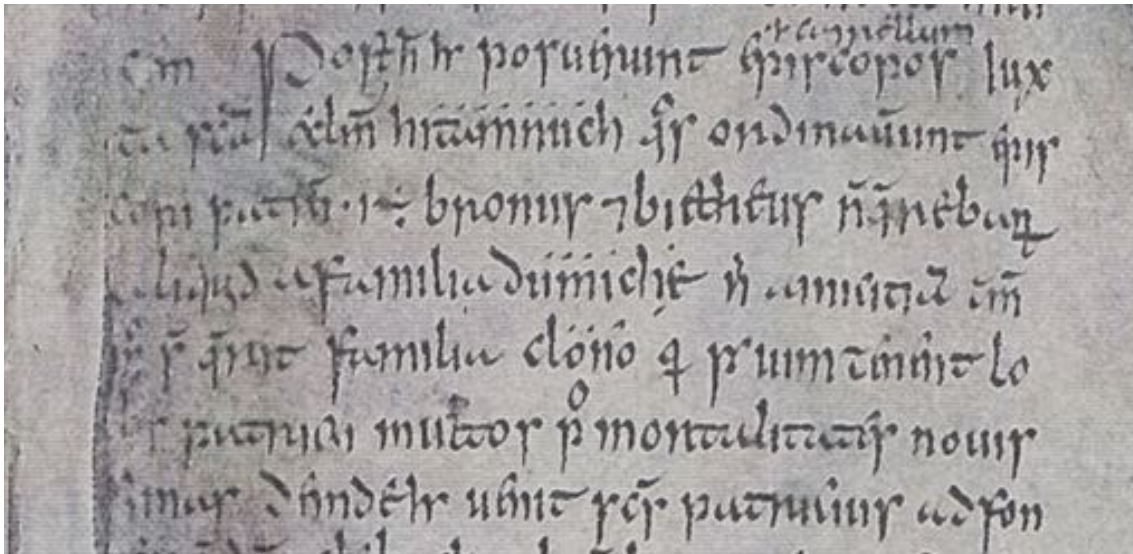


Figure 2 Tírechán's reference to the plagues in his text in the Book of Armagh.

Post h̄ h̄rporuerunt ^{.i. capellum} episcopos lux
 ta p̄c̄ā eccl̄m̄ h̄t̄āmn̄ūch̄ q̄r̄ ordinauerunt ep̄r̄
 copi pat̄r̄c̄i .i. b̄ronus 7 b̄retheus n̄ q̄ neban̄t
 aliquid a familia d̄ūm̄iche n̄ amicit̄ā t̄m̄
 n̄ f̄ q̄rit familia cl̄ōn̄o q̄ p̄ uim tenent lo
 cor pat̄r̄c̄i multos p̄ mortalitates nouis
 simas

Post haec autem posuerunt ^{.i. cairellum} episcopus iuxta sanctam eclessiam hi Tām̄nūch̄, quos or
 dinauerunt episcopi Patricii, id est Bronus et Bi[e]theus; non quaerebant aliquid a
 familia Dūm̄iche n̄ n̄ amicitiam tantummodo, sed quaerit familia Clōn̄o, qui per uim
 tenent locos Patricii multos post mortalitates nouissimas.

Pre Plague

Church (OS spelling) or kingdom	Province	Victim	Cause of Death	References
Cenél Conaill	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Killing	U654.1 The killing of Conall son of Mael Cobo i.e. by Diarmait son of Aed Sláine.
Clonard, Co. Meath	Mide	Clerical death	Natural	U654.2a Bishop Colmán moccu Telduib, abbot of Cluain Iraird, died.
Clonard, Co. Meath	Mide	Clerical death	Natural	U654.2b Oiséne the Tall, abbot of Cluain Iraird, died.
Ferns, Co. Wexford	Laigin	Clerical death	Natural	U654.3 Do-Chua of Luachair, abbot of Ferna, rested.
Cenél Conaill	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Killing	U654.4a The killing of Fergus son of Domnall.
Uí Briúin Aí	Connaught	Secular death	Killing	U654.4b The killing of Fergusa son of Rogailnech.
Kilmacduagh	Connaught	Secular death	Killing	U654.4c The killing of Aed of Bethra.
Downpatrick	Ulaid	Secular death	Natural	U654.6 Death of Aed Rón son of Mael Cobo.
Aran Island, Co. Galway	Connaught	Clerical death	Natural	U655.1 Nem moccu Bim rests.
Cenél Loegaire	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Battle	U656.1 The battles of Cumascach son of Ailill, in which he fell. Crunnmael son of Suibne was victor.
Uí Cheinnselaig	Laigin	Secular death	Natural	U656.4 Death of Crunnmael Erbolg son of Rónán, king of Laigin.
Terryglass, Co. Tipperary	Mumu	Clerical death	Natural	U656.5 Death of Mael Aichthein of Tír dá Glas.
Ardraccan, Co. Meath	Mide	Clerical death	Natural	U657.1b Death of Ultán moccu Conchobair.
Lorrha, Co. Tipperary	Mumu	Clerical death	Natural	U657.4 Death of Cellcéne of Lothra.
Cenél Conaill	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Natural	U658.1a Death of Cellach son of Mael Cobo.
Othan Mór	Northern Uí Néill	Clerical death	Natural	U658.1b Death of Cellach son of Sárán or Rónán.
Unidentified	Unidentified	Clerical death	Natural	U658.1c Death of Fiachra Telnán.
Unidentified	Unidentified	Clerical death	Natural	U658.1d Death of Blathmac son of Rónán son of Colum.
Unidentified	Unidentified	Secular death	Natural	U658.2b Death of Fergal son of Domnall.
Unidentified	Unidentified	Secular death	Natural	U658.4 Tómán son of Taithéne dies.
Connor, Co. Antrim	Ulaid	Clerical death	Natural	U659.1a Dimma Dub, bishop of Condaire died.
Nendrum, Co. Down	Ulaid	Clerical death	Natural	U659.1b Cuiméne, bishop of Naendruim died.
Síl nÁedo Sláine	Mide	Secular death	Natural	U659.1c Dúnchad son of Aed Sláine died.
Unidentified	Unidentified	Secular death	Killing	U659.1d The killing of Orc Doith son of Sechnusach.
Glendalough, Co. Wicklow	Laigin	Clerical death	Natural	U660.1b Colmán of Glenn dá Locha rested.
Síl nÁedo Sláine	Mide	Secular death	Natural	U660.2 Death of Echaíd son of Blathmac
Armagh, Co. Armagh	Northern Uí Néill	Clerical death	Natural	U661.1a Tóiméne son of Rónán, bishop of Ard Macha died.
Emly, Co. Tipperary	Mumu	Clerical death	Natural	U661.1b Conaing grandson of Dant, abbot of Imlech Ibar died.
Clonfert-Mulloe, Co. Laois	Mumu	Clerical death	Natural	U661.1c The sage Laidcnén son of Baeth Bannach died.
Clonfert, Co. Galway	Connaught	Clerical death	Natural	U662.1a Cuiméne the Tall rested in the 72nd year of his age, sage, fell asleep.
Unidentified	Unidentified	Clerical death	Natural	U662.1b Sárán grandson of Critán, sage, fell asleep.
Síl nÁedo Sláine	Mide	Secular death	Battle	U662.2a The battle of Ogoman in which fell Conaing son of Congal. (Blathmac son of Aed, Diarmait's adherent, was defeated).
Ciannachta	Mide	Secular death	Battle	U662.2b The battle of Ogoman in which fell Ultán son of Ernaire, king of Ciannachta. (Blathmac son of Aed, Diarmait's adherent, was defeated).
Ciannachta	Mide	Secular death	Battle	U662.2c The battle of Ogoman in which fell Cenn Faelad son of Gerthide. (Blathmac son of Aed, Diarmait's adherent, was defeated).
Uí Tuitre	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Natural	U662.3 Mael Dúin son of Furudrán son of Bécce died.
Eóganacht Chaisil	Mumu	Secular death	Natural	U662.4 Maenach son of Fingen son of Aed Dub son of Crimthann son of Feidlimid son of Aengus son of Nad Fraích, king of Mumu, died.
Ciannachta	Mide	Secular death	Killing	U662.5 The killing of Mael Fuataig son of Ernaire.
Louth, Co. Louth	Northern Uí Néill	Clerical death	Natural	U662.6 Scanlán, abbot of Lugmad, rested.
Bangor, Co. Down	Ulaid	Clerical death	Natural	U663.1a Repose of Ségán moccu Cuinn, abbot of Bennchor.
Uí Fiachrach Aidni	Connaught	Secular death	Natural	U663.1b Death of Guaire of Aidne.
Cenél Conaill	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Killing	U663.2a The killing of the two sons of Domnall son of Aed i.e. Conall.
Cenél Conaill	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Killing	U663.2b The killing of the two sons of Domnall son of Aed i.e. Colcu.
Ferns, Co. Wexford	Laigin	Clerical death	Natural	U663.5a Tu-Enóc son of Finntan, abbot of Ferna, rested.
Unidentified	Unidentified	Clerical death	Natural	U663.5b Bishop Indercach, rested.
Roscrea, Co. Tipperary	Mumu	Clerical death	Natural	U663.5c Bishop Dímma, rested.

