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Anglo-Norman Castles and Religious Foundations in Counties Louth and Down: A Comparison with examples in England and Wales

By

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Draft dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

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Abstract

This aim of this thesis is to prove that in the aftermath of the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169, the buildings constructed by the first wave of settlers reflected the architectural influences of contemporary buildings which they were familiar with on the their homelands in England and Wales. Proving this will require an archaeological analysis of specific castles and religious foundations built by these Anglo-Norman settlers in Counties Down and Louth, in an attempt to find evidence of these influences. This research will study particular Anglo-Norman families, focusing on those who had the most influence during the initial decades after the invasion. It is presented as a multi-disciplinary view of the subject, as it is necessary to examine the historical background of each of the Anglo-Norman settlers in order to ascertain exactly where they were based in England, and therefore exactly which castles and religious foundations they would have been familiar with. Rather than a brief overview of all the monuments constructed by particular Anglo-Norman lords in both counties, this research will provide a detailed examination of the archaeology of specific castles and religious foundations. Each structure will be examined on its own merits. A comparative analysis will then be completed between each monument and its counterpart in England and Wales. It is hoped that a detailed historical and archaeology study of each individual and monument selected for inclusion, will test the hypothesis that as they constructed specific monuments within Louth and Down, the Anglo-Normans who settled here were replicating architectural features and styles of buildings they were familiar with on their homelands in England and Wales.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

AIM OF THESIS

The aim of this thesis is to test the hypothesis that in the aftermath of the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169, the buildings constructed by the first wave of settlers in Counties Louth and Down reflected the architectural influences of contemporary buildings on their homelands in England and Wales. This thesis will study the relationship between these buildings in an attempt to find archaeological connections and ask if the Irish buildings constructed by the invaders were modelled on British exemplars with which they were familiar?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The first step involved consulting the current literature as it was important to situate this work within the existing research. Had this question been addressed by the experts and, if relevant work had already been undertaken, would it support this research or would it prove to be inadequate?

It became clear at the outset that apart from Leask's *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses,* there has been no attempt to classify Irish castles as a group, in relation to date, type, siting or indeed, architectural influences. Leask's seminal work, first published in 1941 and reprinted at least 11 times since then, analyses the architectural development of castles within Ireland. Leask describes most of the castles examined within this research. However, while he provides valuable archaeological information on these castles, he makes no attempt to produce a comparative archaeological study between the Irish castles and similar buildings in England and Wales.

McNeill argues that from the beginning of the invasion there was a great variety among the castles built in Ireland and that these differences were dictated not only by fashion and resources but also by their intended use.[1] While he does not specifically address the question of a formal architectural connection between these early Irish monuments and similar buildings in Britain, he does examine their type and function and provides us with a number of examples of Irish castles modelled on British exemplars. He argues that the towers at Trim and at Carlingford, which change from square to semi-octagonal, are based on the towers at Ludlow, the Lacy caput.[2] He agrees that the siting and design of Roche Castle can be compared to Beeston and provides a short but concise comparative study between both castles. And he also concurs that there is an architectural connection between Greencastle in County Down and Skenfrith Castle, when he states that 'the overall plan recalls that of Skenfrith in Gwent'.[3]

Furthermore, with regard to church building, McNeill confirms that the Anglo-Norman invaders who settled in Ireland brought English masons with them and new fashions of church design which reflected those of England closely.[4] This confirms the argument put forward within this thesis that as Anglo-Norman colonists like de Courcy settled in Ireland, English Gothic art and architecture began to spread due to the arrival of many craftsmen who had been trained in English workshops.

However, while McNeill agrees with some of the architectural connections between Irish and British monuments as posited by this thesis, he does not provide a fully

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[1] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland, Feudal Power in a Gaelic World'*, (1997), p. 78.
[2] Ibid, p. 53.
[3] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland, Feudal Power in a Gaelic World,* (1997), p. 91.
[4] Ibid, p. 82.

developed archaeological comparison between specific Irish monuments and the British buildings which influenced them.

Sweetman claims that the development of Anglo-Norman stone castles in Ireland can be linked to historical figures and events and agrees that the earliest castles were built by a number of powerful lords, in particular Hugh de Lacy and John de Courcy.[5] He argues that these early Anglo-Norman castles in Ireland had to be defensible, because they were sited in hostile areas and were all constructed to control and dominated newly acquired territories.[6] He examines in-depth many of the castles studied within this thesis, including King John's Castle, Roche Castle, Greencastle and Dundrum. However, he does not link any specific architectural features of these early Irish castles to similar features within British castles.

O'Keeffe agrees that 'Stylistic ideas were clearly moving between north-western Ireland and Wales in the late 1200s and 1300s'[7] and argues that Ballintubber Castle in County Roscommon and Greencastle in County Donegal can be compared with the castles of Caernarvon and Denbigh in Wales, citing specific architectural features like polygonal corner towers.[8] He also states that Roscommon Castle may represent the earliest use of the type of courtyard plan for which the great Edwardian castles of north Wales are famous for.[9] Thus O'Keeffe acknowledges a direct architectural link between various castles in Ireland with similar buildings in Wales. However, he does not provide either a detailed archaeological analysis or a comparative study of any of the castles detailed in this thesis.

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[5] David Sweetman, *Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 34.
[6] Ibid, p. 41.
[7] Tadhg O'Keeffe, *Medieval Ireland, An Archaeology,* (2001), p. 38.
[8] Ibid, p. 38.
[9] Ibid, p. 38.

Regarding the argument put forward in this thesis that John de Courcy introduced the first examples of Gothic architecture into Ireland when he founded the Cistercian monasteries of Inch (fd. 1187) and Grey (fd. 1193) in County Down, O'Keeffe agrees that both abbeys 'can claim to be the first examples of this tradition on the island'.[10] However, he disagrees that these monuments were the inspiration for Irish Gothic, arguing that it is a matter for debate whether any one building can claim that distinction and states that both buildings were quite modest examples of this new style.[11]

Barry's analysis of Anglo-Norman military fortifications concurs with the argument put forward within this thesis that Greencastle in County Down 'resembles Skenfrith Castle in Gwent, close to de Lacy territory in Wales'.[12] However, he disagrees with the suggestion that the keep at Dundrum could have been built by John de Courcy and argues instead that it was more likely based on the model of Longtown in Monmouthshire, whose keep was constructed by the de Lacy family as early as 1187-8 or even Pembroke Castle, built by William Marshall c.1200.[13]

METHODOLOGY

After consulting the current literature, the next step involved determining my methodology. This thesis is presented as a multi-disciplinary view of the subject, in the sense that it was necessary to examine the historical background of each of the Anglo-Norman families in order to ascertain exactly where they were based in England, and therefore exactly what castles and religious foundations they would

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[10] Tadhg O'Keeffe, *Medieval Ireland, An Archaeology,* (2001), p. 143.
[11] Ibid, pps. 143-144.
[12] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 58.
[13] Ibid, p. 59.

have been familiar with. However, the main body of research is archaeological in nature and this is reflected in the bibliography which comprises cartographic sources, excavation reports, my own archaeological fieldwork, published primary sources, published secondary sources and web sources.

In order to test the hypothesis of this thesis, it is necessary to identify the Anglo-Norman settlers who had the most influence in Louth and Down during the initial decades after the invasion. In order to narrow the focus of this research, there are a number of requirements which have to be met for a particular Anglo-Norman individual or dynasty to be included. Firstly, the period to be examined is limited to c. 1169 to c.1300. The reason for keeping the scope of this work within this specific time-line is because it is the initial invaders are more likely to have imported specific architectural styles which they were familiar with. As time went on there was a change in the dynamics regarding the continuing colonisation of Ireland. Rather than new invaders arriving from England, there was a form of internal migration by the descendants of the original conquerors.

Secondly, the individual must have played a major role in the colonisation of these counties. Thirdly, they must have constructed either (or both) a major castle or religious foundation in Louth or Down. Fourthly, it should be possible to pinpoint their homelands in England in order to attempt to identify major monuments constructed within these lands which they could have been familiar with.

Finally, it is necessary to determine which English or Welsh monuments are particularly worthwhile examining in relation to this study. In some cases, experts in

the field had already pointed out comparative structures i.e. McNeill argues Roche Castle can be compared to Beeston Castle and Barry states that Greencastle can be compared to Skenfrith Castle. In other cases, in-depth research allowed some buildings to stand out as comparative structures e.g. St Peter's church in Drogheda and the church at Llanthony Priory in Wales. Both structures were founded by leading members of the de Lacy family, both were run by the same order, the Augustinian Canons and both contain a number of similar archaeological features. This allowed for the conclusion Llanthony Priory stood out as a comparator to St Peter's church.

COLONISATION OF LOUTH AND DOWN

In order to identify the monuments to be included in this thesis, it was vital to understand how these buildings came into being, who built them, what their main function was and why they were sited in particular areas. This required an analysis of the colonisation of Counties Louth and Down in the aftermath of the Anglo-Norman invasion.

Giraldus Cambrensis stated in the 'Expugnatio Hibernica', 'the augmentation of a family fortune...was the primary motivation of the warriors who streamed to Ireland'.[14] This argument can obviously be applied to John de Courcy, Bertram de Verdon and Hugh de Lacy, the most important Anglo-Normans in relation to the colonisation of Counties Louth and Down.

[14] A B Scott, F X Martin, *The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis,* (1978), p. 49.

De Courcy began his conquest of Ulster in 1176 and went on to win a series of battles to take control of the province. The most famous battle occurred on 24th June, 1177: this was the second battle of Down, when de Courcy and his men were confronted by a formidable confederation of native Irish including the Cenel nEoghan led by MacLochlainn, the men of Airgialla and the Ulaid, [15] led by MacDunlevy.[16] Through their superior arms and discipline, that de Courcy defeated MacDunleavy and his allies.

De Courcy almost immediately began encastellating Down and Antrim, building the first castles in Ulster. These included mottes, like Dromore and Clough but also the great stone castles at Dundrum and Carrickfergus. He also transformed the monastic scene in Ulster, not only through importation of various monastic orders but by providing us with the first examples of the Gothic tradition in Ireland.[17]

In the summer of 1185, Bertram de Verdon III accompanied Prince John[18] to Ireland, probably at the behest of Henry II. Bertram had come to Ireland, not in the role of adventurer, but that of a royal administrator and he was granted extensive endowments covering much of the modern county of Louth. Henry II knew he could rely on Bertram to run his colony in his absence as although he had military experience, he was first and foremost a royal servant.

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[15] An Irish dynasty, existing since the 5th century, and from whom the name Ulster originates, who had been pushed back over time to the east of the Bann by the Cenel nEoghan and these two tribes had remained constant enemies.

[16] James Lydon, 'John de Courcy and the Medieval Frontier', in *Worsted in the Game – Losers in Irish History,* (1989), pp. 40-41.

[17] R A Stalley, *The Cistercian Monasteries of Ireland,* (1987), pp. 245-6.

[18] In 1177 Henry II designated his son John as Lord of Ireland.

Louth lay between Meath and Ulster and these lands were held by Hugh de Lacy and John de Courcy respectively. As Smith argues, both men were viewed with suspicion by Henry II and raids into Louth from de Lacy's Meath and de Courcy's Ulster were common by the late 1170s and 1180s.[19]

Bertram and his descendants played an essential role in the development of Dundalk town and its surrounding hinterland. The de Verdons constructed monuments which continue to play an essential role in the archaeological character of Louth. These included Roche Castle, which still overawes the landscape, situated on the Louth-Armagh border and both the Grey Friary and St Leonard's Hospital and Priory, which, until their dissolution, played essential roles within the life of the town of Dundalk.

The organising of the 'kingdom of Meath'[20] was one of the notable achievements of the Normans and this success was mainly due to the determination and ambition of Hugh de Lacy.[21] Although Hugh was not a Geraldine,[22] he, amongst all the Anglo-Normans described by Giraldus in the 'Expugnatio Hibernica', was the one best equipped for the job at hand i.e. the gradually supplementation of the native Irish clan system by harnessing contemporary structures in England.[23] This included the swift encastellation of the region, a regular system of knight's fees and settling the

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[19] Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland,* (1999), pps. 30-31.
[20] Called Mide by the native Irish, meaning 'middle place'.
[21] T W Moody, F X Martin (eds), *The Course of Irish History,* (1967), p. 135.
[22] The Geraldines were descendants of Gerald de Windsor and Nest, daughter of the last native prince of Dyfed, and included the Fitzgerald's, de Barris, Carews and others who, described by Giraldus Cambrensis as "My People", were related by ties of marriage and kinship.
[23] Brendan Smith, 'Tenure and Locality in North Leinster in the Early Thirteenth Century' in *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland – Essays presented to J F Lydon,* T B Barry, Robin Frame and Katherine Simms (eds), (1995), pps. 29-40.

area with his vassals and fellow knights while at the same time attracting the native Irish back into the region to till the land and herd the castle.[24]

In the medieval period, the area which constituted the kingdom of Meath included the modern counties of Meath and Westmeath, as well as parts of Longford and Offaly. Meath was in a vital geographical position which Henry II was quick to realise - he issued a charter which, for the service of fifty knights, granted Hugh the whole kingdom of Meath. He quickly began subinfeudating his new acquisition. One of the stipulations of these land grants was the defence of Meath from attack by the native Irish and to achieve this, his tenants, in conjunction with Hugh, began a process of the encastellation of the area.[25]

However, de Lacy's programme of construction was not limited to County Meath. The *Gormanstown Register* tells us that in 1195, Hugh de Lacy, the future Earl of Ulster, married Lescelina, daughter of Bertram de Verdun and received her half of the de Verdun lands in County Louth.[26] When de Verdun died in 1192, it was de Lacy who is credited with the construction of what was to become known as King John's Castle, between 1195 and 1210. He also built Greencastle in c. 1240 to protect the southern approaches to the Earldom of Ulster, particularly the ferry that crossed from Greencastle to King John's castle, which provided an essential link to his lordship of Carlingford.

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[24] T W Moody, F X Martin (eds), *The Course of Irish History,* (1967), p. 135.
[25] Ibid, p. 83.
[26] James Mills and M S McEnery (eds), *The Gormanstown Register,* (1916), pps. 192-193.

SOURCES

Sweetman and Buckley's *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* contains detailed field surveys for all the known sites within the county. The survey is compiled as an alphabetical listing and each entry begins with its Ordinance Survey reference and an Ordnance Datum reference. Details for each monument include its siting and date of construction, the type of stone used and a complete archaeological description of each portion of the monument. For example, under the 'Liberties of Carlingford', Sweetman and Buckley provide a very detailed archaeological overview of King John's Castle, not only describing the roughly coursed limestone blocks used in its construction and the date each part was constructed but the archaeology of each section, from the D-shaped curtain wall to the various towers, including the original gate-tower.

Another very important part of the Survey is its inclusion of plans of various monuments, as well as a photographic record. Again, with reference to King John's Castle, the plan contained on page 321 of the Survey was vital when conducting my own fieldwork at the castle. It allowed me to follow the exact line of the castle and to photograph the most important archaeological elements, as detailed by the survey. It also confirmed the various sections which made up the Castle, as well as identifying when each part was constructed.