Post Plague

Church (OS spelling) or kingdom	Province	Victim	Cause of Death	References
—		Event	Plague	U664.2 The plague reached Ireland on the Kalends 1st of August.
Síl nÁedo Sláine	Mide	Secular death	Natural	U664.4a Death of Cernach son of Diarmait son of Aed Sláine son of Diarmait Cerebél son of Conall of Cremthann.
Unidentified	Unidentified	Secular death	Natural	U664.4c Comgán moccu Teimni, rested.
Bangor, Co. Down	Ulaid	Clerical death	Natural	U664.4d Berach, abbot of Bennchor, rested.
Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly	Mide	Clerical death	Natural	U664.5 Baetán moccu Conmaicc, abbot of Cluain, died.
Faughart, Co. Louth	Northern Uí Néill	Event	Plague	U664.6 In Mag Itha of Fotharta the plague first raged in Ireland. From the death of Patrick 203 years, and from the first mortality 112 years.

Síl nÁedo Sláine	Mide	Secular death	Plague	U665.1a The great mortality. Diarmait son of Aed Sláine died i.e. of the buide Chonaill.
Mugdoma	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Plague	U665.1b The great mortality. Blamac son of Mael Dúin, died i.e. of the buide Chonaill.
Mugdoma	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Plague	U665.1c The great mortality. Mael Bresail, son of Mael Dúin, died i.e. of the buide Chonaill.
Clonard, Co. Meath	Mide	Clerical death	Natural	U665.2 Ultán son of Caunga, abbot of Cluain Iraird, died.
Fore, Co. Westmeath	Mide	Clerical death	Plague	U665.3a The falling asleep—from the same pestilence i.e. the buide Chonaill—of Féichéne of Fobar.
Clonard, Co. Meath	Mide	Clerical death	Plague	U665.3b The falling asleep—from the same pestilence i.e. the buide Chonaill—of Ailerán the leamed.
Roscrea, Co. Tipperary	Mumu	Clerical death	Plague	U665.3c The falling asleep—from the same pestilence i.e. the buide Chonaill—of Crónán son of Silne.
Cashel	Mumu	Secular death	Natural	U665.4 Cú cen Máthair son of Cathal son of Aed son of Cairpre son of Crimthann, king of Mumu, dies.
Tethba	Mide	Clerical death	Plague	U665.5a Blamac of Tethba, bishops and abbots, and innumerable others, died.
Down, Co. Down	Ulaid	Clerical death	Plague	U665.5b Aengus of Ulaid, bishops and abbots, and innumerable others, died.
Lemanaghan, Co. Offaly	Mide	Clerical death	Plague	U665.5c Manchán of Liath, bishops and abbots, and innumerable others, died.
Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly	Mide	Clerical death	Natural	U665.6a Colmán Cas, abbot of Cluain Moccu Nóis, fell asleep.
Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly	Mide	Clerical death	Natural	U665.6b Cuiméne abbot of Cluain Moccu Nóis, fell asleep.
Cenél Conaill	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Natural	U666.1 Death of Ailill Flann Esa, son of Domnall son of Aed son of Ainmire.
Cruithin	Ulaid	Secular death	Natural	U666.2a Mael Caich son of Scannal, of the Cruithin, died.
Cenél Cairpri	Connaught	Secular death	Natural	U666.2b Mael Dúin son of Scannal, king of Cenél Cairpri, died.
Cruithin	Ulaid	Secular death	Natural	U666.3 Eochaid Iarlaithe, king of the Cruithin, dies.
Mag Aí	Connaught	Secular death	Natural	U666.4 Dub Innrecht son of Dúinchad, king of the Uí Briúin of Mag Aí, dies.
Uí Fiachrach Aidni	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Natural	U666.5 Death of Cellach son of Guaire.
—		Event	Plague	U667.1 The plague still in Ireland.
Uí Fhidgeinti	Mumu	Secular death	Battle	U667.2 The battle of Áine between the Araid and the Uí Fhidgeinti, in which Eógan son of Crunnmael, fell.
—		Event	Plague	U668.1 The great plague.
Dál Riata	Ulaid	Secular death	Battle	U668.2 The battle of Fertas between the Ulaid and the Cruithin, in which Cathusach son of Luirgéne fell.
Derry city	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Natural	U668.4 Fergus son of Muiccoid died.
Bangor, Co. Down	Ulaid	Clerical death	Natural	U669.1b Death of Critán, abbot of Bennchor.
Uí Thuirtri	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Natural	U669.1d Death of Mael Fothartaig son of Suibne, king of Uí Thuirtri. Cenn Faead sang: 1] No dearer to me 2] Is one king rather than another 3] Since Mael Fothartaig was taken 4] In his shroud to Daire.
Unidentified	Unidentified	Secular death	Killing	U669.3 The killing of Mael Dúin son of Maenach.
Uí Breasail	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Killing	U670.2 The killing of Mael Dúin grandson of Rónán.
Dál Fiatach	Ulaid	Secular death	Natural	U670.3a Death of Blamac son of Mael Cobo.
Uí Fiachrach Aidni	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Killing	U670.3b The killing of Cuanu son of Cellach.
Uí Thuirtri	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Killing	U670.5 The killing of Bran Finn son of Mael Fothartaig.
Uí Breasail	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Natural	U670.6 Death of Dúinchad grandson of Rónán.
Unidentified	Unidentified	Secular death	Natural	U671.2 Fergus son of Crunnmael dies.
Síl nÁedo Sláine	Mide	Secular death	Killing	U671.3a The killing of Sechnusach, son of Blamac, king of Temair, at the beginning of winter. ... Dub Dúin, king of Cenél Cairpri, killed him.
Déise	Mumu	Secular death	Natural	U671.3b Bran Finn son of Mael Ochtraig dies. This could be a repeat of U670.5
Unidentified	Unidentified	Secular death	Natural	U672.3 Death of Cumascach son of Rónán.
Dál Riata	Ulaid	Secular death	Killing	U673.2 The killing of Domangart son of Domnall Brec, king of Dál Riata.
Uí Thuirtri	Northern Uí Néill	Secular death	Natural	U673.3b Cormac son of Mael Fothartaig, dies.

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.

Our ancient landscapes: prehistoric rock art in Ireland
Clare Busher O'Sullivan
(Kilkenny: The Heritage Council, 2020. 28p. Illus.)

Rock art in Ireland occurs in clusters throughout the island in Carlow/Wicklow, Louth/Monaghan, Fermagh and Donegal. The densest concentration is found in the Cork/Kerry region. It has generally been preserved in rural landscapes, often in open valleys or the foothills of mountains and is almost always found in close proximity to a water source. Clare Busher O'Sullivan explores what the art form signifies and how it can be protected. This short booklet is also available as a free download from the Heritage Council website. (Heritagecouncil.ie/publications)

Mapping death: burial in late Iron Age and early medieval Ireland
Elizabeth O'Brien

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. [320p.] Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781846828591. €55)

Burial practices that can be identified from the Irish archaeological record of the late Iron Age (c. 200 BC–AD 400) and early medieval period (c. AD 400–800) are discussed in this study. Topics covered include the transition from cremation to inhumation; re-use of ancient ancestral burial places; funeral feasts and grave goods; mobility of people within and into Ireland; the exceptional burials of some women; the cessation of burial of Christians among their ancestors; and burial in early Church cemeteries. Sources used include archaeological excavation evidence; ¹⁴C (radiocarbon) dating evidence; strontium and oxygen isotope evidence for movement of peoples; and osteo-archaeological evidence. Archival sources for the portrayal of death in Irish hagiography, penitentials, laws and canons compiled during the seventh and eighth centuries are also considered.