An Archaeological Survey of County Down took twelve years to complete and throughout this time, its authors, Waterman and Collins, published their findings in the Ulster Journal of Archaeology, as they excavated throughout the county. Jope edited the Survey, which was not only the first systematic survey of the whole archaeology of an Irish county but, as McNeill points out, was also an important

series of statements on the results and interpretation of the record; uniquely in the British Isles, it included houses down to the end of the 18th century.[27]

This resource provides a very detailed archaeological survey on each of the monuments built in County Down included in this thesis. For example, the section on Greencastle takes up almost eight pages within the survey and includes a plan of the whole castle and both a horizontal and vertical plan of the keep. The archaeological research extremely detailed: it begins with a chronological history of the castle and then explains the siting of the castle; it then gives an archaeological report on all the elements of the castle from the curtain wall, the towers and the keep.

Three articles by Waterman in the Ulster Journal of Archaeology, together with my own fieldwork, helped shape my argument in relation to the mottes constructed by de Courcy in County Down. 'Excavations at Clough Castle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* Vol XVII, (1954), pps. 103-163; 'Excavations at Dromore Motte, County Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* Vol XVII, (1954), pps. 164-168: 'Excavations at Dundrum Castle, County Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* Vol XIV, (1951), pps. 15-29.

Each article not only laid out in precise detail the excavations undertaken by Waterman, but also provided detailed plans which assisted in my own fieldwork, allowing me to track each archaeological feature. Waterman began by describing the remains of each castle, explaining its siting and history and listing the few documentary sources available regarding these monuments. In the case of Clough, for instance, he not only provides a plan of the whole castle, including the tower, hall and

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[27] Tom McNeill, 'Obituary, Prof Martyn Jope', in The Independent (London), Nov 23, 1996, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4158/is_19961123/ai_n14082098, accessed 8 July, 2008.

even the palisades, but he also provides a detailed plan of the various sections of the motte, above and below ground.

When researching for the chapters dealing with the archaeology of various religious foundations in Louth and Down and comparative structures in England, two important sources were David Knowles and R Neville Hadcock's *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* and Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock's *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland, with an appendix to earlier sites.* Both books proved to be useful for complete listings of religious houses within Ireland, England and Wales. Although many of the entries would consist merely of a short paragraph when detailing specific houses, these entries were both concise and accurate and would include details from the foundation of the specific monastery or abbey, the endowments bestowed upon it and by whom, the development of the foundation and hardships which it endured and finally, its position at the time of the supposition. Many of the details within the *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* were taken from sources as respected as William Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum*[28]. The extensive use of sources adds authority to both these volumes.

Both books were divided by religious orders and another important part of these books was the 'General Notes' section, placed before the listing of each foundation for a particular order. For example, under the 'General Notes' for the Augustinian Canons within *Medieval Religious Houses, Ireland*, Gwynn and Hadcock go into very precise detail regarding the introduction and development of the Augustinian Canons within Ireland, with a large amount of text devoted to the contribution of St Malachy.

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[28] The Monasticon Anglicanum contains selected charters recording gifts of land and churches to monastic houses in England and Wales

Thus the book does not just provide lists of religious foundations but actually adds to our knowledge about the development of the main religious orders.

While acknowledging that both these sources' main contribution to this thesis were short and concise lists of religious foundations, they proved very useful as a 'jumping off' point, from which to develop my research.

A vital element of this research involved identifying the main Anglo-Norman families who settled in Louth and Down after the conquest. This meant studying these families in terms of the land they were granted, the monuments they constructed and the role they played in the development of the areas in which they settled. As such, it was necessary to examine this question from both a historical and an archaeological standpoint. From a historical perspective, A B Scott and F X Martin's, *Expugnatio Hibernica, The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis* proved invaluable. It was written as contemporary history, based on events actually witnessed by its author, de Barry, on information he gathered from the invaders and on documentary material. Of course because de Barry had many relatives who played a significant role in the invasion, the *Expugnatio Hibernica* cannot be viewed as a totally objective source but as 'a defence produced by an agent of an invading and conquering army to justify its actions in dispossessing the native peoples.'[29] As de Barry himself put it 'You will never find that any race has even been conquered except when their sins demanded this as punishment.'[30] However, there was a positive side to the fact that the book often deals with the exploits of Gerald's relatives – he was exceptionally well placed to know what he was writing about. And by checking his descriptions and statements

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[29] Seán Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages,* (1997), p. 7
[30] A B Scott, F X Martin, *Expugnatio Hibernica,* (1978), p. 233.

against other contemporary sources, including *The Song of Dermot and the Earl* and the various *Irish Annals,* we can be fairly certain that his facts are substantially correct, while acknowledging his bias in favour of the Geraldines.[31]

Some of the most important elements of the *Expugnatio Hibernica* are the character sketches Gerald provided us with. He stated that John de Courcy '...was in all respects devoted to religious observance, and whenever he had succeeded in any enterprise, he would attribute that success entirely to God's grace and give thanks accordingly...'.[32] De Courcy's religious devotion is an important point when arguing that he made a lasting archaeological contribution to County Down with his construction of Inch and Grey Abbey and indeed provided us thereby with the earliest known examples of Gothic architecture in Ireland.

The *Expugnatio Hibernica* also acknowledged that de Courcy 'fortified all parts of Ulaid with castles built in suitable places'[33], providing us with contemporary confirmation of de Courcy's encastellation of County Down.

Regarding Hugh de Lacy, Gerald confirmed Henry II's grant to Hugh: 'The king, then, left the following in command of the garrisons: at Dublin Hugh de Lacy, to who he had already given Meath under grant, with twenty knights...'[34] He also reported that de Lacy '...made an excellent job of fortifying Leinster and Meath with castles'[35]

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[31] F X Martin, 'Giraldus as Historian', in *Expugnatio Hibernica*, (1978), p. 278.
[32] A B Scott, F X Martin, *Expugnatio Hibernica,* (1978), p. 181.
[33] Ibid, p. 181.
[34] F X Martin, 'Giraldus as Historian', in *Expugnatio Hibernica*, (1978), p. 278.
[35] Ibid, p. 191.

and emphasised this again when he states that de Lacy '...built a large number of castles...'[36]

Although this research was undertaken primarily from an archaeological viewpoint, it was essential to complement any archaeological findings with contemporary documentary sources. No examination of the events and leading figures within the conquest of Ireland would be complete without the study of the *Expugnatio Hibernica*. While Gerald wrote his history from the viewpoint of the Anglo-Norman invaders, another important documentary source, the Irish annals, would not have provided us with a full and detailed description of the Anglo-Norman invasion or the principal figures involved. But taken together with the *Expugnatio Hibernica*, they provide us with a fairly accurate description of the main players, dates and events then taking place in medieval Ireland.

The Irish annals are a set of records containing dates and facts regarding the inauguration and death of kings, various battles, the taking of hostages, the erection of castles and founding of monasteries, the arrival of the Anglo-Normans, all listed under the year when they occurred. They originated as marginal notes in chronological tables used to calculate the date of Easter in the medieval monasteries.[37] This recording and preserving of historic records would then pass from monastic foundations into secular learned families after the monastic reform of the 12th and 13th centuries.[38]

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[36] F X Martin, 'Giraldus as Historian', in *Expugnatio Hibernica*, (1978), p. 195
[37] Robert Welch and Bruce Stewart, *The Oxford Companion to Irish Literature*, p. 15.
[38] Ibid, p. 15.

While the Irish annals are an extremely important source for chronological events in medieval Gaelic society, there are a number of problems associated with them. Firstly, while the annals listed the main important events which took place from year to year, they seldom provided much detail, a problem which is intrinsic to this type of record.[39] A good example of this would be the expedition to Ireland by John, son of King Henry II, in 1185. In the *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland*, this event, from John's arrival to departure, takes up nine lines, including the following: 'The son of the King of England, that is, John, son of Henry II, came to Ireland, with a fleet of sixty ships, to assume the government of the kingdom. He took possession of Dublin and Leinster, and erected castles at Tipraid-Fachtna and Ardfinan, out of which he plundered Munster; but his people were defeated with great slaughter by Donnell O'Brien. The son of the King of England then returned to England...'[40] For this same occasion there are over ten pages of text within the *Expugnatio Hibernica*, not only reporting on events but analysing them under various headings including 'The delay in and the obstacles to a full and complete conquest'[41] and 'The reasons for his (John's) lack of success'.[42]

Another criticism regarding the Irish annals is that several of the most important chronicles now exist only as copies compiled centuries after the events which they describe.[43] However, with regard to this research, the most useful chronicle proved to be the McCarthy's *The Annals of Ulster: Vol II, A.D. 1057-1131, 1155-1378, (*Her

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[39] Benjamin T Hudson, *The Prophecy of Berchán: Irish and Scottish High Kings of the Middle Ages,* (1996), p. 96.
[40] John O'Donovan, *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland, by The Four Masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616,* Volume III, (1856), pps. 67-69.
[41] A B Scott, F X Martin, *Expugnatio Hibernica,* (1978), p. 231.
[42] Ibid, p. 237.
[43] Benjamin T Hudson, *The Prophecy of Berchán: Irish and Scottish High Kings of the Middle Ages,* (1996), p. 96.

majesty's Stationery Office. And fortunately, they are also the most reliable source for the earlier medieval period, especially for the north of Ireland. The *Annals of Ulster* survive in two vernacular manuscripts from the late 15th to early 16th century and also preserve an early record known as the 'Irish World Chronicle'[44] which ended in the early 10th century.[45] Koch argues that one of the most remarkable features of the *Annals of Ulster* is the fidelity of the scribes in preserving Old-Irish forms, even archaisms, which he claims gives the them a greater authority than other annals.[46] Because these annals comprise copies of earlier material, they can be considered more accurate than other contemporary annals.

The *Annals of Ulster* helped to confirm and often add to knowledge of particular events or individuals. For instance, when researching the Grey Friary in Seatown, the argument that the Abbey had played an important role within the town was confirmed by the following entry for the year 1253: 'Mael-Padraig Ua Sgannuil...was consecrated in the monastery of the Friars Minor of Dundealgan on the First Sunday of the Advent of the Lord (Nov 30).'[47] The fact that Patrick O'Scanlon, Archbishop of Armagh, was consecrated at the Grey Friary and that it was confirmed in the *Annals of Ulster*, certainly added legitimacy to claims within this thesis regarding the importance of this abbey.

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[44] It should be noted that most of the Irish Annals dealing with the early medieval period appear to share common entries, which are attributed to the lost 'Irish World Chronicle'.
[45] Benjamin T Hudson, *The Prophecy of Berchán: Irish and Scottish High Kings of the Middle Ages,* (1996), p. 95.
[46] John T Koch, *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopaedia,* (2005), p. 71.
[47] B MacCarthy, (ed), *The Annals of Ulster, Vol II, AD 1057-1131: 1155-1378,* (1893), p. 317.

LAYOUT OF THESIS

When applying the criteria detailed under 'Methodology' to County Down, it became immediately apparent that John de Courcy played a fundamental role in County Down's medieval archaeological heritage.

The first chapter on de Courcy will argue that, over time, his family's powerbase was shifted from Somerset to the northwest of England. By acknowledging his familiarity with this area, this study will show that he imported various architectural elements and styles and incorporated them into the monuments he constructed within County Down.

It was de Courcy who built the first castles in Down, mainly the mottes, still present on the landscape today and his stone castles at Carrickfergus and Dundrum. It is important from the start to decide which monuments in Louth and Down will (or will not) be included in this thesis. Rather than a brief overview of all the monuments constructed by the selected Anglo-Norman lords in both counties, this research will provide a detailed examination of *specific* castles and religious foundations. Each structure will be examined on its own merits. With regards to the castles constructed by de Courcy in County Down, the focus of this thesis will be on the motte and bailey castles at Dromore, Clough and the stone castle at Dundrum. The reason it has been decided to narrow this study to these three castles is due to the fact that twelfth century Ulster was not the modern province we envisage today. Instead it covered the area east of the Bann, including the modern counties of Antrim and Down and was

ripe with internecine fighting.[48] John de Courcy and his fellow Anglo-Normans were in the minority and his urgent construction of motte and bailey castles and eventually, stone castles, would greatly aid his conquest of this enemy territory. It is in this context that de Courcy's castles shall be examined.

Turning to the religious foundations established by John de Courcy, this study will examine the history and archaeology of Inch and Grey Abbey and argue that it was de Courcy who provided us with the first known examples of Gothic architecture in Ireland.

This will require an analysis of the development of Gothic architecture, leading to a study of the Cistercian Order and the reasons they embraced this style of architectural style. Through research this thesis will produce an in-depth study of the archaeological features at Inch Abbey and argue that many of its architectural features were imported directly from de Courcy's homelands in England. It will be shown that an essentially Gothic element of both Inch and Furness was the pointed heads of windows and arches, visual effects which forced the visitor's eye to follow the lines of the building upwards and not so much along its length.[49] These features, together with the pointed windows and stone carvings in the arches at Inch and the type of vaulting over the chapels, are all elements specific to the Gothic style of northern England.

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[48] James Lydon, 'John de Courcy and the Medieval Frontier', *in Worsted in the Game – Losers in Irish History* , (1989), p. 38.
[49] J P Mallory and T E McNeill, *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonization to Plantation,* (1991), p. 278.

De Courcy's introduction of the new Gothic Style, and his continuing connections with the north of England, were confirmed by the foundation of Grey Abbey c. 1193. It will be argued that this abbey was built by English stonemasons, that it was occupied largely by English monks and that its architectural style, with its crossing tower and pointed lancet windows, is a good example of north English Gothic.[50]

When applying the requirements for inclusion within this thesis to Louth, there were a number of Anglo-Norman settlers considered. However, one particular dynasty would go on to have a critical influence on the development of north Louth, even founding the county's largest town, Dundalk. More importantly, they constructed some of the finest monuments within the county, including the Grey Friary in Seatown, Dundalk and Roche Castle, on the Louth-Armagh border.

Bertram de Verdon III arrived in Ireland as part of Prince John's retinue in the summer of 1185 and was granted extensive endowments covering much of modern day County Louth. Research will show that in the aftermath of the invasion of England (over one hundred years earlier), the de Verdons, originally from Normandy, were granted land in Staffordshire and Leicestershire – these are the lands which will be studied when looking for similar buildings to the monuments the de Verdons constructed in Louth.

As mentioned above, it is important from the start to decide which monuments will be included in this thesis. When Bertram de Verdon chose Castletown as the site for his chief manor in Louth, he constructed a motte and bailey castle which still remains

[50] C E B Brett, *Buildings of North County Down*, (2002), p. 8.

today. While this motte would have played a very important role in subjugating the local population and was actually mentioned in contemporary documents, it is Roche Castle, constructed by Rohesia de Verdon, c. 1230, which will be the focus of this study. There are a number of reasons for analysing the archaeology of Roche Castle and the history of Rohesia de Verdon, as opposed to concentrating on Bertram and the Castletown motte. a) Roche Castle is the largest fortress to be built by any de Verdon and also has the most substantial remains. b) Rohesia de Verdon is credited with being the only female to have built a major castle in Ireland. c) Its use of massive half round gate-towers and its incorporation of natural defences provided by its position on the edge of a very precipitous rock, points to Roche Castle as being one of the most innovatively designed castles in Ireland in this period.