In the vale of Tralee: the archaeology of the N22 Tralee bypass

Edited by Patricia Long, Paul O'Keeffe and Isabel Bennett

(TII Heritage, 9)

(Dublin: Wordwell, 2020. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781911633198. €25)

The N22 Tralee Bypass traverses a rich cultural landscape and the serendipity associated with the archaeological study of new road development sites means that diverse topics are discussed in these essays. The changing landscape in the hinterland of Tralee from ancient dense woodlands to fields is considered, using wood, charcoal and plant remains recovered from excavations, while evidence for the improvement and enclosure of fields in more recent centuries is also noted. There are reports on prehistoric farmers who

built one of the region's first houses in Manor East, and a prehistoric community who constructed a ceremonial avenue of timber posts in Ballingowan. Evidence for the arrival of the first metalworkers in the Lee Valley is discussed, and some early burials are interpreted. Traces of domestic houses from the early Christian era were found at Knockawaddra and Ballingowan, while abandoned cottages of 19th-century date at Lismore were also examined. Books in this series can also be read on the TII website. <https://www.tii.ie/technical-services/archaeology/publications/tii-heritage/>

Around the Bay of Dundalk: archaeological investigations along the route of the M1 Dundalk western bypass
Shane Delaney, David Bayley and Jim McKeon

(TII Heritage, 10)

(Dublin: Wordwell, 2020. Illus. Pbk. ISBN: 9781911633211. €25)

Archaeological investigations on the M1 Dundalk Bypass were undertaken in 2002–2004 and were principally carried out by Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd with supplementary work by Aegis Archaeology Ltd. Among thirty-four excavated archaeological sites discussed in this Transport Infrastructure Ireland report, highlights include a Neolithic ceremonial site at Balrigan, a complex Bronze Age cemetery at Carn More, an early medieval cemetery settlement at Balrigan, souterrains at Newtownbalrigan and Tateetra, and an Anglo-Norman earthwork castle on Fort Hill.

Kings of Aileach and the Vikings, AD 800–1060

Darren McGettigan

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. [192p.] Hbk. ISBN 9781846828362. €24.95)

The kings of Aileach came to prominence in the north of Ireland c. AD 800, just as the first Viking fleets began to raid the coasts of Ulster. Viking activity in this area followed a similar pattern to raiding activity elsewhere on the island. But it began to diverge after 866 when Áed Findliath, a high-king of Ireland from the Cenél nEógain dynasty, destroyed Scandinavian settlements in what is now County Antrim. The Cenél nEógain may initially have allowed Viking strongholds to survive further south in Ulaid territory at Strangford Lough and Carlingford, and later on also at Ruib Mena on Lough Neagh. However, these longphuir too were eventually destroyed by the Irish of the north of Ireland. One recent review of this book has reminded us that there is uncertainty as to whether early kings of Aileach were inaugurated at the stone fortress of *Grianán Ailigh* in north-east Donegal, or slightly further east on an elevated site in the townland of *Aileach Mór* (Elaghmore), perhaps beneath the remains of Elagh castle. Will we ever know?

Early Irish sculpture and the art of the high crosses

Roger Stalley

(London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art (distributed by Yale University Press), 2020. xv, 248p. illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781913107093. £40)

This beautifully illustrated book is a study of the art, cultural context, patronage and technical production of early Irish high crosses. It places particular emphasis on the work of the early tenth-century 'Muiredach Master' the sculptor responsible for some of the best examples of Irish high crosses, including those at Monasterboice, Clonmacnoise, Duleek, Durrow and Kells. Stalley challenges some of the accepted interpretations of these exceptional examples of medieval sculpture.

Monastic Europe: medieval communities, landscapes, and settlement

Edited by Edel Bhreathnach, Malgorzata Krasnodebska-D'Aughton and Keith Smith

(Turnhout: Brepols, 2019. xx, 553p. Hbk. ISBN 9782503569796. €75)

Monasticism became part of European culture from the early period of Christianity and developed into a powerful institution that had a profound effect on society and on the landscape. The essays in part two of this interdisciplinary collection address the role of monasticism in shaping landscapes and settlement patterns. Geographically the discussion ranges from Ireland, Scotland and Wales to Romania and the Balkans, and from Scandinavia to the Iberian Peninsula. There are essays of Irish interest by Edel Bhreathnach on 'The Nature of Pre-'Reform' Irish monasticism', Finola O'Carroll on 'The Blackfriars preachers, Trim, Co. Meath and the legacy of Geoffrey de Geneville', and Tracy Collins on 'Transforming women religious? Church reform and the archaeology of female monasticism in Ireland'.

Settlement change across medieval Europe: old paradigms and new vistas**(Ruralia 12, 2019)**

Edited by Niall Brady and Claudia Theune

(Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2019 (distributed by Oxbow Books). 446p. illus. Hbk. 9789088908071 £195; Pbk. ISBN 9789088908064. £70)

Climate change, demographic, technological and economic changes, and improved agricultural husbandry systems are among the influences on settlement in medieval Europe discussed in these essays. Changes in ideology within society and among principal groups, such as secular and ecclesiastical bodies, as well as the impact of politics and warfare, are also considered in the context of settlement change. These factors had profound spatial, economic and social impacts on the environments, landscapes and habitats evident at micro-, meso- and macro-levels. They affected how land was worked, how it was organised, and the nature of buildings and rural complexes (homesteads, work buildings, villages, monasteries, towns and landscapes).

Among the 36 papers in this volume (proceedings of an international conference held in Kilkenny), there are four relating to Ireland, by Niall Brady on deserted

settlements in later medieval Ireland, Ian Doyle and Tadhg O'Keeffe on the deserted medieval borough of Newtown Jerpoint (Co. Kilkenny), Anne-Julie Lafaye on Augustinian friaries in Mayo and Sligo, and Breda Lynch on change in the Wexford countryside. Priced for well-funded institutions.

Medieval rural settlement. Britain and Ireland, AD 800–1600

Edited by Neil Christie & Paul Stamper

(Windgather Press, 2021 (distributed by Oxbow Books). 304p. illus. ISBN 9781911188674, £25)

This book is intended to be the flagship publication of the British Medieval Settlement Research Group (MSRG) and offers systematic appraisal of sixty years' work across the whole field of medieval settlement, designed to inspire the next generation of researchers. The essays reassess the origins, forms and development of medieval rural settlement in Britain and Ireland from AD 800 to 1600. Land use, economics and population are considered, drawing on evidence from archaeological excavations and surveys, historical geographical analysis and documentary and place-name study. Part I comprises papers exploring the history of medieval rural settlement research in Britain and Ireland, the evolving methodologies, the roots of the medieval landscape and the place of power in these settlements and landscapes. Part II presents regional and national reviews and notes future research needs. A final section provides guidance on how to research and study medieval rural sites, and there is a comprehensive bibliography.

Gaelic Ulster in the Middle Ages: history, culture and society**(Trinity Medieval Ireland series, 4)**

Katharine Simms

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. 552p. Hbk. ISBN 9781846827938. €65)

Drawing on a lifetime of research this is an authoritative account of medieval society in Gaelic Ulster. The first part of the book provides a detailed account of the history of Ulster from the eleventh to the sixteenth century, in the context of Irish and European history. The second part is thematic and Simms analyses many specific aspects of medieval Gaelic society with chapters devoted to chieftains, churchmen, scholars, warriors, elite women, and the everyday life of the people.

A twelfth-century royal grant of Tigernán Ua Ruairc in the Book of Kells

Denis Casey

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. 58p. Pbk. ISBN 9781846828584. €9.95)

Tigernán Ua Ruairc made a substantial grant of land in Meath (from Dulane to Slane) to the church at Kells, and the property transaction was recorded in the renowned illuminated gospel book known as the Book of Kells. In this short book Denis Casey shows how the donation gave the king political and military advantages and discusses the wider context of property-related transactions involving medieval Irish kings and the church.

Athassel Priory and the cult of St Edmund in medieval Ireland

Francis Young

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. [192p.] Hbk. ISBN 9781846828461. €50)

In Ireland, the cult of St Edmund, king and martyr (d.869), was among the saints' cults associated with Anglo Norman settlement. Athassel priory in County Tipperary was at the centre of the cult of this English royal saint. The priory possessed a miraculous image of the saint that drew pilgrims to Athassel. Incidentally, the author suggests that the spread of the forename Éamon in fifteenth-century Ireland is one indication of the impact of the cult.

Journeys of faith: stories of pilgrimage from medieval Ireland

Louise Nugent

(Dublin: Columba Press, 2020. 352p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781782183723. €26.95)

This book looks at medieval pilgrimage and its modern legacy in the Irish landscape and in popular local traditions. It is written for the general reader, and the discussion spans many centuries. The book is well illustrated in colour throughout with the author's own original photographs together with a judicious selection of museum artefacts and other pilgrimage-related images from Ireland and elsewhere. Documentary evidence is also used, but the author seems more at home when interpreting the evidence of the landscape. Evocative photographs are the most appealing feature of this overview of modern Irish pilgrimage traditions and aspects of their medieval counterparts.

The town in medieval Ireland in the light of recent archaeological excavations

(Research Papers in Irish Archaeology, 6)

Edited by Christiaan Corlett and Michael Potterton

(Dublin: Wordwell, 2020. [320p.] Illus. ISBN 9781916291249. €35)

In these illustrated essays, archaeologists, historians and geographers consider the medieval archaeological heritage of more than twenty of Ireland's historic urban spaces. The results of excavations and surveys at towns such as Castledermot, Enniscorthy, Inistioge, Navan, New Ross and Wexford are discussed. Aspects of Ardreigh, Athy, Dungarvan and Fethard are also investigated while deserted medieval settlements on the shores of Lough Key and Lough Ree (Co. Roscommon) are also discussed. Individual medieval urban sites or buildings at Carlow, Drogheda, Ferns, Kildare, Kilkenny, Kilmallock and Mullingar also receive attention. There is also an essay on archaeology in the European Historic Towns Atlas project. The contributors aspire to highlight the importance of our medieval towns so as to facilitate better decision-making for their protection, preservation and promotion.

Kerry history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county

Edited by Maurice J. Bric; series editor William Nolan

(Dublin: Geography Publications, 2020. xxvi, 680p.

Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9780906602935. €60)

Among the twenty-nine essays in this volume, those of particular interest to readers of *Áitreabh* will include William O'Brien's overview of the prehistoric archaeology of Kerry; Aidan Harte and Tomás Ó Carraigh's study of early medieval field systems, land tenure and farming in the Lough Currane basin; John Sheehan on the Vikings and Kerry's early medieval kingdoms; Paul MacCotter on the manor of Castle Island from the time of the Anglo Norman settlement through to 1600, and David Edwards on the property transactions of Richard Boyle, first earl of Cork, in the early seventeenth century. Eamon O'Flaherty looks at the growth of towns from the late sixteenth to the early eighteenth century; Toby Barnard reflects on nature in eighteenth-century Kerry; John Knightly documents the evolution of the Kilcoleman Abbey demesne; and Cormac Ó Gráda with Tyler Anbinder and Simon Wegge analyse assisted emigration from the Lansdowne estate in the nineteenth century. A substantial final chapter by James A. Walsh and Breandán Ó Caoimh charts aspects of population and economy in twentieth-century Kerry.

Dungarvan = Dún Garbhán. Irish Historic Towns Atlas, no. 30

John Martin

Cartographic editor Sarah Gearty

(Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2020. 28p. Illus. 20 maps, 8 plates. Pbk. ISBN 9781911479376. €30)

Newly researched and drawn maps illustrating the evolution of Dungarvan are published here along with a series of reproductions of older maps, all in loose-leaf format. Adhering to the well-established structure of this atlas series, detailed, systematically referenced lists of topographical information are provided. John Martin's overview of the topographical development of Dungarvan traces the occupation and settlement of the site from medieval to modern times. The Anglo-Norman town on the south coast was later shaped by the Boyle and Devonshire estates. Decline in the second half of the nineteenth century was not really reversed by the coming of the railway in 1878, but the 1930s investment in local authority housing marked a new era for residents of the town.

Drogheda c. 1180 to c. 1900: from fortified boroughs to industrial port town

Ned Mc Hugh

(Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2020. 19p. 1 folded map. Pbk. ISBN 9781911479383. €10)

This 'pocket map' is an ancillary publication derived from the Irish Historic Towns Atlas of Drogheda published in 2019. The map depicts selected highlights from the larger atlas. The accompanying descriptive essay explains how the medieval topography of the town – including the town wall, roads and shorelines – relates to the modern townscape.

Deeds not words – the survival of the Fitzmaurices Lords of Kerry, 1550 to 1603

Martin Moore

(Gabha Publications, 2020. 332p. ISBN

9780995549210. €20).

This book gives the background to the Fitzmaurice family, and how they fitted into the complex political world of sixteenth-century Munster. Their sphere of influence extended from Fenit to Abbeyfeale and northwards to include Ardfert, Ballybunion, Beale, Listowel and Lixnaw.

Captain Francisco de Cuéllar: the Armada, Ireland, and the wars of the Spanish monarchy, 1578–1606

Francis Kelly

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. [312p.] Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781846828751. €35)

Captain Francisco de Cuéllar was an officer who served with the ill-fated Spanish Armada. He was shipwrecked on the coast of County Sligo in September 1588. He found shelter among the Gaelic Irish of the north-west for seven months before he was helped to reach Scotland and later the Low Countries. For almost three decades this adventurous sea captain traversed much of the Spanish Empire and beyond: Spain, Portugal, the Low Countries, Italy, France, the Caribbean, Brazil and Ireland. The book chronicles Cuéllar's entire military career and it gives a great sense of the wide horizons of early modern seafarers.

The alliance of pirates: Ireland and Atlantic piracy in the early seventeenth century

Connie Kelleher

(Cork: Cork University Press, 2020. xxii, 408p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781782053651. €30)

Piracy was a way of life on the south-west coast of early modern Ireland. Privateering was outlawed by King James I in 1603, but many former privateers and other seamen came to settle in west Munster, some bringing their families with them. This book tells the story of maritime plunder in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, examining its impact on the geo-political and socio-economic landscape of Ireland and further afield. Archaeological evidence is used to supplement the information gleaned from documentary sources. A varied and fascinating selection of relevant maps and illustrations is used to good effect.

Belturbet, County Cavan, 1610–1714: the origins of an Ulster plantation town

Brendan Scott

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. 72p. Pbk. ISBN 9781846828553. €9.95)

Belturbet originated as a new town established in the early years of the Ulster Plantation. Brendan Scott examines the formation of the town during the initial settlement period and traces its fate during times of unrest and violence in the 1640s and again later in the seventeenth century. Efforts by the town corporation to impose its authority were not always successful and this book explains why that was so.

Morristown Lattin, County Kildare, 1630–1800: the estate and its tenants

Emma Lyons

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. 80p. Pbk. ISBN 9781846828577. €9.95)

Estate records are used to trace the story of this Catholic-owned landed estate through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Leases, rent rolls, legal documents and correspondence shed light on aspects of estate management and the position of tenants as well as patterns of landownership and inheritance.

Law and revolution in seventeenth-century Ireland

Edited by Coleman A. Dennehy

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. xvi, 366p. Hbk. ISBN 9781846828133. €55)

This collection of essays emanating from the Irish Legal History Society includes an interesting chapter by Philip Walsh on 'Martin Blake of Ballyglunin, County Galway: from transplantation to restoration – a case study of land, law and estate protection'. This microhistory concentrates on the landholding of a middle rank Catholic merchant, documenting the family's experience of transplantation, expansion, consolidation and survival. It provides a taster of the discussion in Walsh's doctoral thesis on the Blakes of Ballyglunin (PhD, UCD, 2017).

Shannonbridge: a history of Raghra, c.1600 to c.1900

Brendan Ryan, Laura Price

(White Grass Publications, 2019. 365p. Illus. No ISBN. €20)

This study of the evolution of a village gives due recognition to its significance as a river crossing and also notes the influence of its proximity to Clonmacnois. As is often the case in traditional local studies, the authors did not resist the temptation to provide succession lists of local clergy. Their description of every premises on the street, however, as they take the reader on an in-depth tour of the village, earns the book a mention here.

Cork: city and county

(The Buildings of Ireland)

Frank Keohane

(New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2020. xix, 681p. Illus. 32 plates. Hbk. ISBN 9780300224870. £45)

Many of the highlights of this gazetteer of the architectural riches of Cork are to be found in the centre of Cork city itself, characterised by a blend of Georgian streetscapes, neoclassical public buildings and distinctive churches. The fortifications of Cork harbour are described, along with the lighthouses and other significant coastal buildings in the county. The architectural treasures of smaller towns such as Bandon, Fermoy, Kinsale, Mitchelstown and Youghal are also documented. Frank Keohane's volume on the architecture and archaeological monuments of Cork city and county, illustrated with maps, plans and photographs, is a very welcome addition to this well-established 'Pevsner' series.

Cork Harbour

Cal McCarthy

(Newbridge: Merrion Press, 2019. x, 284p. Illus. ISBN 9781785373015. €29.95)

Cork harbour developed as a military hub that formed part of the international trade network of the British Empire. Commercial development of the harbour proceeded in tandem with its military evolution. Cork's overall development was greatly impacted by the political and military consequences of Britain's prominence on the global stage over several centuries. This illustrated book examines these interconnected aspects of the history of the harbour and the wider context in which the port was developed.