While detailing the archaeology of Roche Castle, this thesis will also provide a comparable study between it and Beeston Castle in Cheshire, which, it will be argued, Roche Castle was based on. Both Beeston and Roche Castle were constructed within potentially rebellious areas. It will be shown that both these castles include various archaeological features that are early examples of the developments within castle building in the 13th century, including flanking towers and a strong gatehouse. When comparing the archaeology of both castles, this research will make a further argument – that if Roche is comparable to Beeston, Beeston is comparable to the Crusader Castle of Sahyoun in Syria, particularly with regard to its rock-cut defences

Turning to the religious foundations built by the de Verdons, this thesis will concentrate on St Leonard's Hospital and Priory and the Gray Friary, both constructed in Seatown, Dundalk. The decision to analyse the archaeology and history of these

particular buildings is due to the fact that both constructions played a major role in establishing the new medieval town of Dundalk (which was sited c2km from Castletown, sometime in the early 13th century) and both remain part of the essential character of Seatown today.

St Leonard's priory and hospital could have been constructed as early as 1188 and thus pre-date the town of Dundalk itself. [51] There are only fragmentary remains of the original priory but through excavations and primary documentary sources it will be possible to provide a detailed analysis of this monument and its role within the medieval town of Dundalk. This study will also look at the origins of the Fratres Cruciferi, who ran the hospital and friary and attempt to discover why Bertram de Verdon was responsible for the only church dedicated in Ireland to St Leonard. Finally, we will look at contemporary medieval monuments, constructed in Leicestershire and Staffordshire (Bertram's homelands in England), in order to find similar archaeological features and styles.

The Grey Friary was situated 250m to the east of St Leonard's, on the outskirts of the new town of Dundalk. Today the remains consist of a 15th century bell-tower – this was part of the friary church that stood right on the street front.[52] The original friary extended from Chapel Lane to Brown's Mill in Dundalk. [53] This was also the harbour area, and the friary's northern boundary was the water of the tidal estuary. There is some doubt about who constructed the friary – its foundation has been attributed to both Rohesia and her son John. This study will claim that regardless of

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[51] Paul Gosling, *From Dún Delca to Dundalk, The topography and archaeology of a medieval frontier town, AD c.1187-1700,* (1993), p. 265.
[52] Ibid, (1993), p. 313.
[53] Brown's Mills was situated at the end of Mill Street, at the corner of Seatown Place and Barrack Street.

the original grantee of the friary, it was John who became a principal patron and benefactor to the infant Franciscan community and a substantial contributor to the erection of the friary's church and buildings.[54] Also within the chapter on the de Verdons, we will look at the reasons for John's devotion to the Franciscans and the Gray Friary and will again look to his homelands in England for any similar constructions he may have been replicating.

One of the most well-known monuments in Louth is King John's castle at Carlingford. The decision to research the history and archaeology of this monument as part of this thesis leads us to another Anglo-Norman dynasty, the de Lacys, who were one of the most influential families to settle in Ireland after the conquest. What makes the de Lacys particularly interesting with regards to this thesis is that they built castles in both Louth and Down - King John's Castle in Carlingford, County Louth and Greencastle in County Down. Together these castles had one principle purpose i.e. guarding the sea route into the Earldom of Ulster through Carlingford Lough.

However, before we can attempt an archaeological analysis of the above castles, it will be necessary to provide a historical analysis of the de Lacy family. As is the case with the de Verdons and John de Courcy, this thesis is attempting to understand why the de Lacys' constructed particular castles in specific places. This necessitates an understanding of the historical context within which these castles were built and requires us to examine the circumstances in which the de Lacys found themselves during the family's early years in Ireland. This research should allow us to prove that these the two castles were constructed as fortresses, intended to act hand in hand with

[54] Harold O'Sullivan, *The Franciscans in Dundalk,* p. 33.

the subinfeudation of the local population and to symbolize the strength of the Anglo-Normans. Furthermore, the protection of this area of north Louth and south Down was vital in order to protect Ulster.

The next step will be a comparative study of King John's Castle with Greencastle, looking at their specific archaeological features and identifying any similarities and differences between both castles. Again, bearing in mind the need to prove a connection between the castles constructed in Louth/Down and similar castles in England/Wales, this study will then undertake a comparative archaeological study of Greencastle and Skenfrith Castle in Gwent. Skenfrith Castle was located very close to the de Lacy seat at Ewias Lacy and the family was probably very familiar with the design and layout at Skenfrith. These facts should allow for the conclusion that the overall plan at Greencastle is similar to that at Skenfrith.

When turning to religious foundations established by the de Lacys in Louth and Down, it soon became apparent that there was very limited choice. Margaret Murphy of the Discovery Programme suggested widening the scope of this thesis to include Meath. However, the author was very reluctant to deviate from the original scope and after some discussions with Professor Terry Barry, it was decided to keep the focus of this research within the confines of Counties Louth and Down. As a result, this thesis will study the history and archaeology St Peter's medieval church in Drogheda. This church was founded by Hugh de Lacy towards the end of the 12th century and while little remains of the original medieval structure, there are a small number of archaeological elements still in situ and these, together with extracts from Isaac Butler's journal and Robert Newcomen's map of Drogheda from 1657, will allow us

to conjecture how this monument would have looked. This will in turn allow for a comparative study between the medieval church at Llanthony Priory in Gwent, which was also founded by the de Lacy family, c. 1105 and St Peter's medieval church in Drogheda.

The final section will return to Carlingford and undertake a detailed study of the Dominican Priory at Carlingford. The reasons for the inclusion of the priory within this thesis are threefold. Firstly, it was built by Richard de Burgh, an Anglo-Norman lord who would dominate the Irish political scene in the late 13th and early 14th century. Secondly, after analysing the archaeology of monuments built in the early part of the time period under investigation, it will be important to look at the archaeology of a structure built at the latter end of this era. Finally, having detailed the Cistercian Order and Gothic architecture, it will be interesting to turn to the Dominicans and show how the archaeology of the mendicant orders contrasts with the Cistercians and their churches.

One problem encountered early on in the research on Richard de Burgh is that there is very little known about de Burgh direct ancestors in England. At this point the author briefly considered setting aside the work already completed on de Burgh in favour of someone whose pedigree was more accessible and detailed. However, the fact that de Burgh's family background is obscure does not disguise the fact that he dominated the Irish political scene for more than four decades and played a fundamental role in the colonisation of both Connacht and Ulster. Furthermore, the Dominican priory at Carlingford deserves to be included in this thesis, firstly because as a whole structure

it provides us with a very good example of a medieval Dominican priory and secondly because of its many specific archaeological features.

Research will be undertaken to outline a genealogical background on Richard de Burgh, in effort to pinpoint where he was raised in England. As in each case above, the chapter on de Burgh will also ask why he chose to support the Dominicans and detail the arrival of the order in Ireland. Finally, this study will include an archaeological comparison between this priory and similar religious foundations de Burgh may have been familiar with.

From the above it should be clear that this thesis will involve both documentary and archaeological research. The aim of this study is to prove that the monuments constructed by the Anglo-Norman lords who settled here after the invasion of Ireland were replicating the features and styles of similar buildings found within their homelands in England and Wales. It is hoped that through the above themes it will be possible to prove this argument.

Chapter 2

John De Courcy and the encastellation of Ulster

Over the years, the phrase 'a landless Somerset knight'[1] has often been applied by historians to John de Courcy. While there has been a plethora of information written about de Courcy after his arrival in Ireland, less was known about his background in England. Although the de Courcy family did indeed have land in Somerset, it is John's connection to the northwest of England that provides us with an explanation for his conquest of Ulster. From the archaeology of the great monasteries he built in County Down, to the signatories on the many charters he issued during his reign as Lord of Ulster, we are pointed again and again towards northwest England. This essay will attempt to analyse these connections and will argue that it is impossible to explain his assault on the northeast region of Ireland without acknowledging his ackground in this light. More importantly, it will further the argument that de Courcy was influenced by the architectural style of buildings from the northwest of England.

In order to reach the above conclusion, this chapter will explore the following themes: a brief analysis of de Courcy's background, which will provide an answer to the question 'Why Ulster?'; an overview of the conquest itself; the archaeology of his encastellation of Ulster and the monasteries he founded in Down.

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[1] James Lydon refers to him as 'minor gentry in Somerset' in 'John de Courcy (c.1150-1219) and the Medieval Frontier' in *Worsted in the Game – Losers in Irish History,* (1989), p. 38.

Powerful Connections

For many years the orthodox view of John de Courcy's background was that he 'came from a family seated at Stoke Courcy in Somerset...'[2] However Sean Duffy has conclusively demonstrated that this was not the case and that in fact de Courcy's family was based in the northwest of England. [3]

John de Courcy's family background is complicated and a genealogy table is appended (Appendix 1)[4] to give a clearer picture. But by acknowledging his background we can provide an answer to that most important of questions – Why Ulster? If we simply accepted the oft repeated idea of this 'landless Somerset knight', we would find no explanation for de Courcy's assault on the north-east coast of Ireland – but, if we acknowledge his connections to an area less than seventy miles away, on the northwest coast of England, directly across the Irish sea, his interest in Ulster can probably be explained.[5]

Once John de Courcy had settled in the northwest of England, the obvious action to take (at least for an adventurer like John) would be to push into Ulster. But this could occur only after establishing connections with another vital region: the Isle of Man. De Courcy did not simply decide to invade Ulster because he was bored and longed for adventure (as is claimed by various historians including Orpen: 'de Courcy would

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[2] Goddard Henry Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans, 1169-1216,* Volume II, (1968), p. 8.
[3] Duffy minutely details de Coury's background in 'The First Plantation: John de Courcy and the Men of Cumbria' in *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland,* (1995). Through charters and other primary documents, he conclusively proves that when de Courcy's father married Avice de Meschin, daughter of William de Meschin and Cecily de Rumilly, the family's powerbase shifted to Cumbria in the northwest of England.
[4] See Appendices, p. ii.
[5] A J Otway-Rutven, 'Dower charter of John de Courcy's wife' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1949), p. 4.

have found it hard to cope with Fitz Audelin's timid rule and thus he sprung into action'[6]). He had a definite knowledge of what was in store for him and perhaps had been preparing for this assault for many years. Although it coincided with the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland, John's actions in Ulster had more to do with expansionism. This objective could be better achieved by knowing he had support from his connections in Cumbria and the Isle of Man.

De Courcy's marriage to Affreca, the daughter of Godfred, the Norse King of the Isle of Man, was most likely political, to seal an alliance with her father who paid homage to the King of Norway. The advantage to be gained by a well-judged marriage into a Scandinavian dynasty was well understood by de Courcy.[7] By marrying Affreca, de Courcy was weaving ties of family and political friendship with many powerful allies, and in particular, was making his Lecale free from Viking raids. Affreca also provided de Courcy with connections to Scotland – her aunt had married Somerled, the Scandinavian Lord of Argyll and the Isles. [8] Furthermore, the Manx Chronicle tells us that Affreca's father, King Godfred, took for his second wife, Findguala MacLochlainn, daughter of the King of the Cenel nEoghan in Ulster.[9] This would eventually lead to an extremely advantageous relationship for John de Courcy.

John was also nephew by marriage to the son of the King of Scotland, Duncan II. William Meschin, John's grandfather, had two daughters: Avice had married William de Courcy II (John's father), while Alice had married William Fitz Duncan (the

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[6] Goddard Henry Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans, 1169-1216,* (1911), p. 10.
[7] J R S Philips, 'The Anglo-Norman Nobility', in *The English in Medieval Ireland,* (1984), p. 89.
[8] Ibid, p. 102.
[9] 'Courcy and Kinsale' – detailed biography of John de Courcy
http://www.courcy.com/sirjohndecourcy.html

King's son), thus making him John's uncle.[10] All the above relationships led to strong political connections in Ulster, Scotland and the Isle of Man, imperative for anyone attempting to conquer the northeast of Ireland.

There was also a further connection between Cumbria, the Isle of Man and Ulster – religion. The twelfth century was a period of major reform of the Church, with great monasteries springing up in Northern England. One of these was Furness in Lancashire. An abbey for the monks of Savigny was founded in 1125 at Tulketh in Lancashire by Stephen, Count of Boulogne and Mortain (later to be King of England) – Stephen soon afterwards re-founded the abbey on at better site at Furness which went on to become one of the largest houses of the Cistercian order, with several colonies of monks sent out to establish abbeys elsewhere.[11] In 1127, Mac Dunleavy, King of Ulster, requested the establishment of a daughter house of Furness in Co Down. This is an extremely important connection – exactly fifty years before de Courcy's conquest of Ulster, there was an ecclesiastical link (pre-dating any secular link) between the North of England and Ulster. Furness also had a daughter house on the Isle of Man, Rushen Abbey, founded in the 1130s by King Olaf.

Holmcultram in Cumberland, another Cistercian Abbey, founded by Henry, Son of David (King of Scotland), also held lands on the Isle of Man.[12] And finally, St Bees of Copeland, established by William Meschin before 1125, held lands near Douglas in the Isle of Man.[13] Thus three important monasteries in Cumbria - Furness, Holmcultram and St Bees - all had connections with the Isle of Man (and in the case

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[10] J R S Philips, 'The Anglo-Norman Nobility', in *The English in Medieval Ireland,* (1984, p. 102.
[11] David Knowles, R Neville, *Medieval Houses, England and Wales,* (1971), p. 119.
[12] Ibid, p. 119.
[13] Seán Duffy, 'The First Plantation: John de Courcy and the Men of Cumbria', in *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland,* (1995), p. 6.

of Furness, with Ulster). These monasteries were almost like stepping-stones between the three regions.