Portlaoise: an illustrated history

Joe Curtis

(Dublin: Eastwood Books, 2020. [128p.] Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9781916137578. €16.99)

English military personnel built a fort in the Laois region in the late 1540s to guard against attacks on the Pale. In 1556 Queen Mary decided on a scheme for an English settlement in the area that would become known as Queen's County. The town that developed around the fort was to be named Mary Burgh. This short book explores the visual history of Portlaoise/Maryborough as it developed up to the modern age, covering various aspects of commerce, religion, education, health and law and order.

Nature and the environment in nineteenth-century Ireland

Edited by Matthew Kelly

(Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2019. xii, 231p. Hbk. ISBN 9781789620320. £75)

This interdisciplinary collection of essays by historians, geographers and literary scholars is designed to offer new insights into nineteenth-century aspects of agricultural improvement, Dublin's animal geographies, and Ireland's healing places, amongst other matters.

Irish famines before and after the Great Hunger

Edited by Christine Kinealy and Gerard Moran

(Cork University Press & Quinnipiac University Press, 2020. [392p.] Illus. Pbk. 9780578484983. €25)

Episodic famines and periods of food shortage affected Ireland through the centuries and poverty, hunger, emigration and excess mortality were familiar experiences in many communities. In this collection of essays by a range of historians, some of the forgotten famines that shaped the lives of Irish people at home as well as those who opted to settle in other countries are investigated. There are twenty essays and they cover topics from the late medieval period through to the late twentieth century.

The darkness echoing: exploring Ireland's places of famine, death and rebellion

Gillian O'Brien

(Doubleday Ireland, 2020. [368p.] Pbk. ISBN 9781781620502. €16.99)

It is hard to forget the cold eeriness of Dublin's Kilmainham Gaol. As 'dark tourism' goes, it's among the darkest. Throughout the country, similarly grim places are now marketed as tourist venues, including Spike Island in Cork and a Victorian workhouse at Portumna in County Galway. The museum at Glasnevin Cemetery explores many aspects of death in Dublin, as well as offering a resource for research into family history, and it too is considered in this study. The author of this book has worked as an historical consultant on the Kilmainham and Spike Island projects and offers interesting reflections on the modern heritage industry as it seeks to come to terms with Ireland's often troubled past.

The illustrated guide to the ecclesiastical heritage of the County of Galway = Treoir le grianghraif ar oidhreacht eaglasta Chontae na Gaillimhe

Zena Hoctor & Christy Cunniffe

(Galway: Galway County Council, [2020]. [196p.] Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9891913449001. Available from the Heritage Office, Galway County Council. Free)

This beautifully illustrated, large format book focuses mainly on the nineteenth- and twentieth-century ecclesiastical heritage of County Galway, and there are some delightful images of architectural treasures and a variety of little-known stained-glass windows. This publication is also available to download (Galwaycommunityheritage.org).

Dublin moving east, 1708–1844: how the city took over the sea

Michael Branagan

(Dublin: Wordwell, 2020. x, 320p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 97819164922264. €35)

Dublin city more than doubled in size between 1708 and 1844. Development involving significant land reclamation was driven first by the Ballast Board and after 1786 by the Corporation for Preserving and Improving the Port of Dublin. Archival sources are supplemented by information drawn from the built environment of bridges, harbours, quay walls, docks, locks, railway embankments, stores, streets and public buildings, highlighting evidence still visible in the topography of the modern city that preserves traces of its evolution in pre-modern times. In addition to telling the story of Dublin port, this well-illustrated book also looks at the building of railway lines serving Drogheda and Dun Laoghaire, and the development of Howth and Dun Laoghaire harbours.

Building the Irish courthouse and prison: a political history, 1750–1850

Richard J. Butler

(Cork: Cork University Press, 2020. 652p. Illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781782053699. €39)

Local grand juries invested significant resources in constructing public buildings such as courthouses and prisons in many Irish towns in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Richard Butler examines the social and economic history of these buildings, investigating who built them and how these local urban infrastructural projects were financed. This com-

prehensive book is well illustrated with images of the buildings discussed.

Irish country furniture and furnishings, 1700–2000

Claudia Kinmonth

(Cork: Cork University Press, 2020. 576p. Hbk. ISBN 9781782054054. €39)

This book looks at traditional Irish farmhouse and cabin furniture and considers how and why it was made. Kitchen dressers, chairs, stools, settles and out-shot beds are all examined in detail. Themes include the influence of traditional architecture, availability of timber, why and how furniture was painted, and the characteristics of designs made by a range of furniture makers. The use of natural materials such as bog oak, turf, driftwood and straw is discussed. This new book is a thoroughly reworked and expanded version of a 1993 book by the same author, incorporating additional research and with new colour illustrations.

Rich specimens of architectural beauty: John Preston Neale's Irish country houses

Kevin Mulligan

(Tralee: Churchill House Press, 2020. [224p.] Illus. ISBN 9781838139025. €40)

Original drawings of Irish country houses by John Preston Neale are published in this large-format book. The drawings were prepared for his *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland* (1824–9). The drawings are considered alongside a wealth of new primary documentation from Neale's letter books showing the role of architect Richard Morrison in the project and exploring how an architectural canon was formed.

The best address in town: Henrietta Street, Dublin and its first residents, 1730–80

Melanie Hayes

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. 312p. Illus. Hbk. 9781846828478. €30)

Dublin's Henrietta Street boasted some of the city's largest private townhouses in the eighteenth century and became one of the foremost arenas of elite power in Georgian Ireland. This book explores the architecture and social history of these impressive townhouses, telling the story of the people who first populated this once prestigious street. The well-illustrated book was commissioned by Dublin City Council's Heritage Office, and its publication is associated with the new 'tenement' museum recently opened at 14 Henrietta Street that depicts a later phase in the occupation of this exceptional street.

The politics of Dublin Corporation, 1840–1900: from reform to expansion

James H. Murphy

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. [240p.] Hbk. ISBN 9781846828539. €50)

Dublin's local authority had a crucial role in the development of the physical infrastructure of the city during the nineteenth century, with responsibility for fundamental services such as the provision of a new water supply. Markets, gas, electricity, drains

and boundaries are among the many topics discussed. The book pays particular attention to the members of the Corporation, their ambitions and their conflicts as they took on responsibility for diverse aspects of the management of the city.

Crime and punishment in nineteenth-century Belfast: the story of John Lynn

Jonathan Jeffrey Wright

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. 77p. Pbk. ISBN 9781846828560. €9.95)

Presented as a microhistory of crime and punishment in Belfast in the mid-nineteenth century, this study tracks the urban social contexts of a man who killed his father, and the fate that awaited him in various institutional settings in Belfast together with the story of his later life overseas.

Ashbourne: landscape, lives and lore

Edited by Barry Kennerk

(Ashbourne: Ashbourne Historical Society, 2020. 413p. Illus. ISBN 9781527254633. €20)

This illustrated local history, incorporating oral history, traces the story of the town of Ashbourne in County Meath from its origins in 1820. The settlement began as a coach stop developed by road-builder Frederick Bourne. The main sections of the book are 'From early settlement to village'; 'Voices of Ashbourne'; 'Five historical walks'; and finally 'From village to town'. The modern town of Ashbourne has expanded beyond all recognition in the past thirty years, and Ashbourne Historical Society has produced a fascinating volume documenting the story of the town and its people.

The Americanisation of Ireland: migration and settlement, 1841–1925

David Fitzpatrick

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. xvi, 254p. Hbk. ISBN 9781108486491. £30)

Statistical and social data for American migration into Ireland are analysed here from the era of the Great Famine down to the early years of post-Independence Ireland. The challenges of integration affecting American-born migrants who came to settle in Ireland are examined, as is their influence on local communities. In the first chapter attention is given to the phenomenon of reverse migration. The available evidence suggests that for every three nineteenth-century migrants from Ireland to America one may have returned home. The 'returned Yank' was a very real phenomenon. Those in a position to purchase land on their return tended to do so in the north-west or in north Leinster, where the market for land seemed more open than in the west and south of the country. Fluctuations in reverse migration over time appear to be best explained by economic cycles in America while special offers for eastward travel by shipping companies serving Atlantic routes after 1874 was enough to entice some migrants to come home. Before the end of the nineteenth century the story of the two-way flow of people between Ireland and America was becoming complicated by the increasing prevalence of short-term visitors rather than migrants among those travelling

eastwards across the Atlantic.

The Benedictine nuns & Kylemore Abbey: a history
Deirdre Raftery & Catherine KilBride
 (Newbridge: Irish Academic Press, 2020. [210p.]
 illus. Hbk. ISBN 9781785373220. €19.95)

A group of Benedictine nuns arrived in 1920 to establish a monastery at Kylemore in a beautiful setting in a remote part of the west of Ireland. Drawing on material from the Kylemore archives, this book tells their story and also charts the history of the castle they acquired. It had been built by Mitchell Henry and was later home to the Duke and Duchess of Manchester. The twentieth century saw the Benedictines develop the gardens and restore the Gothic Chapel. More recently, the castle and grounds have been opened to the public and marketed as a tourist destination, creating significant local employment.

The lost Gaeltacht: the Land Commission migration – Clonbur, County Galway to Allenstown, County Meath
Martin O'Halloran
 ([Dublin]: Homefarm Publishing, 2020. ISBN 9781916227507. €29)

In the mid-twentieth century Irish-speaking farming families were moved from impoverished and congested areas in the west of Ireland to new farms in County Meath. The resettlement scheme had been supported by the Fianna Fáil government that came to power in 1932 and the process of government-sponsored internal migration continued into the 1940s. This book tells the story of those who migrated from Clonbur in 1940 and settled in a new Gaeltacht colony at Allenstown. O'Halloran outlines the role of the Land Commission in purchasing and allocating the land. He tells of the poverty people had experienced in Clonbur, the opposition some migrants encountered on arrival in Meath, the ongoing challenges of life in war-time Meath, the extent of their social integration into the Allenstown community, and their ongoing links with the place they had left.

Dublin by design: architecture and the city
Edited by Noel Brady & Dr Sandra O'Connell
 (Dublin: O'Brien Press in association with the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland, 2020. [240p.]
 illus. ISBN 9781788491679. €29.99)

This essay collection offers an illustrated history of the development of Dublin city through the last century. There is a particular focus on its role as Ireland's capital since independence 100 years ago, as well as on architectural planning. The first section is largely historical, with essays by Mary Clark, Gráinne Shaffrey, Frederick O'Dwyer, Brian Ward, and Tony Reddy. Aspects of housing development are discussed by Lorcan Sirr, Gerry Cahill and James Pike. Later sections of the book address themes such as the 'green city' and the future direction of urban architecture in Dublin.

Irish housing design, 1950–1980: out of the ordinary
(Studies in architecture)
 Edited by Gary Boyd, Michael Pike and Brian Ward

(London: Routledge. 2019. xiv, 244p. Illus. ISBN 9781138216426. £120)

Well-designed public housing schemes were built in many Irish towns in the mid-twentieth century. They were generally envisaged as helping to shape and define community and social life. Many of the building projects described in this collection of illustrated case studies exemplified high quality work by architects whose designs influenced architectural thought and practice in Ireland and beyond.

Wild woods: the magic of Ireland's native woodlands
Richard Nairn
 (Dublin: Gill Books, 2020. 304p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN 9780717190218. €14.99)

While documenting a Wicklow woodland of mature native trees over a typical year, Richard Nairn also writes about other native woodlands throughout Ireland. He has researched the ancient roles of trees in Irish life and the best methods for managing and using woodlands today.

Empowering communities through archaeology and heritage: the role of local governance in economic development

Peter G. Gould
 (London: Bloomsbury, 2018. [200p.] Hbk. ISBN 9781350036222. £67.50)

Public archaeology and heritage tourism are the topics addressed in these diverse case studies. The author seeks to identify the success factors associated with economic development projects such as site museums, craft cooperatives, and tourism businesses within communities adjacent to archaeological or heritage sites. The Burren centre in County Clare was chosen as a case study from Ireland.

Partnership and participation: community archaeology in Ireland

Edited by Christine Baker
 (Dublin: Wordwell, 2020. ix, 227p. Illus. Pbk. ISBN: 9781916291218. €35)

Projects undertaken under the banner of community archaeology in recent years are varied and can include field-walking, building surveys, oral history projects, graveyard surveys, art projects, archival research, geophysical, landscape and topographic surveys, conservation and excavation. One common thread has been that of reconnecting people with their past and encouraging new communities to connect with their localities, thereby creating awareness and ensuring the protection of the archaeological resource. Among the twenty essays published in this collection there are reports on geophysical surveys, 3D projects, landscape surveys, heritage-based tourism, public art and community excavations. The contributors are drawn from all parts of Ireland and the book offers a wide range of perspectives, from the community itself to institutional overviews. The editor, Christine Baker, is heritage officer for Fingal County Council.

Notices of sources and guides to sources
Bernadette Cunningham

The act book of the diocese of Armagh, 1518–1522

Edited by John McCafferty

(Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2020. Hbk. ISBN 9781906865764. €30)

The ecclesiastical Act Book for the southern part of the diocese of Armagh covering the years 1518 to 1522 offers a rare and vivid glimpse into the lives of ordinary individuals in early sixteenth-century Ireland. The place and personal names preserved in the documents give important clues as to the ethnic composition of the Pale through the proceedings of a busy and popular court which sat in Drogheda, Termonfeckin and Dundalk. This volume provides an edited text of the original Latin manuscript along with an English summary of each case.

1641 Depositions, volume VI. Laois (Queen's County) & Offaly (King's County)

Principal editor Aidan Clarke

(Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2021. viii, 540p. Hbk. ISBN 9781906865405. €50)

The 1641 Depositions are witness testimonies, mainly by Protestants, but also by some Catholics, from all social backgrounds, concerning their experiences of the 1641 Irish rebellion. The evidence for Laois is more extensive than that for Offaly, largely because

Queen's County was one of the two counties outside Dublin to which the Commissioners came to collect depositions. The evidence for both counties reveal, beneath the landowning surface, the continued presence of scattered settler communities composed of leaseholders, large and small, as well as craftsmen who supplemented their earnings with smallholdings.

The churchwardens' accounts of the parishes of St Bride, St Michael Le Pole and St Stephen, Dublin, 1663–1702

Edited by W.J.R. Wallace

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. [208p.] Hbk. ISBN 9781846828355. €50)

The Dublin parish of St Bride, united with the parishes of St Michael Le Pole and St Stephen, served an area just outside the medieval city walls, based around Bride Street, Ship Street, Golden Lane and Stephen Street. These accounts of the post-Restoration era show how the parish recovered and developed over a forty-year period. The responsibilities of parish personnel in areas such as poor relief, firefighting and policing are recorded, and the documents provide valuable insights into the history of late seventeenth-century Dublin.

*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>



Cartouche of Sligo town and harbour [detail from William Larkin, *A map of the county of Sligo* (London, 1819)]

David Dickson

(Professor Emeritus of Modern History
Trinity College Dublin)

The First Irish Cities

Introduction

The *Irish Historic Towns Atlas* project has now published fascicles for 30 towns and cities, to which have recently been added a series of spin-off publications in various formats and registers, all of a very high technical standard, reasonably priced and user friendly. It is a remarkable achievement. As a result, the study of Irish urban history is in a far more favoured place compared to the situation forty years ago when the project was launched. There is much in the long history of Irish urbanization that we still do not know, but researchers entering the field now have a formidable

set of case studies and cartographic resources on which to draw.

Emergence of Regional Centres

One lingering issue in Irish urban history is the relatively sudden emergence of a small number of very substantial regional centres in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. No Irish urban settlement approached a population of 10,000 people in 1600 – at a time when there were at least 180 cities in Europe with a population in excess of that figure. However by 1821 there were at least ten cities and urban centres in Ireland above that threshold, and several Irish cities were ranked in the top European league as measured by population. But Irish city rankings subsequently fell back sharply in the course of the nineteenth century, with only Belfast travelling up the league table. Clearly something distinctive and unusual had occurred in Ireland's 'long eighteenth century'.



The Exchange, Cork [1774]

So, aided not a little by the *IHTA* fascicles now available, I have been looking more closely at this phenomenon, focussing on those top ten urban places during the era of growth – from the 1660s to the 1820s – and have sought to identify both common patterns and internal differences. The study has embraced nine ports, Dublin, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Sligo, Derry, Belfast and Drogheda – and one inland city, Kilkenny. There are common elements in that growth cycle: most obviously, aside from the War of the Two Kings and the 1798 rebellion, it was a century and a half of domestic peace, and that long peace brought a dividend for everyone. Granted the memories of siege and destruction, expulsion and confiscation were at first very raw, but

the long-run growth of overseas trade and ever busier streets created a sense of stability, opportunity and a new equilibrium.