As Smith states, although the long-established image of de Courcy as an obscure Somerset knight has been overturned, it remains a fact that he was not, in reality, a great landed magnate and his conquest of Ulster can still be viewed as perhaps the most remarkable achievement of the early years of English involvement in Ireland.[14] Lydon agrees, arguing that de Courcy pushed the Norman frontier to its furthest limits in the North of Ireland and that he, more than any other figure, gripped the imagination of the later Anglo-Irish.[15]

John de Courcy's Conquest of Ulster

De Courcy's first contact in Ireland was in 1171-72, during Henry II's expedition. The king, probably half-joking, granted de Courcy a licence to take the province of Ulster[16] 'Si a force la peust conquere' – if he could take it by force.[17] We know this because of The Song of Dermot and the Earl[18] which states 'to one John he (Henry II) granted Ulster, if he could conquer it by force; John de Courcy was his name'.[19] Henry's largesse (whether in jest or not), may have been because MacLochlainn, the king of the Cenel nEoghan – a group of tribes whose king was recognised as the high-

[14] Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland – The English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (1999), p. 29.
[15] James Lydon, 'John de Courcy and the Medieval Frontier', in *Worsted in the Game – Losers in Irish History,* (1989), p. 37.
[16] It should be noted that in the medieval period, Ulster was not the modern province we know today, but the part of it which lies east of the Bann, incorporating the modern counties of Down and Antrim.
[17] Goddard Henry Orpen, *The Song of Dermot and the Earl,* (1982), p. 199.
[18] The Song of Dermot and the Earl is a Norman-French poem written sometime in the early thirteenth century. Together with Giraldus Cambrensis' Expugnatio Hibernica, it remains one of the most important documentary sources of the Conquest of Ulster.
[19] Goddard Henry Orpen, *The Song of Dermot and the Earl* (1982), p. 199.

king of the whole northern province – had been the only one among the main kings of Ulster who remained aloof from Henry.[20]

In the latter half of 1176, John de Courcy returned to Ulster in the company of William Fitz Audelin, the king's steward. Giraldus Cambrensis describes FitzAudelin as greedy and cowardly and argues that 'he inspired neither trust in his subjects nor fear in his enemies'.[21] Giraldus implies this was why de Courcy decided to take matters into his own hand and launch his attack on Ulster. Earlier in this chapter, we questioned the claim that John de Courcy decided to attack Ulster on a whim and that his assault was planned well in advance. John surrounded himself with men from the Dublin garrison including 22 men-at-arms and 300 foot soldiers. In early 1177, under the eagle standard of the de Courcy family, he marched rapidly through Meath and Uriel and invaded Ulster.[22] Together with his men, he skirted the back of the Mourne Mountains and took the city of Down by surprise, defeating Dunleavy, the local chieftain.[23]

De Courcy went on to win a series of battles to take control of Ulster. *The Annals of Ulster* stated 'A hosting by John de Courcy and by his knights into Dal-Araidhe on which they killed Domnall, grandson of Cathusach, King of Dal-Araidhe.[24] *The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland* inform us that 'Dun da leathglas was plundered and destroyed by John and the knights who came in his army.[25] The most famous battle occurred on 24th June, 1177: this was the second battle of Down, when de Courcy and

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[20] Goddard Henry Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans, 1169-1216,* (1911), p. 9.
[21] A B Scott, F X Martin (ed), *The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis,* (1978), p. 175.
[22] T W Moody, FX Martin, *The Course of Irish History,* (1967), p. 135.
[23] Annette Jocelyn Otway Ruthven, *A History of Medieval Ireland,* (1980), p. 58.
[24] B MacCarthy, *The Annals of Ulster,* 1893, p. 185.
[25] Kenneth Nicholls, *The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland,* (1990), p. 31.

his men were confronted by a formidable confederation of native Irish including the Cenel nEoghan led by MacLochlainn, the men of Airgialla and the Ulaid, [26] led by MacDunlevy[27] (Appendix 2).[28] This army was also accompanied by various clergymen, including the Archbishop of Armagh, who brought their most powerful relics to protect the Irish.[29] Gerald Cambrensis claimed in the *Expugnatio Hibernica* that there were over ten thousand Irishmen ready to battle John de Courcy: like many of Gerald's descriptions of the Norman Conquest we can take this to be an exaggeration[30], but it does give us an idea of what John was facing.

Giraldus Cambrensis also informs us that at this stage de Courcy had constructed a weak fortress in the corner of the city,[31] but he only had 700 men and thus was heavily outnumbered by the Irish confederation. Giraldus refers to this fortress as a municipium[32] – although he labelled it as flimsy and ill-fortified, the small defending force of Norman knights and men were able to hold out against what seems like overwhelming odds, even if we allow for the probable exaggeration by Giraldus.[33] Furthermore, the Normans had considerable military advantages over the native Irish – heavy armour, fearsome longbows (carried by the Welsh archers) and knights

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[26] An Irish dynasty, existing since the 5th century, and from whom the name Ulster originates, who had been pushed back over time to the east of the Bann by the Cenel nEoghan and these two tribes had remained constant enemies.
[27] James Lydon, 'John de Courcy and the Medieval Frontier', in *Worsted in the Game – Losers in Irish History,* (1989), pp. 40-41.
[28] See Appendices, p. iii.
[29] Ibid, pp. 40-41.
[30] Scott and Martin note that Giraldus lists numbers of men in battle or expedition 19 times throughout the Expugnatio Hibernica. While he was in a position to know the number of Normans in these situations, Giraldus could only guess the opposition numbers and it was an accepted practice in the medieval period to express a great (but unknown) number by as many as sixty thousand.
[31] A B Scott & F X Martin (ed), *The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis,* (1978), p. 177.
[32] Giraldus may have applied this term to some form of earthwork – possibly a ringwork like that at Ferrycarrig.
[33] George Cummingham, *The Anglo-Norman Advance,* (1987), p. 84.

mounted on huge horses.[34] It was through their superior arms and discipline, that de Courcy defeated MacDunleavy and his allies.

In the aftermath of the battle, John became Lord of Ulidia, which he ruled for the next two decades – under his firm guidance Norman genius left a permanent archaeological heritage in Ulster.[35] De Courcy did not come to Ulster on his own: he established a large colony there and brought many men over from Britain after the conquest of Ulster. During his 27 years in Ulster (from 1177 to 1204), de Courcy issued a large number of charters, many of which survive today. All together these charters provide us with a list of about 67 witnesses and although it is impossible to identify many of them (due to the fact their names were so obscure), we can pinpoint many of them to the northwest of England and southern Scotland, from the Wirral to Ayr. Examples of witnesses to John's charters include Arnold, Philip and Hugh, all described as being 'of Chester'[36]; William Savage, who witnessed one of John's charters and held lands in Derbyshire and Chester; Gilbert of Furness, who witnessed a charter of Tommaltach Ua Conchobair, Archbishop of Armagh. [37] In fact, there is only one follower of de Courcy who had a connection to Somerset, Roger Poer.[38] Giraldus tells us 'Roger Poer, a youth yet unbearded, fair-haired, handsome and tall....was rightly deemed second only to John in the renown that he won.[39] Roger (also known as Robert le Poer) not only had connections with Somerset, but with the

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[34] George Cummingham, *The Anglo-Norman Advance,* (1987), p. 40.
[35] T W Moody and F X Martin, *The Course of Irish History,* (1967), pp. 135-136.
[36] J T Gilbert, *The Register of the Abbey of St Thomas the Martyr,* (1889), p. 221.
[37] Rev William Reeves, *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor and Dromore – consisting of a Taxation of those Dioceses,* (1992), pp. 192-93.
[38] Seán Duffy, 'The First Plantation: John de Courcy and the Men of Cumbria', in *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland,* (1995), pp. 16-17 p. 12.
[39] A B Scott & F X Martin (ed), *The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis,* (1978), p. 177.

de Courcy family itself and his family went on to be very prominent in Ireland in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[40]

It is significant that John de Courcy utterly changed the landscape of Ulster in his time. He and his men began to busy themselves encastellating parts of Down and Antrim almost immediately.[41] It was de Courcy who built the first castles in Ulster, mainly mottes, which to this day dot the landscape, like that Dromore, which is arguably the very finest in Ireland.[42] But he also left a more enduring symbol of the Norman overlordship of the area, with his two great stone castles: one at Dundrum, which guards the approach by sea and land to South Down, and the other at Carrickfergus, which still dominates the Belfast Lough.[43]

Local tradition has it that de Courcy built a castle in Downpatrick itself – this argument suggests that the castle site was at the bottom of English Street, where there used to stand a building called Castle Dorras, on a site now occupied by the offices of the local newspaper, The Down Recorder.[44] This would have been an obvious site to build a castle – overlooking both the landing sites for boats and the gateway into the town of Downpatrick. However, De Courcy seems to have concentrated his military power at Dundrum and Carrickfergus and to have left Downpatrick as a religious centre.[45]

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[40] J R S Philips, 'The Anglo-Norman Nobility', *in The English in Medieval Ireland* (1984), p. 101.
[41] Robin Frame, 'War and Peace in the Medieval Lordship of Ireland, in *The English in Medieval Ireland,* (1984), p. 121.
[42] James Lydon, 'John de Courcy and the Medieval Frontier', in *Worsted in the Game – Losers in Irish History,* (1989), p. 44.
[43] Ibid, p. 44.
[44] Information on John de Courcy and Inch Abbey
http://www.devlin-family.com/JohndeCourcy.htm
[45] Ibid.

De Courcy established centres in Carrickfergus, Downpatrick, Dromore, Coleraine, Newry, Dundrum and Carlingford and these centres were more than simply garrisons: around each of them a town grew up, which often included a mill, workshops, houses for officers, artisans and retainers as well as a church.[46]

For the purpose of this essay, we will concentrate on three castles erected by John de Courcy in Down: the motte and baileys of Clough and Dromore and the great stone castle at Dundrum.

SOME BACKGROUND ON MOTTE CASTLES

The introduction of the castle into England was one of the most distinctive transformations on the English landscape brought about by the Norman invasion. This is not to say that England before 1066 was ignorant of the idea of fortification. The Anglo-Saxons of the tenth century were vigorous fortress builders, and the old English burgh was a vital component of the military system – an early 11th century Anglo-Saxon text records that a man was worthy of the rights of a thegn if he had five hides of land, a seat in the king's hall and a chapel, a kitchen, a bell-house and a burhgeat (or defended gatehouse).[47] It is true that these structures containing gatehouse were similar to many of the buildings that have been called castles in Western France and Normandy. But with the coming of the Normans to England, a novel type of fortification was introduced: the timber castle, which included two new features - the great tower and the motte.[48] The motte and bailey castle was *definitely* a new structure in England. There is one very simple and obvious reason why this must

[46] T W Moody and F X Martin, *The Course of Irish History,* (1967), pp. 139.
[47] Eric Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England,* (2000), p. 50.
[48] C Warren Hollister, *The Military Organisation of Norman England,* (1965), p. 136.

be so – if they had existed already the Norman Conquest may not have gone so smoothly for the invaders as the Anglo-Saxons could have used these structures to defend themselves against their attackers.

With regards to Ireland, there is no archaeological or historical evidence that supports the idea of motte building before the Normans arrived in 1169.[49] In general terms Irish mottes followed the traditional form as described below, although they did vary in detail. Indeed, over the last twenty years fieldwork has revealed a wide variation in the shape and size of mottes in Ireland.[50] The vast majority of earthwork castles were built in the early stages of the Norman Invasion but they were not merely constructed for the period of the conquest – many of these earthen fortifications were built for long-term occupation.

The Normans built castles at both centres of population and major strategic centres. Motte and bailey castles carried the same residential structures that are found in stone castles but with an important difference – they were built of timber, clay-clad timber, cob, wattle and daub[51], shingles and thatch.[52] These timber buildings were a vital element of the motte castle – on its own the motte is an inert mass of earth, sand, marl or stones: it could not itself be inhabited or defended and was always an addition to its associated constructions of timber.[53] In fact Dr Hope-Taylor has put forward the suggestion that the most important element in a motte and bailey castle was not the

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[49] Chateau Gaillard VII, 'Mottes in Ireland', (2-7 September, 1974), p. 95.
[50] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 16.
[51] Wattle and daub is a mixture of manure, straw and mud.
[52] Robert Higham, 'Timber Castles – A Reassessment' in *Anglo-Norman Castles*, Robert Liddiard (ed), (2003), p. 105.
[53] D J Cathcart King, 'The field archaeology of mottes in England and Wales', in *Chateau Gaillard V,* (1972), p. 108.

motte itself but the tower it supported.[54] The top of the motte was surrounded with a wooden palisade with a platform on the inner side: inside this was a wooden tower, used as a watchtower, storage of weapons, a firing-post and a refuge.[55] At its base the motte was surrounded by a wet or dry ditch/moat, which served both for defensive purposes, and as a quarry that provided material for the motte. Beyond the ditch was a lower courtyard, the bailey, which was often roughly oval or kidney shaped and was defended by a ditch and an internal bank supporting a timber palisade.[56]

The circular motte could be defended by a small number of people. In the early medieval period there were two major methods of siege warfare - mining and fire. Mining involved digging a tunnel, held up by props: in theory, when the props were pulled away the building would collapse (although this method was not always successful). Fire involved firing burning arrows into palisades but it was impossible to get rid of motte (mound) itself. The height of the mound provided another great advantage: this was an age when there was no high velocity weaponry – the main long-range weapon was the bow and arrow. Thus the higher the motte, the more protected the soldiers.

Unfortunately no timber structure survives from this period and no contemporary writer has described how a motte and bailey was laid out.[57] The landscape of both England and Ireland contains large numbers of castle sites with only earthworks

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[54] Brian K Davison, 'The Origins of the Castle in England', in *The Archaeological Journal,* Vol 124, (1967), p. 206.
[55] Eric S Wood, *Archaeology in Britain,* (1979), p. 171.
[56] Helen Clarke, *The Archaeology of Medieval England,* (1984), p. 109.
[57] D F Renn, *Norman Castles in Britain*, (1973), p. 14.

remaining and no buildings surviving above ground.[58] Many of the mottes constructed by the Normans were so large that they were not readily converted to alternative uses or eradicated from the landscape.[59] But we can get an idea of how motte and bailey castles would have appeared from the illustrations on the Bayeux Tapestry. This is a unique pictorial source (almost contemporary[60]) of the Norman invasion of England, which included eyewitness accounts. It was named after Bayeux, a major town in Normandy and ordered by Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, half brother of William the Conqueror and one of his main supporters and thus is essentially a form of Norman propaganda. It is actually an embroidery, not a tapestry and while the execution of the Bayeux Tapestry may well have been predominantly (or even totally) English[61], its artistic conception, design and the language of its inscriptions remain indelibly Norman.[62] Some scholars believe (on stylistic grounds) that the Tapestry was executed at St Augustine's abbey at Canterbury - the Bayeux artist actually incorporated images from manuscripts known to have been in Canterbury in the 11th century.[63] This argument is supported by the fact that Odo held extensive estates in Kent.[64]

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[58] Robert Higham, 'Timber Castles – A Reassessment', *Anglo-Norman Castles*, Robert Liddiard (ed), (2003), p. 105.
[59] Trevor Rowley, *The Norman Heritage, 1055-1200,* (1983), p. 49.
[60] Although an exact date for its construction has been debated for many years, the general consensus is that is was completed within 25 years of the Conquest, probably by 1077 when the new cathedral at Bayeux was consecrated.
[61] Art Historians remain convinced that the tapestry was embroidered in England by Anglo-Saxon craftsmen. However it is self-evident that it was made under Norman patronage.
[62] Ian Short, 'The Language of the Bayeux Tapestry', in *Anglo-Norman Studies XXIII, Proceedings of the Battle Conference,* (2000), p. 267.
[63] Gale, R, Owen-Crocker, 'The Embroidered World – Text in the Bayeux Tapestry in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles,* Robin Netherton and Gale R Owen-Crocker (eds), (2005), pp. 35-60.
[64] Trevor Rowley, *The Normans,* (1999), p. 56.