Changed Times

The most concrete sign of changed times was the gradual but quite uncontroversial dismantling of town walls and other old defensive works. By 1800 only in Drogheda and Derry were the walls more or less intact. Most city folk were living outside the former walled areas, those with money seeking out fashionable locations, those without resources crowding into market districts, back lanes and dockland streets. And in general, the 'rules' of classical architecture became more

widely assimilated, brick generally replacing stone as the dominant building material, and elegant assembly rooms, market houses and dedicated public spaces becoming standard features.

The differences between the top ten are however revealing: the big two began their long ascent earliest, Dublin from the 1610s, Cork from the 1660s; Waterford and Limerick took much longer to gain momentum, and Belfast's early dynamism faltered in the early 1700s, only to recover dramatically in the last third of the century. Highly favourable external markets for Irish agricultural goods, together with a transformation in the demand at home for shop goods and new-style services, drove this growth and in so doing created a set of far more complex and diverse urban communities. Only Galway among the larger medieval ports lagged behind.

Contrasts and Differences

But starker contrasts are evident too: all urban centres were in local Protestant control from Cromwellian times, and in a formal sense this remained the case throughout the period. But in some of the top ten, the general citizenry were also predominantly Protestant far into the eighteenth century – this was the case in Belfast, Derry and Dublin, and while the denominational balance in Dublin changed around mid-century, Derry and particularly Belfast remained overwhelmingly Protestant until the end of the eighteenth century, although of course the balance between Anglican and Dissenter varied considerably. In other cities, Catholic numbers were always in the majority, but the contrast was between some cities where the largest business families were Protestant (Cork, Sligo and Drogheda), and others where Catholic control of business was always substantial (Waterford, Limerick, Kilkenny and Galway). This religious balance profoundly affected local urban culture, politics and public life, not least in the contrasting impact of the great political awakening of the 1790s.

There were also striking differences in the control over urban land and by extension over the physical development of these centres as they expanded. None of them enjoyed strong municipal government at this point, and the agents of morphogenesis (to use a once popular term) were in some cases one or two powerful ground landlords, in others a cluster of local trading families possessing both the necessary credit and the appetite to get involved in property development.

Urban Planning

Thus when it came to the development of publicly-owned property – of town commons, parks and reclaimable foreshores – these were in effect privatized. The transformation of St Stephen's Green in Dublin into a residential square set the pattern in the 1660s: merchants and professionals took out very long leases of blocks of ground, some investing in initial development before subletting to builders, others going into speculative construction themselves. That pattern was reproduced on a more modest scale elsewhere, and the names of such merchants remain on countless streets, quays and lanes in every city.

One consequence of this was the creation of multiple layers of stakeholder. Public control over building

use and the re-development of street alignments became close to impossible. The Irish parliament did of course establish Wide Streets Commissioners, first in Dublin, then in Cork and Waterford, with unusual powers of compulsory purchase. But the borrowing powers needed to purchase and re-shape city streets were for a long time not forthcoming, and it was only in central Dublin that major street re-planning and building controls were implemented. And even in Dublin it was a process spanning decades.

However where large well-resourced private urban estates (and competent managers) existed, we do find a measure of urban planning: thus the re-development of large parts of later eighteenth-century Belfast by the Donegall estate, the strategic development of the Gardiner and Fitzwilliam estates in Dublin and, most spectacularly, the creation of Newtown Pery in Limerick city. But in some cases where there was the potential for strong proprietorial intervention – in Sligo town by the Wynne family or in Derry by the Irish Society – it did not happen.

The first great era of city growth was ending in the 1820s. Textile manufacturing and food processing, which between them had given huge employment up to then, were undermined by new economic realities. The Irish ports became more like conveyor belts between rural Ireland and industrial England.

There were many factors at work in this loss of momentum, but the cities of the 1820s had a brave new look. Gaslight was now banishing the night from principal streets. But it was a different story in the darkening poverty of the back streets as old industrial neighbourhoods became overwhelmed with pauper migrants, flooding in from a countryside in depression. Dublin's Liberties were the classic example, but this was replicated elsewhere. Only Belfast, with cotton, then linen, manufacturing brought into town, seemed able to break out of the cycle. But for Belfast's new proletariat there were other troubles to come.

Conclusion

What were the legacies of this urban bloom? Amid the many tangible and intangible dividends, several stand out: some of the strongest public buildings of our present-day cities date from this era – Dublin's Custom House and Four Courts, Cork's Mayoralty House and Shandon church, Limerick's Custom House, Drogheda's Tholsel, Belfast's Clifton House to list some of the most obvious – and several of the great infrastructural projects have also survived, notably the twin canals in Dublin and the great navigation walls piercing Cork Harbour and Dublin Bay. But where the physical fabric is no longer evident, there is a hidden physical legacy in the heart of each city – in the locations chosen for bridges, in the re-ordered streetscapes, in the width and height of properties and their inter-relationships and alignments – devised in many cases almost anonymously during the eighteenth century, long before the modern era when city growth resumed.

David Dickson's *The First Irish Cities: An Eighteenth-Century Transformation* has just been published by Yale University Press, price €30.00.



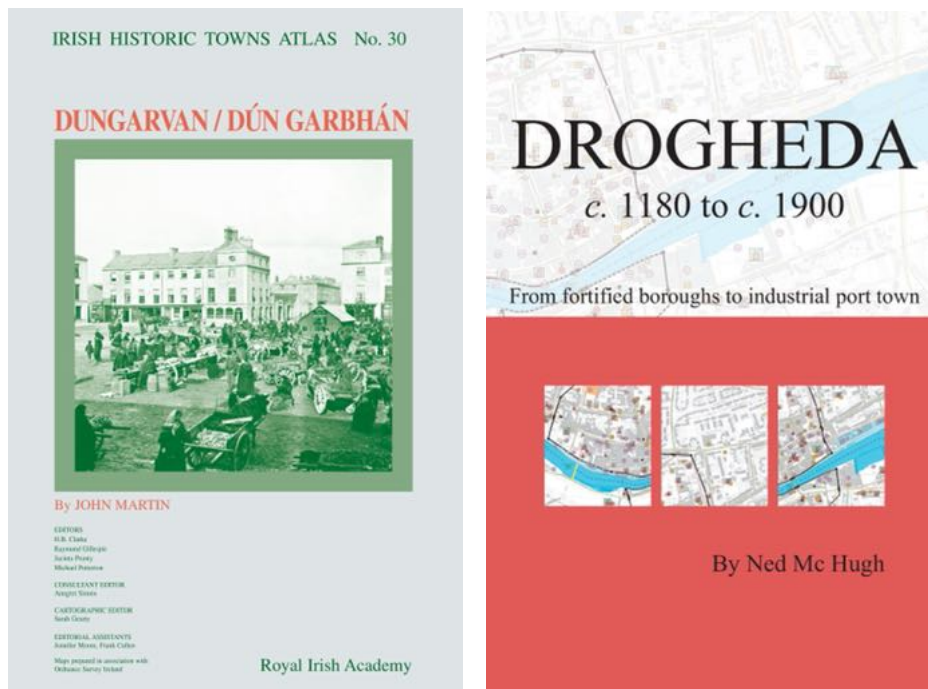
Belfast's late eighteenth-century great leap forward captured on paper for the first time: James Williamson's elegant *Map of the town and environs of Belfast* (1791)



Dr. Jacinta Prunty, Maynooth University, served as IHTA honorary editor from 2008-20.

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

Sarah Gearty, Cartographic editor



Recent IHTA publications

A year has passed, and by time of writing (the end of April 2021) – with the exception of a period of phased reopening from 13 July to 21 September – Academy House, Dawson Street, Dublin, has remained closed through the pandemic and we await news of when it and other libraries and archives may open their doors. Like so many, the IHTA has managed and adapted, with two publications released towards the end of 2020, several events taking place online and contributors turning to available online sources to advance their research.

During the summer lockdown energy focused on the development of the Digital Atlas of Dungarvan in Arc GIS Online, using content already at proof stage for the printed version. Early Ordnance Survey and Valuation Office town plans were digitised and layered with IHTA core and thematic maps and the OSi GeoHive base maps. These map layers were superimposed with details of over 640 historic sites derived from the topographical information provided in the atlas. We created five video tutorials and a StoryMap to show the range of possibilities when using the resource. National Heritage Week provided good impetus for the project and the Digital Atlas of Dungarvan was officially launched under the theme of ‘Heritage on your doorstep’ on 18 August 2020. It is freely available to explore here: <https://www.ria.ie/digital-atlas-dungarvan>.