On the Bayeux Tapestry we have illustrations for early Norman castles (Appendix 3)[65]. The castles of Rennes, Dinan, Dol, Bayeux and Hastings are all depicted. Although each castle appears with a tower on top of the motte, encircled by a palisade, there were variations between them. For example, the castle at Rennes has a palisade with crenellations, a fosse, flying bridge etc but it is slightly different than others as it looks like the mound is covered either by animal skins to protect against fire or perhaps wooden slates/shingles.[66] At Bayeux the castle has a mound and a very elaborate entranceway and flying bridge but no sign of an outer fosse or bank – (although timber bridges would certainly have been an element of motte and bailey castles constructed in England post-1066, only about a dozen of them have been excavated to date)[67]. The illustration of Hastings Castle shows workmen digging earth to build a mound and what looks like the beginning of a wooden palisade being constructed. The Tapestry illustrates a perfect stratigraph but when it was excavated it was found that it was composed almost entirely of sand. This led historians and archaeologists to question whether the Hastings's motte represented on the tapestry was purely stylistic.[68]

There has been an ongoing debate regarding the Bayeux Tapestry. Davidson in the 1960's tried unsuccessfully to find archaeological evidence for mottes in Normandy before the Norman invasion of England. He argued mottes evolved precisely because of this invasion. If the Bayeux Tapestry was created approximately twenty years after invasion, mottes may have been in existence by then but were not necessarily a

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[65] See Appendices, p. iv.
[66] These wooden slates could have been used as a protection of the motte itself, revetting it to make its face vertical and impossible to climb.
[67] Stuart E Rigold, 'Timber Bridges at English castles and moated sites', in *Chateau Gaillard VI,* (4-9 September, 1972), p. 183.
[68] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 40.

natural part of Normandy before then. The argument here is that you cannot use the Bayeux Tapestry as evidence that there must have been mottes in Normandy before the Conquest – the mottes of William may only have come into being as part of warfare strategy against England, and the Tapestry is simply projecting back what was in existence in the 1080's. However, as mentioned earlier, there are early examples of mottes at Grimbosq (Calvados) and Rivary (Orne) dating to the mid-eleventh century.[69] From this evidence it can be argued that the motte castle was a known quantity to the Normans before their Conquest of England.

Regardless of which side of the debate we choose to support, it may well be that we should attribute the motte and bailey castle less to contemporary fashion and custom in Normandy and France and more to the circumstances of the conquest itself and the imperative of speedy fortification with an unskilled labour force.[70] But this does not mean that the motte and bailey castle was a totally new type of construction created during the Conquest of England – early examples like Olivet Castle may well have been constructed in Normandy pre-1066.[71]

This debate centres on the argument that the motte and bailey castle was developed as part of the military technology used by William the Conqueror during his invasion of England. However, this argument can be called into question by examining the archaeology and written evidence in relation to the castles of Fulk Nerra, Count of Anjou from 987-1040. This evidence shows that many of the castles constructed by Fulk Nerra were of the motte and bailey type and were used by him and his son,

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[69] Eric Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England,* (2000), p 52.
[70] R Allen Brown, *English Castles,* (1976), pp. 53-54.
[71] Collections of the Normandy Museum – Archaeological Excavation Sites – Grimbosq. http://www.mondes-normands.caen.fr/angleterre/archeo/Normandie/mdn/fouilles/grimbosq/index.htm

Geoffrey Martel, both to defend their realm and in the conquest of neighbouring regions.[72] Montboyau Castle (now St-Cyr-Sur-Loire), constructed in 1017, was one of several built by Fulk Nerra as part of his campaign against Tours, then in the possession of Odo II of Blois.[73]

Furthermore, an even earlier date was given to the motte uncovered during the excavation of Doué-la-Fontaine.[74] Although the castle was begun c.900 AD, the excavations proved that a motte was added during a subsequent phase of building, c.1000 AD, which Kenyon argues was added for defensive purposes.[75]

Whatever argument there is about the development of the motte and bailey in the 11th century, there is not doubt that it was a fully developed feature in England and Wales by the Norman Invasion of Ireland in 1169.[76] In the aftermath of the Norman Conquest, the important castles were translated from earth and timber into stone.[77] The Anglo-Normans who arrived in Ireland in 1169 came from a world where castles had been a prominent feature of life for the last three generations.[78] John de Courcy, as argued above, could hardly have contemplated his Conquest of Ulster without the use of the motte and bailey castle.

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[72] Kelly de Vries, *Medieval Military Technology,* (1992), p. 204.
[73] Jim Bradbury, *The Routledge Companion to Medieval Warfare,* (2004), p. 203.
[74] John Kenyon, *Medieval Fortifications,* (1990), p. 44.
[75] Ibid, p. 44.
[76] Chateau Gaillard, VII, 'Mottes in Ireland', (2-7 September, 1974), p. 96.
[77] Trevor Rowley, *The Norman Heritage, 1055-1200,* (1983), p. 50.
[78] McNeill, T, E, 'Hibernia Pacata et Castellata', in *Anglo-Norman Castles,* Robert Liddiard, (ed), (2003), p. 259.

SOME BACKGROUND ON RINGWORK CASTLES

In the early medieval period ringwork[79] castles were fairly common in both Britain and Normandy and it has been calculated that in England there was one ringwork for every 3.7 motte castles.[80] These structures comprised a slightly-raised circular (or near-circular) area enclosed by a large inner bank and outer ditch.[81] Higham and Barker describe it, at its simplest, as an empty flan case.[82] The original defences and buildings both in and around the ringwork would have been constructed of timber or clay and wood.[83] In some cases ringworks were 'filled in' to create a motte, as in the case of Aldingham in Cumbria.[84]

The term 'ringwork' was coined to describe the earthwork castles which did not have the strong point of motte but were still identified as enclosed, defined by a bank and ditch.[85] Furthermore the ringwork is also defined as having a minimum height of two metres above the outside defences, with the enclosed area a lot smaller than the massive enclosing elements.[86] In England and Normandy ringworks were easy enough to recognise but in Ireland this proved more difficult. This is because it is almost impossible to distinguish the surface morphology of a ringwork from indigenous ringforts.[87] O'Keeffe sums up the problem when he states 'an earthern enclosure of ring-plan which is known to have been built by the native Irish in the early middle ages, for example, will always be identified as a ringfort, but an

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[79] O'Keeffe points out that the term 'ringwork' has no medieval meaning, it is a modern archaeological term which refers to a particular morphological element of an earthwork enclosure i.e. its ring-plan.
[80] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 46.
[81] Tadhg O'Keefe, *Medieval Ireland, An Archaeology,* (2001), p. 30.
[82] R Higham and P Barker, *Timber Castles,* (1992), p. 192.
[83] Kieran O'Conor, *The Archaeology of Medieval Rural Settlement in Ireland,* (1998), p. 18.
[84] John Hunter, Ian Ralston, *The Archaeology of Britain,* (1999), p. 235.
[85] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland, Feudal Power in a Gaelic World,* (1997), p. 60.
[86] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 4.
[87] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 45.

earthwork with an identical morphology, which is known to have been built by the Anglo-Normans, will always be known as a ringwork.[88]

Barry argues that there are several gaps in the distribution of motte castles in areas known to have been extensively settled by the Anglo-Norman and that these gaps cannot be explained away by either agricultural destruction or by lack of field-work and that it is in these areas that archaeologists like Twohig suggest we search for ringworks.[89] However, this view is not accepted by all archaeologists. McNeill points out the lack of clear criteria for identifying ringworks and argues that if we are not clear about how we define the sites, the patterns will be meaningless.[90] O'Keefee also argues that at this moment there is little empirical evidence to support the idea that ringworks 'are a significant element in the archaeological record of colonial Ireland'.[91]

Despite the above, O'Conor has argued that about 63 'probable and possible' ringworks can be identified within Ireland.[92] And, as discussed below, we shall argue that the original earthwork enclosure at Dundrum may have consisted of a ringwork castle.

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[88] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), pp. 30-31.
[89] Ibid, pp. 45-46.
[90] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland, Feudal Power in a Gaelic World,* (1997), pp. 60-61.
[91] Tadhg O'Keefe, *Medieval Ireland, An Archaeology,* (2001), p. 30.
[92] Kieran O'Conor, *The Archaeology of Medieval Rural Settlement in Ireland,* (1998), p. 18.

The Encastellation of Ulster

Under de Courcy's leadership, his men began to busy themselves encastellating parts of Down and Antrim.[93] It was de Courcy who built the first castles in Ulster – the motte and baileys, which to this day dot the landscape.[94] He constructed mottes all over the counties of Down and Antrim and they confirm better than any surviving records the precise centres of manors created by him.[95] De Courcy established centres in Carrickfergus, Downpatrick, Dromore, Coleraine, Newry, Dundrum and Carlingford and these centres were more than simply garrisons[96]: around each of them a town grew up, which often included a mill, workshops, houses for officers, artisans and retainers, as well as a church.[97]

There are several reasons why de Courcy would have wanted to encastellate his conquered lands as soon as possible. Castles would have played a part in the subinfeudation of the areas in which they were built. Defeat of local opposition and the securing of areas by the construction of fortified castles went hand-in-hand with the process of subinfeudation, which rewarded supporters and greatly increased the chances that the settlement would be permanent.[98] Castles would also have emphasised the social pre-eminence of the lord: they were not merely constructed for

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[93] Robin Frame, 'War and Peace in the Medieval Lordship of Ireland' *in The English in Medieval Ireland,* James Lydon, (ed), (1984), p. 121.
[94] James Lydon, 'John de Courcy and the Medieval Frontier' *in Worsted in the Game – Losers in Irish History,* Ciaran Brady (ed), (1989), p. 44.
[95] Ibid, p. 19.
[96] See page 36.
[97] T W Moody and F X Martin, *The Course of Irish History,* (1967), pp. 139.
[98] Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland – The English in Louth,* (1999), p. 35.

their defensive strength in times of war: as well as reflecting military power, they also reflected political power, too.[99]

John de Courcy, together with his fellow Normans, brought feudal organisation to his newly acquired lands and introduced the motte as his principle type of fortification.[100] The earthen motte was obviously the speediest type of fortification and, as argued above, he would have been well aware of the integral value of the motte castle when attempting to conquer and control hostile lands using a small number of men. The extent to which Normans like de Courcy successfully conquered areas like Ulster, depended on how the they controlled them – earthwork castles reflect this control in that when the land was sub-divided, the sub-tenants built a stronghold, namely an earth and timber castle.[101]

Since the Archaeological Survey began its database for archaeological sites, it has revealed that there are 275 mottes in Leinster, 107 in Down and Antrim and only 75 in the rest of Ireland.[102] However not all these earthwork castles were constructed on virgin sites.

By far the most common earthworks in this period were ring-forts, many dating from the 5th to the 10th century and it is estimated that between thirty and forty thousand of these ring-forts were constructed.[103] We know that some of the 450 Irish mottes so

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[99] T E McNeill, 'The Great Towers of Early Irish Castles', in *Anglo-Norman Studies XII, Proceedings of the Battle Conference,* (1990), p. 114.
[100] Chateau Gaillard, VII, 'Mottes in Ireland', (2-7 September, 1974), p. 96.
[101] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 16.
[102] Ibid, p. 17.
[103] Chateau Gaillard, VII, 'Mottes in Ireland', (2-7 September, 1974), p. 96.

far identified were built on, or shaped from, pre-existing structures.[104] The Normans made use of the ring-fort, refurbishing old defences or infilling and raising them to become mottes – an example of this infilling occurred in the early thirteenth century at Lismahon in County Down.[105]

It is relatively rare for Irish mottes to have an accompanying bailey.[106] However, in areas like Meath and Ulster, mottes with baileys proliferated along the borders[107], probably as bases for groups of foot soldiers, stationed there in times of war or to counteract raiding.[108]

The other type of earth and timber castles introduced by the Anglo-Normans into Ireland was the ringwork. As stated above, a ringwork castle comprised a slightly raised circular area enclosed by a large inner bank and outer ditch. In Ireland the banks are often more pronounced and the fosse is wider than that of a typical ringfort – then entrance also differs from a ringfort in that it will often have a distinctive ramp and each side of the gap in the rampart will be laced with stone.[109] In Britain ringworks are more densely distributed in areas like South Wales, where many of the Anglo-Normans who conquered Ireland came from.[110]

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[104] Chateau Gaillard, VII, 'Mottes in Ireland', (2-7 September, 1974), p. 96.
[105] John R Kenyon, 'Medieval Fortifications' in *The Archaeology of Medieval Britain*, Clarke, Helen, (ed), (1990), p. 6.
[106] McNeill, T, E, 'Hibernia Pacata et Castellata', in *Anglo-Norman Castles,* Robert Liddiard, (ed), (2003), pp. 263-265
[107] Only 30% of mottes in the Irish Republic have baileys and these are mainly concentrated on the borders of the earldom of Ulster.
[108] McNeill, T, E, 'Hibernia Pacata et Castellata', in *Anglo-Norman Castles,* Robert Liddiard, (ed),, (2003), pp. 263-265.
[109] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (2003), p. 4.
[110] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 46.

We will now examine the archaeology of two of the motte and bailey castles built in County Down, whose construction have been attributed to John de Courcy: Clough, and Dromore (Appendix 4)[111]. We shall also study Dundrum Castle, which possibly originated as a ringwork castle, before being turned quickly replaced by masonry. We are extremely fortunate in that we have a detailed analysis of the archaeology of these mottes through the excavations by Waterman in the early 1950s.

Clough motte and bailey castle

The motte and bailey castle at Clough appears to have been erected soon after de Courcy invaded Ulster in 1177. It is situated within Clough Village and the motte rises to a maximum height of almost 7 metres above the bottom of the ditch and over 26 metres across the summit (Plate I).[112]

The castle mound is a conspicuous feature of the village, commanding views in every direction, including the stone keep of Dundrum in the South. The mound was defended by a timber palisade[113], probably designed to accommodate archers.[114] The site was on the route followed by de Courcy when he invaded Ulster – the castle lies on the direct road from Downpatrick to Newry. The line of the road is marked out by the earthwork castle at Clough, as well as the motte and bailey known as the Crown Mound, near Newry and by the motte at Ballymaghery, outside Hilltown.[115]

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[111] See Appendices, p. v.
[112] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), pp. 200-201.
[113] These were palisades of timber posts twelve to eighteen inches apart.
[114] D M Waterman, Excavations at Clough Castle, Co. Down, *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, (1954), p. 102.
[115] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Clough Castle, Co. Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XVII (1954), p. 104.

PLATE I

The mound at Clough is over 7m high

Clough castle was a motte castle with a bailey, which as mentioned above, were relatively rare in Ireland, and the majority are found along the border of Ulster. The excavation was restricted almost entirely to the top of the motte. This is pear-shaped in plan at the top, eighty feet across the main diameters and sloping gradually from north to south, with the highest point of the mound some 6.3m above the level of the bailey and about 8.6m above the deepest part of the ditch, which surrounds the base mound on all its sides[116] (Appendix V).[117]

The excavation revealed that the earliest defences of the motte consisted of a timber palisade represented by close-set postholes encircling the summit, two to three feet back from the edge of the mound.[118] Because of considerable wearing down of the surface[119], it was impossible to trace the gate of the palisade and thus the abutment of the bridge from the bailey. However, where the palisade was traceable on the west side of the motte, an oval post of about one and a half foot in length was discovered, which may have supported the foot of the timber brace of one of the gate-posts.[120] Waterman argues that this was certainly the most convenient point for bridging the ditch that separates the motte from the bailey (Plate II).

Immediately behind the palisade and spaced at irregular intervals around the perimeter of the mound were a number of pits of varying shape and size.[121] One of

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[116] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Clough Castle, Co. Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XVII (1954), p. 104.
[117] See Appendices, p. vi.
[118] These postholes were normally circular or oval in shape and averaged three to four inches in diameter.
[119] This wearing down was due in no small measure to the presence of a pathway which had gnawed deeply into the material of the mound.
[120] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Clough Castle, Co. Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XVII (1954), p. 107.
[121] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Clough Castle, Co. Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XVII (1954), p. 107.

these, (referred to as Pit 6), on the west side of the motte, was square in plan with rounded corners and measured four and a half feet by three and a half feet at the lip.[122] The pit was situated about a foot behind the palisade and had two large boulders set on each side of it – the siting of the pit points to it being an integral part of the defences of the motte and it may well have been a weapon pit, designed to accommodate an archer, with a stone-built loop for the discharge of arrows.[123]

At Clough there was no evidence of a timber tower but a central hollow was discovered.[124] This hollow was about 11.3m long and averaging 5.3m feet wide.[125] No post-holes of a wooden tower were found: had they existed, these post-holes, which would have accommodated massive timbers, should have been readily located.[126] However, hollows on top of mottes often indicate the area where a wooden tower once stood and subsequently collapsed and decayed.[127] Higham and Barker argue that demolishing a structure, such as a tower, can lead to a disturbance of the earthwork itself and can cause it to collapse: this can happen at the end of a timber castle's life when there will often be large quarry holes in the sides and the top of the motte and mounds of earth in the ditch below.[128]

The excavation in 1951 also found evidence of a single storey hall building dating to the middle of the 13th century. This takes us outside the period of John de Courcy's reign in Ulster and therefore requires only a brief mention. The hall of mortared

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[122] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Clough Castle, Co. Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XVII (1954), p. 107.
[123] Ibid, p. 107.
[124] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 20.
[125] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Clough Castle, Co. Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XVII (1954), p. 108.
[126] Ibid, p. 118.
[127] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 20.
[128] R Higham and P Barker, *Timber Castles,* (1992), p. 197.

PLATE II

The modern bridge from the bailey to the top of the motte at Clough

stonewalls was built after the initial primarily defensive phase.[129] It was rectangular with a possible transverse partition – adjacent to this, in the southwest wall, was a door built with Scrabo sandstone and a second timber-framed door.[130] This hall seems to have been used very little before its destruction by fire, as it lacked both a proper floor and a hearth.[131]

Waterman argued that the stratigraphical relationship of the timber palisade and the central mound is such that coin evidence[132] obtained from the initial excavation may be used to date both structures. These coins point to the early thirteenth century as the latest date for the construction of the castle at Clough – however, although there are no historical references to Clough, the actual historical situation might suggest a slightly earlier date. Clough occupied a position of considerable strategic importance for de Courcy: it was an area vital for maintaining communication as it was sited at the junction of roads, not only between Downpatrick and the south but with the castle at Dundrum as well (Plates III and IV).[133] It would have been imperative for de Courcy to protect this communications route as quickly as possible after his Conquest of Ulster. Waterman states that it is reasonable to suggest a dating of around 1200 for the erection of the motte and bailey castle at Clough. But he concedes that he is 'rounding up' this date, and that the castle may well have been constructed earlier.

In recent times there has been a reinterpretation of the excavation of Clough. O'Conor points out that the original defences around the edges of the top of the motte

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[129] T E McNeill, *Anglo-Norman Ulster,* (1980), p. 86.
[130] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), pp. 200-201.
[131] T E McNeill, *Anglo-Norman Ulster,* (1980), p. 86.
[132] The coins found at Clough, which were both of King John, were not in circulation long before they were lost.
[133] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Clough Castle, Co. Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XVII (1954), p. 118.

may have been far stronger than argued by Waterman.[134] Higham and Barker believe that the original peripheral summit defences at the site could have consisted of a 1 metres wide clay wall, supported on a post and wattle skeleton.[135]

Of all the excavated sites in Down, Clough Castle had the most elaborate buildings and defences and would appear to have been occupied from at least c.1200 to 1500. These buildings included the hall and various arrow pits that we detailed above - a number of iron arrowheads from the 12th or 13th century were found within these pits.[136] By the middle of the 13th century, a single storey hall had been built and later in this century a two-storey rectangular keep was also constructed (Plate V).[137] There was also a large collection of pottery found dated to the second half of the 13th century, including glazed jugs produced by the Downpatrick kiln.[138] All these facts point to Clough as being an important construction during de Courcy's rule as Lord of Ulster but there are no known historical references to it.

Dundrum motte castle and circular keep

The castle of Dundrum stands on a two hundred foot high hill, overlooking the village of Dundrum and its bay (Plate VI). We can be fairly certain that it was built on the site of an existing Irish fortification (Halpin and Newman state that this earlier stronghold was named Dún Druma – the fort on the ridge).[139] However, it is not known whether the Anglo-Normans constructed a ringwork castle at Dundrum, before quickly replacing it with a masonry castle or whether it was a masonry castle from the

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[134] Kieran O'Conor, 'Motte Castles in Ireland: Permanent Fortresses, Residences and Manorial Centres' in Chateau Gaillard 20, (2002), p. 117.
[135] R Higham and P Barker, *Timber Castles,* (1992), pp. 318-320.
[136] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 48.
[137] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 26.
[138] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 45.
[139] A Halpin and C Newman, *Ireland, An Oxford Archaeological Guide,* (2006), p. 83.

PLATES III & IV

Clough was strategically sited, overlooking the approach from all sides

PLATE V

The two-storey rectangular keep at Clough

PLATE VI

Dundrum overlooks the village and bay of Dundrum

beginning. What we can be certain of is that Dundrum was not a motte and bailey castle but some other form of earthwork enclosure.

De Courcy may have been familiar with ringwork castles on his homelands in Cumbria. Aldingham castle on the coast of Furness began as a ringwork – it took the form of a small rounded enclosure, around 40 m in diameter with a 3 m high bank.[140] This ringwork was eventually filled in to form a low motte, a process which was also occurred at Rumney in Glamorgan and Goltho in Lincolnshire.[141]

Pennington Castle was another ringwork castle in Cumbria, consisting of a rampart and outer ditch on the slopes of Pennington Beck.[142] An when Kendal Castle was re-sited on a natural mound known as Castle Hill, on the opposite side of the River Kent, the summit of the mound was enclosed by a large ringwork bank and surrounded by a wide ditch.[143]

Dundrum was first occupied in the latter part of the first millennium as evidenced by fragmentary remains excavated by Waterman in 1952.[144] These finds included an early Christian bronze ornament[145] (See Appendix 6).[146] This siting was obviously considered advantageous by both de Courcy and the native Irish for controlling the immediate hinterland. [147] The castle was built on a prominent wooded hill that rises to

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[140] J G Norman Pounds, *The Medieval Castle of England and Wales,* (1990), p. 14.
[141] Ibid, p. 14.
[142] Pennington Castle, http://homepage.mac.com/philipdavis/English%20sites/651.html
[143] Adrian Pettifer, *English Castles – A Guide by County,* (1995), p. 270.
[144] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 207.
[145] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dundrum Castle, 1950', in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XIV, (1951), p. 16.
[146] See Appendices, p. vii.
[147] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 40.

a height of over two hundred feet and is one of the few examples of early Norman military engineering in stone in Ulster[148] (Appendix 7).[149]

The siting of Dundrum Castle lends weight to the argument that it may have originally consisted of a ringwork castle. These structures usually occupy high ground on top of ridges and hills and are often located in strategic positions, controlling river crossings or passes through valleys.[150] The castle at Dundrum was an important military base and a vital strategic element of de Courcy's subinfeudation of the area. It controlled the southern entrance into East Down – whether you approached from Newry, skirting north of the Mourne Mountains or from Carlingford Lough by ferry, around the south of the mountains, it meant passing Dundrum Castle.[151] When travelling to Dundrum from Newry and Hilltown, you pass Clough motte and bailey castle.[152]

The 1950 excavation by Waterman revealed the top of the hill at Dundrum underwent four separate periods of construction, beginning with a perimeter bank, then the present stone curtain wall, followed by the great round tower and finally, the inner gate-house.[153] However, there has been some controversy regarding the actual date of the construction of the stone keep at Dundrum. The fact that Dundrum had a massive *round* keep was unusual in itself – the majority of early thirteenth century castles had rectangular keeps (Plate VII).[154] This has led some historians to argue that it may well have been constructed by Hugh de Lacy, who had cousins in the Welsh marches,

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[148] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dundrum Castle, 1950', in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XIV, (1951), p. 15.
[149] See Appendices, p. viii.
[150] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 14.
[151] T E McNeill, *Anglo-Norman Ulster – The History and Archaeology of an Irish Barony, 1170-1400,* (1980), p. 7.
[152] This was the route used by de Courcy in 1177.
[153] T E McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in a Gaelic World,* (1997), pp. 26-27.
[154] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 59.

PLATE VII

Round keep at Dundrum

where the experimental round keep was very popular.[155] However, the 1211-12 Pipe Roll, when detailing the total sum spent on the great tower, the lesser tower, the hall and other ancillary buildings at Dundrum, records a figure of £4.15s.2d.[156] In the same Pipe Roll it is recorded that £129.12s.0d was spent on the construction of a stone keep at Athlete Castle. Thus it can be argued with some conviction that the amount spent on Dundrum in this period would have been far too small for the tower to have been totally constructed *de novo*. It is the writer's contention that it may be possible that the keep was constructed (or partially constructed) during the period when de Courcy was Lord of Ulster and in fact, the castle is mentioned in the historical records when it was unsuccessfully besieged in 1205[157] by de Courcy who was trying to overthrow Hugh de Lacy.[158]

What we can state with certainty is that the original phase of building at Dundrum can be attributed to de Courcy – this is supported by the fact that a defensive bank from c.1180 was located during excavations.[159] Barry argues that there is now mounting evidence that the defensive element of a ringwork castle consisted of a peripheral palisade bank and ditch.[160] The early masonry defences at Dundrum consisted of a multi-angular curtain wall on a hilltop,[161] most likely containing a timber building in its interior (Plate VIII).[162] Jope argued that these initial defences at Dundrum are considered 'among the earliest stone defensive works to be built by the English in

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[155] T E McNeill, *Anglo-Norman Ulster – The History and Archaeology of an Irish Barony, 1170-1400,* (1980), pp. 7-9.
[156] O Davies and D B Quinn, 'The Irish Pipe Roll of 14 John' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1941), 4.
[157] Brendan O Neill, (ed), *Irish Castles and Historic Houses,* (2002), pp. 68-69.
[158] De Courcy had been overthrown by de Lacy in 1204 when de Lacy was granted Ulster and the title of earl.
[159] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 207.
[160] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 45.
[161] The presence of a rock escarpment and rock-cut ditch helped strengthen these early defences.
[162] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 59.

Ireland'.[163] In fact, if, as argued here, it was de Courcy who initiated the project, he built these defences too effectively for his own good – Dundrum stood both assault and siege by de Courcy when he attempted to recover Ulster[164] after King John removed him from his Lordship in 1205.[165]

Jope also stated that the circular keep at Dundrum was constructed in the first quarter of the thirteenth century as excavations have shown that it post-dated the curtain wall by only a short period[166] – again, this lends credence to the argument (albeit tentative) that the keep was possibly constructed by de Courcy before his removal as Lord of Ulster in 1204.

There is another point that may also support this argument. Although there were men in Ireland in the late 12th century who had worked in the tradition of stone construction, none of their skills had been applied to castle building in stone – these stone masons may well have been able to arrange for the supply of stone, lime and timber and also the cutting and laying of stones[167] and would have had experience building stone churches and round towers. But they would have been completely untrained in the planning and construction of a keep.[168] It was only those Anglo-Normans with extensive resources and contacts outside Ireland, who would have been able to arrange for specialists to come over and build their castles in stone.[169] In

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[163] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 119.
[164] This assault was undertaken with the assistance of the King of Man – once again proving that de Courcy had armed himself with important allies.
[165] Edwin C Rae, 'Architecture and Sculpture, 1169-1603' in *A New History of Ireland II – Medieval Ireland 1169-1534*, Art Cosgrove (ed), (1987), p. 755.
[166] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 207.
[167] This only applied if these native stonemasons could be recruited – remember they had been invaded by an alien race and may well have been hostile to any notion of assisting in their own subinfeudation.
[168] T E McNeill, 'Hibernia Pacata et Castellata', in *Anglo-Norman Castles,* Robert Liddiard, (ed), (2003), p. 260.
[169] Ibid, p. 260.

PLATE VIII

Multi-Angular Curtain wall at Dundrum

Chapter I, it was clearly shown that de Courcy was an Anglo-Norman with wide ranging contacts throughout England, the Isle of Man and even Scotland.

Furthermore, de Courcy's founding of Inch Abbey in 1180 meant he had to bring to Ireland many craftsmen who had been trained in English workshops. English craftsmen would also have worked at Grey Abbey, founded in 1193. Both these abbeys were constructed within County Down and it might be possible that de Courcy could have employed these same craftsmen to construct the round stone keep at Dundrum. After all, although de Courcy was without doubt a religious man, he was also extremely pragmatic: there would have been little point in building abbeys if his position in Down was not secured through the building of strong fortresses.

A final reason to support the argument that de Courcy might have constructed the round stone keep at Dundrum is that the choice of stone is a statement of the importance of a site and of the status attached to it as a material for the building of castles.[170] The choice of masonry (rather than timber) in the construction of a castle showed confidence that the lordship was here to stay. It is important to understand that de Courcy, unlike Hugh de Lacy, was never officially granted the title of Earl of Ulster. He would have had a lot to prove not only to himself, but also to his own men and the native Irish alike. His conquest of Ulster can still be viewed as perhaps the most remarkable achievement of the early years of English involvement in Ireland. It would have been imperative for him to establish himself as overlord of the region as definitively as possible. Building in stone would have shown he was confident of maintaining his hold over the region for the foreseeable future.

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[170] T E McNeill, 'The Great Towers of Early Irish Castles', in *Anglo-Norman Studies XII, Proceedings of the Battle Conference,* (1990), p. 100.

Furthermore, building a *round* keep would have shown both initiative and imagination, which he had already displayed during his Conquest of Ulster. McNeill argues that there were two distinct reasons for building round great towers: 1) they were a response to the threat of undermining by attackers as the lack of corners made them stronger and 2) they were 'display castles' i.e. a social statement, celebrating the arrival of the new lord.[171] Both reasons could be applied to de Courcy. The prompt appearance of the circular keep in Ireland would also show that Anglo-Normans, like de Courcy, were keeping abreast of developments elsewhere.[172]

Although Waterman argued that the keep at Dundrum can hardly be earlier in date than that at Pembroke[173] and as such is *almost* certainly later than de Courcy's possession of the castle, he does accept that the question is entirely in doubt and that it is only possible safely to *suggest* a date sometime in the first quarter of the thirteenth century for its construction.[174] The writer of this thesis contends that it is possible that de Courcy was responsible for the construction of the keep at Dundrum but accepts that further investigation is required to try and produce additional evidence to support this contention.