September and October saw several online initiatives: Rachel Murphy and Ruth McManus wrote about using the IHTA in third-level teaching for a Royal Irish Academy educational resources series: <https://www.ria.ie/educational-resources>; Jennifer Moore put together an exhibition of vignettes from the IHTA for Culture Night: <https://www.ria.ie/news/irish-historic-towns-atlas/vignettes-irish-historic-towns-atlas>; and Frank Cullen presented a video on the 1847 Ordnance Survey town plans for the Dublin Festival of History: <https://www.ria.ie/dublin-festival-history-dublin-1847-maps-and-themes>.

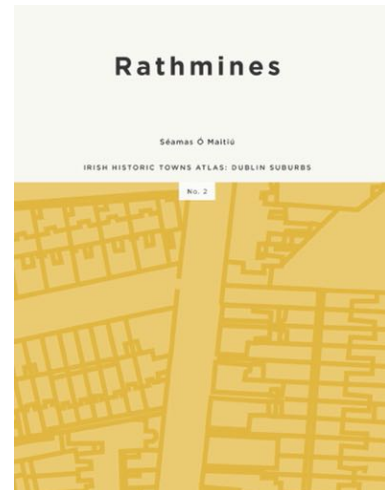
November was the one-year anniversary of the death of J.H. Andrews, MRIA, one of our founding editors. To mark this Arnold Horner presented an online lecture, ‘Man, maps and map history: John Andrews, 1927–2019’. Over 270 people joined us live on YouTube premier for this special occasion. If you missed it you can watch it here: <https://www.ria.ie/news/irish-historic-towns-atlas/man-maps-and-map-history-john-andrews-1927-2019>.

The Dungarvan fascicle had been delivered safely to the printers by the end of the summer, and December saw the much-awaited publication of IHTA, no. 30, *Dungarvan / Dún Garbhán*, by John Martin. To celebrate the release, and in the absence of our usual ‘launch’, we took the virtual option. Over 200 people registered for an online event which took place on 3 December 2020 and was opened by Mayor of Dungarvan, Councillor Damien Geoghegan, and introduced by Joanne Rothwell, Waterford County Archivist. John Martin presented a lecture on the history of

Dungarvan and this was followed by an interview where William Fraher of the Waterford County Museum asked John about his research on the atlas. This is all available to view here: <https://www.ria.ie/news/irish-historic-towns-atlas/dungarvan-released-lecture-and-interview>.

Drogheda is the latest addition to the IHTA pocket map series, with *Drogheda, c.1180 to c.1900: from fortified boroughs to industrial port town* by Ned Mc Hugh being published just in time for Christmas 2020. This and IHTA, no. 30, *Dungarvan / Dún Garbhán* are available to order online from <https://www.ria.ie/publications/new-publications> for €10 and €30 respectively. Three to five years after publication in print IHTA provides select contents to browse and download for free via the web and IHTA; no. 28 *Galway / Gaillimh* (2016) by Jacinta Prunty and Paul Walsh (2016) was made available in this way in February 2021.

Meanwhile, IHTA contributors have continued their research on future atlas publications despite current difficulties. Contributors on Arklow, Ballyshannon, Carlow, Cavan, Clonmel, Drumcondra, New Ross, Tralee, Tullamore, Waterford and Westport are all progressing their drafts. Howard Clarke and Máire Ní Laoi made significant progress on the city of Cork, which is in line for publication as no. 31 in the main IHTA series. Séamas Ó Maitiú finalised his text on Rathmines at the end of last year and during the quiet months of January-March much of the cartography and production was guided to completion. We look forward to publishing *Rathmines* as No. 2 in the Dublin suburbs series this autumn.



Rathmines by Séamas Ó Maitiú will be published as no. 2 in the IHTA Dublin suburbs series in Autumn 2021

The annual IHTA seminar resumes in May 2021 and although we can't gather in Academy House as usual we look forward to online sessions during Thursday lunchtimes through the month. 'Town and country' is the theme with titles ranging from 'Monastic tenants, Viking raiders and Hiberno-Norse Towns People' (Howard Clarke and Ruth Johnson) to the plenary 'Why should historians also study the countryside?' (Chris Dyer) and looking at the relationship between urban centres and their hinterlands through later medieval (Michael Potterton, Jim Galloway and Margaret Murphy), early modern (Raymond Gillespie and Brendan Scott) and modern Ireland (Ruth McManus, Frank Cullen, Séamas Ó Maitiú, Colm Lennon).



Ruth McManus, Dublin City University and Jonathan Wright, Maynooth University were appointed as IHTA honorary editors in April 2021.

Jacinta Prunty moved to South Sudan in November 2020 to take up service in Yambio Teacher Training College. Jacinta made a huge contribution to the IHTA as one of our honorary series editors and some of that work is related in this tribute: <https://www.ria.ie/news/irish-historic-towns-atlas/jacinta-prunty-moving-south-sudan>. Following on from this, there was a call for new editors and in April 2021 Ruth McManus and Jonathan Wright joined Howard Clarke, Raymond Gillespie and Michael Potterton as series editors; and Anngret Simms (consultant editor), Sarah Gearty (cartographic and managing editor), Jennifer Moore and Frank Cullen (editorial assistants).

Welcome Ruth and Jonathan!

Keep up to date with all IHTA news via Twitter @IHTA_RIA and our webpage <https://ihta.ie/>.

GSIHs Annual Conference: Atlantic South Donegal 2021



Donegal Castle Photographic Archive NMS

The group's next conference (postponed until 2022) will be in South Donegal in association with Donegal, Ardara, Glenties & Portnoo (GAP) Heritage and History Group. The papers are wide ranging and deal with settlement from prehistory, the medieval period, through to the nineteenth century. An introduction to the historic settlement of south Donegal will be given by Dr Brian Lacey, an archaeologist and medieval historian who specialises in the northwest of Ireland (County Donegal and Derry). Brian Lacey has been one of the most important figures in history and archaeology in Donegal in the last thirty years.

The papers include one by local archaeologist Paula Harvey on the 'Adopt a Monument' scheme at Doon Fort, undoubtedly one of the most spectacularly picturesque heritage sites in Donegal. It is situated on a small island in the middle of Loughadoon, just outside the village of Ardara. Doon Fort is a large drystone fort, thought to be the residence of the O'Boyle chieftains. The exact date of the construction of the fort is unknown and it may date from the late Iron Age to the Early Medieval period. There will be two papers on the Ballyshannon area and Chris Corlett (National Monuments Service) will discuss an amazing survey undertaken in June 1946, in advance of the Erne Hydro-Electric Scheme near Ballyshannon. This survey was carried out in order to document the archaeological monuments, vernacular buildings, folklore and place-names of the area that would be effected. Shortly after completion of the field work a report was compiled that contained descriptions and photographs of the archaeological monuments and vernacular buildings, as well as some drawings. This report was submitted to the Office of Public Works, who had commissioned the survey, and its contents remained unpublished. Material collected in relation to the folklore of the area was submitted to the then Irish Folklore Commission.

Two separate field trips are planned to the north of Donegal town to see Kilclooney dolmen, Doon Fort, Inishkeel monastic site, Eden House and examples of vernacular architecture. The second field trip will be based in Donegal town which rose to prominence in the later middle ages as one of the principal residences of O'Donnell lords of Tirconnell. Donegal castle was constructed around 1474 by Hugh Roe O'Donnell (d. 1505) at much the same time as the Franciscan friary was established a short distance to the south of it. After the flight of the earls in 1607 the land around Donegal town was granted to Captain Basil Brooke who began to settle the land and succeeded in attracting sufficient settlers that the town was incorporated in 1613. The town was laid out around a triangular diamond placed to the south of the castle. Three streets led from the diamond: Bridge St, Main St and Quay St. The burgage plot pattern still survives within the town. In 1612 Basil Brooke was granted the right to hold a weekly market at Donegal. The diamond was evidently the market place of the new town.

Geraldine Stout (President) August 2021



Group for the Study of Irish Historic
Settlement
Annual Conference

*Historic Settlement:
Atlantic South Donegal*

Central Hotel, Donegal
Date: 17-19 September 2021



Speakers:

**Brian Lacey, Charlie Doherty, Paul MacCotter,
Paula Harvey, Anne-Julie Lafaye, Angela Byrne,
Barry O'Reilly, Brendan Mac Suibhne, Chris Corlett**

Fieldtrip to include some or all of the following:

**Owenea Standing Stone, Kilclooney Dolmen, Iniskeel
Monastic Site, Eden House, Doon Fort.**

Further information from: www.irishsettlement.ie

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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@upcmail.ie

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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