As mentioned above, the 1950 excavation of Dundrum showed that the castle's defences first consisted of a multi-angular enclosure of stone and mortar on the hilltop. McNeill argued that it appears weak due to its only slightly fortified entrance

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[171] T E McNeill, 'Squaring circles: flooring round towers in Wales and Ireland' *in The Medieval Castle in Ireland and Wales – Essays in honour of Jeremy Knight,* John R Kenyon and Kieran O'Connor (eds), (2002), p 96.
[172] Edwin C Rae, 'Architecture and Sculpture, 1169-1603' in *A New History of Ireland II – Medieval Ireland 1169-1534*, Art Cosgrove (ed), (1987), p. 753.
[173] Pembroke Castle in South Wales was built c.1200 by William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke and Strigoil and Lord of Leinster.
[174] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dundrum Castle, 1950', in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XIV, (1951), p. 24.

and also because the wall was not particularly thick.[175] At Dundrum the wall is only one and a half metres thick. However, the excavation uncovered the holes for timbers projecting out on either side of the wall-head, which would have widened the wall-walk on the inside and provide machicolations on the outside.[176] On the east side, a double latrine recess, which was set into the curtain wall, proves that there were buildings within it of some permanence, probably constructed by John de Courcy, but they were obviously built from timber as there are no remains of these constructions. The floor of this recess is about four or five feet above the original courtyard level and must have been part of a major building which stretched into the courtyard – it was most likely demolished when the keep was constructed in the early thirteenth century.[177]

The round keep at Dundrum stands within the curtain wall, which enclose an irregular space, bounded by a rock-cut fosse.[178] Following the erection of the curtain wall, a loose grey occupation soil accumulated against its inner surface, overlying the refilled foundations trench – it was from this level that the foundation trench for the footings of the keep was dug.[179] The keep would originally have been at least three stories in height as shown by the fact that both the staircase and the fireplace flue reached above the sockets of the second floor. The walls of the topmost storey contain continuous mural passages (Plate IX).[180] The keep's entry floor had an original fireplace, windows and a latrine. Although the castle retains some of its battlement level, there

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[175] T E McNeill, *The History and Archaeology of an Irish Barony, 1170-1400,* (1980), p. 7.
[176] Ibid, p. 7.
[177] Ibid, p. 7.
[178] Harold Leask, *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses,* (1999), p. 41.
[179] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dundrum Castle, 1950', in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* XIV, (1951), p. 19.
[180] Ibid, p. 41.

is no evidence of anything other then simple merlons and embrasures and certainly no sign of any hoarding.[181]

Dundrum not only had a cylindrical donjon (which presumably contained the great chamber of the castle on its first, i.e. its entry, floor) but also a great hall of which nothing remains.[182] However the *Irish Pipe Roll of 1211-12* specifically mentions the great hall and makes it clear that the tower and the hall were two separate constructions.[183]

After the building of the round stone keep, the next period of construction involved the gatehouse (this was outside the period of de Courcy's rule and again, requires only the briefest of mentions). This was built in the upper ward and replaced an original simple archway. It was built in c. 1260 and was constructed from firestone brought from Down and iron brought from Drogheda to repair gates and doorways.[184]This structure was reached along a path from the southwest – it was two storeys high and was constructed against (and over) the original curtain wall (Plate X).[185] This necessitated the reduction of the curtain wall in height to allow for the new gateway, and this in turn facilitated an ingenious defensive device – the reduced wall was thickened in the gate passage so that a timber ramp would have been set in place to get over it – by removing the ramp when the castle was being attacked, it would have made the gateway even more secure! The castle at Dundrum, (regardless of whether

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[181] T E McNeill, 'The Great Towers of Early Irish Castles, in *Anglo-Norman Studies XII, Proceedings of the Battle Conference,* (1990), pp. 110-114.
[182] Tadhg O'Keefe, *Medieval Ireland Archaeology,* (2000), p. 39.
[183] O Davies, D B Quinn, *The Irish Pipe Roll of 14 John* in Ulster Journal of Archaeology, (1941), p. 59.
[184] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of Co Down,* (1966), p. 207.
[185] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 59.

PLATE IX

The topmost storey of Dundrum keep contains continuous mural passages.

PLATE X

Gatehouse at Dundrum Castle

or not he constructed the round keep), will forever be associated with John de Courcy and remains one of the finest Norman castles constructed in Northern Ireland.

Dromore motte and bailey castle

Waterman excavated Dromore motte and bailey in 1951 and it appeared probable that it involved a period of construction similar to that at Clough.[186] It was built on a frontier position, overlooking the Lagan valley and above the town of Dromore (Plate XI). It is one of the relatively few sites in Ireland containing a well-preserved bailey.[187] The large motte, somewhat egg-shaped on top, is c. forty feet in height above the surrounding ditch with a small, square bailey to its south[188] (Appendix 8).[189]

Like both Dundrum and Clough, the siting of Dromore castle was chosen because of its naturally defensive position. The bailey occupies a strong position within the curve of the river Bann and the motte was constructed at the neck of a promontory, controlling the natural approach to this site from the north.[190] The sides on the motte away from the bailey were defended by an outer bank and ditch – the outer earthworks stop short of the west side of the bailey, which overlooks a dangerous

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[186] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dromore Motte, County Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* XVII (1954), p. 164.
[187] R E Glasscock, 'Mottes in Ireland' in *Chateau Gaillard, VII,* (2-7 September, 1974), p. 99.
[188] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dromore Motte, County Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* XVII (1954), p. 165.
[189] See Appendices, p. ix.
[190] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dromore Motte, County Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* XVII (1954), p. 165.

slope to the river, but continues along the east side where the natural contour is not as steep.[191]

As with Clough, historical references to Dromore are virtually non-existent although the *Irish Pipe Roll of 1211-12* contains several entries including accounts for the building of a new bridge, hall and other ancillary buildings.[192] This reference confirms that Dromore motte had been in existence for several years and it can be stated with a fair degree of certainty that this castle, like Clough, was constructed by de Courcy as he attempted to consolidate his Lordship of Ulster.

At Dromore there are traces of wooden palisades on the periphery of the motte.[193] A number of post-holes were excavated which penetrated the glacial hill on which the motte was built and they appeared to represent two rather flimsy palisades – these were spaced about a foot apart and they surrounded the top of the motte.[194]

The outer post-holes were five feet apart and inclined in such a way that it appears the posts that they held leaned considerably to the south, while the inner post-holes were five and a half feet deep.[195] Waterman argued that if, as it appears, two distinct palisades did in fact exist, it is reasonable to assume that they were independent structures, one erected after the destruction of the other: if that is the case, the initial

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[191] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dromore Motte, County Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* XVII (1954), p. 165.
[192] O Davies and D B Quinn, 'The Irish Pipe Roll of 14 John' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1941), 4.
[193] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 42.
[194] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dromore Motte, County Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* XVII (1954), p. 166.
[195] The outer post-holes were four inches in diameter and 9 inches deep, while the inner post-holes were three to three and a half inches in diameter and seventeen inches deep.

PLATE XI

Dromore Motte

http://images.google.ie/imgres?imgurl=http://farm1.static.flickr.com

defences of the perimeter of the motte consisted of a single row of posts, at least five feet apart.[196]

Another similarity between Clough and Dromore castles is the presence of a large hollow within the mound. Within this hollow post-holes were excavated which varied from five to nine inches in diameter and averaged six inches in depth.[197] Waterman tentatively argues that their siting suggest that they supported the angle posts of some flimsy structure, dating from the early years of occupation of the motte.[198] If Dromore was built in the early stages of de Courcy's invasion of Ulster, it is possible that this wooden structure may have been a hastily constructed archer's tower.

The motte at Dromore may have been the work of two periods (Appendix VII). This argument is supported by the fact that at about three-quarters of the height of the motte there is a narrow berm[199] which gives the mound a sort of shouldered appearance (Plate XII).[200] If the mound was constructed over two separate periods, the original mound was about thirty feet high (the summit of which coincided with this berm) and was then subsequently raised a further ten feet with the fresh soil kept away from the periphery of the earlier mound to prevent slip.[201] Dromore is one of the best-preserved examples of a motte and bailey castle from the period of de Courcy's Conquest of Ulster.

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[196] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dromore Motte, County Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* XVII (1954), p. 166.
[197] Ibid, p. 167.
[198] Ibid, p. 167.
[199] The word berm is defined as a narrow ledge along the top of a slope, at the edge of a road or along a canal.
[200] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dromore Motte, County Down', *in Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* XVII (1954), p. 167.
[201] Ibid, p. 167.

A comparative analysis of John de Courcy's castles in County Down with Egremont Castle, Cumbria

We will now compare the motte and bailey castles John de Courcy constructed in County Down with Egremont Castle in Cumbria. Ranulf Meschin of Briquessart, the Vicomte of Bayeux, held the Lordship of Cumberland[202] and was also granted the Earldom of Chester in 1120 by Henry I.[203] Ranulf in turn granted the ward of Allerdale above Derwent, (which in the medieval period included the whole Barony of Copeland[204]) to his younger brother William de Meschin.[205]

William built his baronial castle at Egremont and changed the name of the barony from Copeland to Egremont.[206] William de Meschin was John de Courcy's grandfather. Egremont was eventually inherited by William's son, Ranulph[207], but on the death of Henry I in 1135 it passed to William Fitz Duncan, nephew of King David of Scotland (and son of Duncan II, King of Scotland from 1093-94).[208] Fitz Duncan was married to Alice, William Meschin's daughter, who was therefore an aunt to John de Courcy. Egremont was passed down to William Fitz Duncan's daughter, Annabel

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[202] County Cumbria, in northwest England, was created in 1974. It includes the former counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, Furness (originally in Lancashire) and the Sedburgh rural distract in Yorkshire. Although the *county* of Cumbria dates from 1974, the name Cumbria has been used for centuries.

[203] Duffy, Seán, 'The First Plantation: John de Courcy and the Men of Cumbria', *in Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland,* James F Lydon, Terrence T Barry, Robin Frame, Katherine Simms (eds), (1995), p. 6.

[204] Cumberland was divided into eleven baronies under Ranulf de Meschin, the original grantee. The largest of these baronies was Copeland, also referred to as Egremont *and* Allerdale above Derwent, which extended from the River Derwent to the River Duddon, a distance of some 35 miles.

[205] Samuel Jefferson, *The History and Antiquities of Allerdale Ward, above Derwent, in the county of Cumberland,* (1842), p. 2.

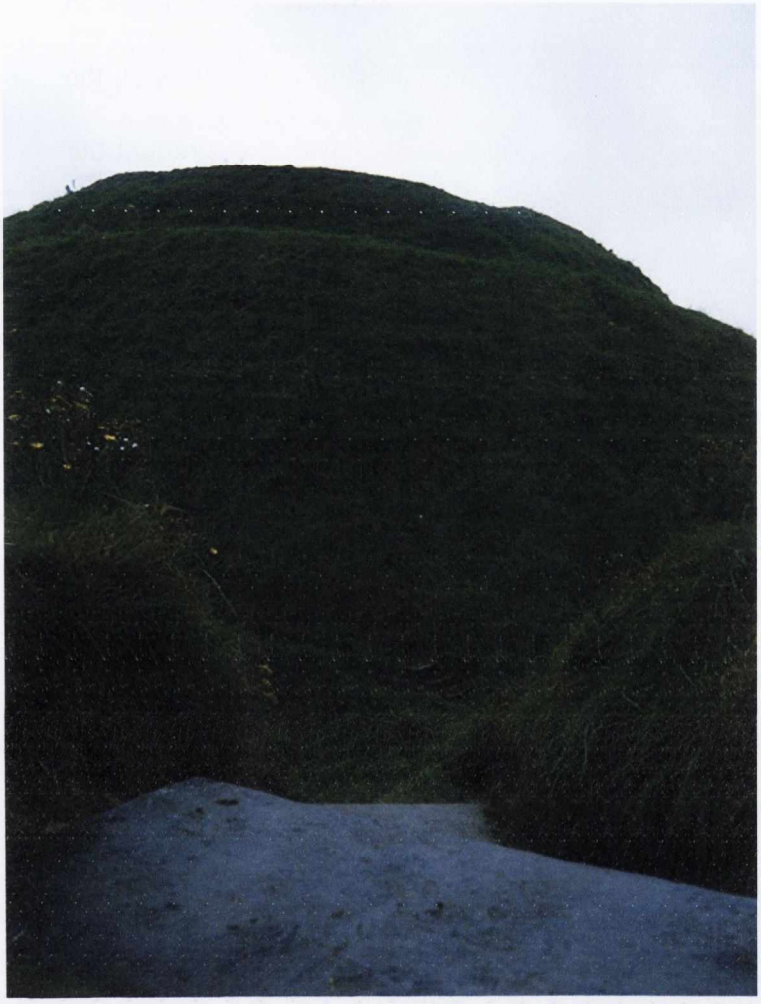
[206] Ibid, p. 2.

[207] William de Meschin and Cecily de Rumilly had 5 children in all: Maud (the exact date of her death cannot be stated with certainty; Matthew, who died in 1135; Ranulph, who died in 1140, Avice (John de Courcy's mother) who died in 1176 and Alice, who died in 1187.

[208] Percival Turnbull, Deborah Walsh, 'Recent work on Egremont Castle' in *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society,* Vol XCIV, (1994), p. 79.

PLATE XII

Dromore motte with the narrow berm visible about three quarters of the way up the mound.



http://images.google.ie/imgres?imgurl=http://farm1.static.flickr.com

and by the last quarter of the 12th century to the de Multon family (through the marriage of both daughters' of Annabel's son Richard de Lucy).

The complex events above can be best summed up as follows: from its very beginning Egremont Castle was in the hands of relatives of John de Courcy: firstly his grandfather William de Meschin; then his uncle Ranulph; then his aunt Alice and her husband William Fitz Duncan and then on down through his cousin Annabel and her family. When it comes to architectural influences, we must examine the connections of the founder. John de Courcy clearly had very strong connections with Egremont Castle.

In comparing Egremont to the various motte and bailey castles de Courcy constructed in Down, the first point of comparison was their siting. Egremont was constructed c 1125 on a mound above the River Ehen, near the Scottish border (Plate XIII). It was essential to construct a castle in this part of Cumbria because of the continuing threat of attack, not just from the Scottish king, who hoped to regain the lands seized by William Rufus, but also from the local population who refused to recognise the partition of the ancient kingdom of Strathclyde[209] by the division known as 'the border'.[210] In Ulster, it was also a border area which acquired castles such as Dromore, chosen because of its naturally defensive position. Like Egremont, Dromore was built near a river, the Bann and above a town, Dromore.

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[209] At its height, the kingdom of Strathclyde stretched from the northern most point of Loch Lomond, right down to Cumbria, with its capital at Dumbarton Rock or *Dun Beatann,* the fortress of the Britons. Its people were Brythonic, which refers to an indigenous Briton as opposed to Anglo-Saxon of Gaelic.
[210] Percival Turnbull, Deborah Walsh, 'Recent work on Egremont Castle' in *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society,* Vol XCIV, (1994), p. 77.

Also like Egremont, it occupied a frontier position and with Clough and the masonry castle at Dundrum, played an essential role in the subinfeudation of the local population. Clough castle lay on the direct route from Downpatrick to Newry. Thus the castle was constructed to protect an area vital for maintaining communication, not only between Downpatrick and the South, but between Clough and Dundrum castle, which controlled the southern entrance into east County Down. John de Courcy's connection with Egremont castle and the barony of Copeland would have made him aware of the necessity of siting a castle which would allow him to both defend and control the surrounding area.

The first castle constructed at Egremont was a motte and bailey, which was created by the modification of a natural mound[211] - the motte had very steep sides on the north, west and east while the south faces the masonry of the Great Hall, although it remains obvious that the southern side of the motte has been scarped to also leave a very steep slope.[212] There is a problem with the bailey at Egremont in that it is not known whether it was constructed at the same time as the motte or added later.[213] What we do know is that the motte and bailey were separated by a great ditch and that the motte stands some nearly 16 metres above it.[214] At Clough castle the motte is around 9 metres above the ditch, at Dromore it reaches 13 metres.

As mentioned above, Egremont was partly constructed in a bid to defend the area from the Scottish forces under King David I. When Henry I died in 1135, King David

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[211] Percival Turnbull, Deborah Walsh, 'Recent work on Egremont Castle' in *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society,* Vol XCIV, (1994), p. 77.
[212] Local Heritage Initiative: Phase Two, Egremont Castle, Interpretation and Geophysical Survey, 'What the Archaeologists Say'
http://www.lhi.org.uk/projects_directory/projects_by_region/north_west/cumbria/phase_two_egremont_castle_interpretation_geophysical_survey/index.html
[213] Ibid.
[214] John F Curwen, 'The Castles and Fortified Towers of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire North of the Sands together with a brief historical account of border warfare' in *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society,* Vol XIII, (1913), p. 23.

Plate XIII

An aerial view of Egremont Castle.

http://www.visitcumbria.com/wc/egremontcastle-9866b2.jpg

invaded northern England and occupied Cumberland and Northumberland in support of the claims of his niece, Empress Matilda, to the English Crown.[215] William Fitz Duncan, who inherited the Barony of Copeland and thus Egremont castle in the same year, threw his support behind his uncle, the Scottish king and led the Scots to victory in the battle of Clitheroe in June, 1138. Egremont would have played an important role during this campaign and it is probable that these events coincided with a period of rebuilding at Egremont, including the construction of the first stone castle.[216] The present remains of the gate-tower and the western curtain wall exhibit herringbone masonry, which is unlikely to be later than 12th century date. Herringbone masonry describes stones which, instead of being laid horizontally, are laid at 45 degree angle. While this method does not in itself conclusively point to any particular period of construction (it was employed by Romans, Saxons and Normans), it is generally assumed to be of Saxon or early post conquest date, unless otherwise proven.[217] This could be the reason that there is no evidence of herringbone masonry at any of the mottes in County Down or at Dundrum Castle, which were all constructed by de Courcy in the late 12th or early 13th century.

Clough and Dromore motte and bailey castles originally consisted of earth and timber defences. The excavation at Clough revealed that the earliest defences consisted of a timber palisade and various pits, including a weapon pit, designed to accommodate an archer. At Dromore there are traces of wooden palisades on the periphery of the motte. The early masonry defences at Dundrum consisted of a multi-angular curtain wall, which may have contained a timber building in its interior. However, Waterman

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[215] Richard Huscroft, *Ruling England 1042-1217,* (2005), p. 72.
[216] Percival Turnbull, Deborah Walsh, 'Recent work on Egremont Castle' in *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society,* Vol XCIV, (1994), p. 79.
[217] Ibid, p. 79.

argues that that whether the early defences at Dundrum Castle were of masonry from the beginning or of earth and timber, remains in debtate.[218] While it was common practice to erect temporary timber buildings as the initial defences for a motte and bailey castle, there is also no direct evidence of a timber phase at Egremont.[219] Turnball and Walsh agree that it is certainly possible that Egremont did not have, as it is often assumed, an initial timber-built phase.[220] However, a Geophysical Survey Report on Egremont motte and bailey in 2002 argued the earliest structure was probably constructed of timber and dated it to c.1125.[221]

By 1135, the earlier fortifications at Egremont were replaced by a gatehouse and a curtain wall constructed from stone.[222] While some of the curtain wall has herringbone masonry, as described above, the gatehouse, which was inserted in the curtain wall, was faced with ashlar. John de Courcy would have been familiar with the stone defences at Egremont. This may explain why he quickly converted the defences at Dundrum motte into stone. As stated earlier the siting of Dundrum was vitally important as it controlled the southern entrance into County Down, whether travelling by land or by water.[223]

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[218] D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dundrum Castle, 1950', in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, XIV, (1951), p. 23.
[219] Local Heritage Initiative: Phase Two, Egremont Castle, Interpretation and Geophysical Survey, 'What the Archaeologists Say'
http://www.lhi.org.uk/projects_directory/projects_by_region/north_west/cumbria/phase_two_egremont_castle_interpretation_geophysical_survey/index.html
[220] Percival Turnbull, Deborah Walsh, 'Recent work on Egremont Castle' in *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society,* Vol XCIV, (1994), p. 77.
[221] Local Heritage Initiative: Phase Two, Egremont Castle, Interpretation and Geophysical Survey, 'What the Archaeologists Say'
http://www.lhi.org.uk/projects_directory/projects_by_region/north_west/cumbria/phase_two_egremont_castle_interpretation_geophysical_survey/index.html
[222] Ibid.
[223] See page 54.

At Dundrum the defensive works included a multi-angular curtain wall and a circular keep. Excavations show that the keep post-dated the curtain wall by a very short period - as stated above Jope argued that these were amongst the earliest stone defences to be constructed by the English in Ireland.[224] The fact that de Courcy constructed one of the earliest round keeps in Ireland points to his having some knowledge of this type of building. Furthermore, his willingness to build with stone showed confidence that his lordship was here to stay. At Egremont, the first masonry building erected on top of the motte was also a circular keep, although nothing remains of it now.[225] There is confusion over the date of the circular keep at Egremont and whether it was erected in the late 12th or the 13th century. Turnball and Walsh's excavation in 1994 found that none of the archaeological deposits excavated at Egremont could be considered as an intact medieval feature, due to extensive disturbance which had been caused during the reorganisation of the castle as a public amenity at the turn of the 20th century.[226] A geophysical survey carried out in 2002 also confirmed numerous disturbances including gardening and landscaping.[227] Thus it is difficult to confirm exactly when the circular keep at Egremont was constructed. What we can say is that the motte and bailey castle at Egremont was built with the intention of protecting an area under continuous threat of attack. It may have initially consisted of some type of timber defences, as was usual in the case of motte castles. However, within a short period of time, these defences were replaced by stone, including a gatehouse and curtain wall. John de Courcy has strong family

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[224] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 119.
[225] Adrian Pettifer, *English Castles,* (1995), p. 41.
[226] Percival Turnbull, Deborah Walsh, 'Recent work on Egremont Castle' in *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society,* Vol XCIV, (1994), p. 81.
[227] Local Heritage Initiative: Phase Two, Egremont Castle, Interpretation and Geophysical Survey, http://www.lhi.org.uk/projects_directory/projects_by_region/north_west/cumbria/phase_two_egremont_castle_interpretation_geophysical_survey/index.html

connections with Egremont and may well have been aware of the role the castle played in William Fitz Duncan's campaign in support of King David.

Conclusion

The three motte and bailey castles constructed by de Courcy played an important role in the subinfeudation of County Down. The timber castle, an unknown and unfamiliar structure in Ireland would have looked oppressive to the native Irish in the early stage of the conquest. He would have been aware of the motte and bailey castle at Egremont and its purpose in both subduing and defending a region. Also, through his familiarity with Egremont Castle, he would have been aware of the necessity to replace the timber defences of his motte castles with masonry, and this in turn lends weight to the possibility that it was de Courcy who constructed the keep at Dundrum. The strengths of the castle in the aftermath of the invasion were two-fold: they allowed de Courcy to control his newly acquired lands, providing his forces with a means to defend themselves against attack while also ensuring a stabilising continuity of lordship in the region. There was a final, perhaps unforeseen, function fulfilled by de Courcy's motte and bailey castles in County Down – as time progressed, the native Irish population would come to realise that these structures played an essential role in their suppression by the Anglo-Normans.

Chapter 3

Did John de Courcy introduce the first examples of Gothic architecture into Ireland?

In order to attempt to confirm the original hypothesis of this research – that the buildings constructed by Norman settlers in Counties Louth and Down were influenced by the architecture of contemporary monuments in England and Normandy – it is necessary to analyse the specific styles of architecture that these Normans imported into Ireland. As such, this chapter will concentrate on one particular architectural style – Gothic – and will examine the argument that John de Courcy was responsible for the introduction of Gothic into Ireland, when he founded the Cistercian monasteries of Inch and Grey in County Down.

This will require an exploration of the following themes – what constitutes Gothic architecture and its principal features; a brief history of the Cistercian order; an analysis of the architectural requirements of the Cistercians, which should lead to an explanation of why they so embraced this particular architectural style; the arrival of the Cistercians in Ireland, specifically looking at the archaeological details of Mellifont, in an attempt to prove that its main features did not constitute what is considered Gothic architecture. Then we will examine the Cistercian foundations set up after the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in 1169, focusing specifically on the abbeys of Inch and Grey which John de Courcy founding in County Down; an analysis of the archaeological details of both these abbeys, together with the main features of their mother-houses in the north of England. All the above should allow us to confirm that it was de Courcy, as Earl of Ulster, who provided us with the first known examples of Gothic architecture in Ireland.

The development of Gothic Architecture

Gothic is a style of medieval architecture developed in France around 1140, which came to replace Romanesque, an early European architectural style, which combined Roman and Byzantine elements and was prevalent from the ninth to the twelfth century. The main Romanesque features included rounded arches and barrel vaults. The Gothic style of architecture tended to be less 'heavy' than the Romanesque and what made the lightness of Gothic architecture feasible involved both structural and aesthetic elements: the pointed arch and ribbed vault, flying buttresses and thin walls pierced by expansive windows.[1]

The term Gothic, as first applied in the sixteenth century by Lorenzo Ghiberti[2], is a misleading word because of the implication that it had been invented by the Goths, a race of people that spanned seven hundred years and huge tracts of Europe from northern Poland to the Atlantic Ocean.[3] Although this race did not invent the particular architectural style known as Gothic, their name was associated with the use of the pointed arch. Around the end of the twelfth century, the pointed arch replaced the round arch (which had been in continuous use since Roman times) and because this structural form constitutes one of its features, Gothic architecture is sometimes referred to as Pointed architecture.[4]

The shape of the pointed arch allowed a far greater weight to be carried than with Romanesque and thus roofs became a lot heavier. To ensure that the walls and pillars could take such weight, the architects developed what were known as buttresses (or

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[1] Carol Strickland, Amy Handy, Patty Brown, (eds), *The Annotated Arch,* (2001), p. 44.
[2] Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378-1455) was one of the most important early Renaissance sculptors of Florence – his work formed the basis for much of the style and aims of the later High Renaissance.
[3] Peter Heather, *The Goths,* (1997), p. 2.
[4] Ibid, p. 144.

flying buttresses (Appendix 9a))[5] which were additions to the main part of the building that transferred extra weight to additional points.[6] These 'flying buttresses' helped the outward pressure of the massive roofs to be restricted, while allowing walls to be thinner and pierced by wider window openings, leading to the development of lancet windows [7] (Appendix 9b).[8]

Another essential feature of Gothic architecture was the ribbed vault. This was a system which was developed by constructing the groins of a vault into a series of light arches, also known as 'ribs'. Thus the roof, made up of stone blocks, rested on top of intersecting ribs, which were often visible on the completed structure – the ribs served both an aesthetic and an architectural purpose.[9]

A change followed the introduction of this type of vaulting, together with the pointed arch and buttresses – there was now an ambition to build higher and higher, and new ideas relating to design came about in the form of vertical lines i.e. Gothic architecture was designed to allow people to share a feeling of striving upwards, towards heaven.[10]

The massive columns of the Romanesque period were replaced with thin clusters of shafts, the capitals of which were often richly carved with, for example, highly

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[5] See Appendices, p. x.
[6] http://www.britainexpress.com/architecture/early-english.htm.
[7] Ibid.
[8] See Appendices, p. x.
[9] Jeffrey R Wigelsworth, *Science and Technology in Medieval Europe,* (2006), pp.33-44.
[10] Tim Dowley, John Briggs, Rubert Linder, David Wright, (eds), *Introduction to the History of Christianity,* (2002), p. 293.

stylised foliage designs (Appendix 9c)[11] – the richness of these carvings was due in part to the introduction of the chisel in stone carving.[12]

What constituted Gothic was clearly more than the isolated use of single structural features like the pointed arch or ribbed vault as both of these had been incorporated at Durham Cathedral before 1130 (and Durham is still considered Romanesque) – the main distinction lies in the way the structural elements were used in the larger categories of architecture e.g. in redefining space or the value of light.[13]

However, the new Gothic architecture did not just appear – it actually grew out of Romanesque and the progress of Gothic was slow. During the latter part of the 12th century the Cistercian Order, with their requirement of regulation and functionalism, embraced Gothic architecture and assisted in its development throughout Europe. The Cistercians thus played an essential role in the dissemination of Gothic architecture to territories throughout Europe, while their importance in bringing the style to the north of England has long been acknowledged.[14]

The Cistercian Order and its embracing of Gothic Architecture

As the investiture struggle between the Holy Roman Emperor and the Pope came to an end, twelfth century Europe witnessed a great monastic revival, with the order of Cluny at its forefront: however, to some it appeared that the Cluniac order itself

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[11] See Appendices, p. x.

[12] Early English Gothic Architecture, including good illustrations of the main feature of this architectural style.
http://www. britainexpress.com/architecture/early-english.htm.

[13] Peter Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude – Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth Century England*, (1984), p. 54.

[14] Christopher Wilson, 'The Cistercians as 'Missionaries of Gothic' in Northern England' in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles,* (1986), p. 86.

needed reform, having drifted away from the original Benedictine rule of simplicity and poverty.[15] Robert, Abbot of Molême in Burgundy, together with a small number of monks, began to argue for the return of the Benedictine rule in its original simplicity and severity – when his pleas fell on deaf ears, he and his supporters withdrew and founded a new monastery at Cîteaux near Dijon in 1098.[16] It was here that the Cistercian reform movement was born.

It is St. Bernard[17] who must be credited with the tremendous expansion of the order which began with the foundation of its daughter house at La Ferté in 1113; by 1152 the number of daughter houses had reached 339, with almost ninety of these in England, Wales and Scotland[18] (Appendix 10).[19] It was under St Bernard that the new features of reformed monasticism began to spread throughout Europe. In 1125 St Bernard wrote the *Apologia* to William of St Thierry (his condemnation of Romanesque sculpture, in which he argued that it was a distraction and an expense which was contrary to the humility expected from a monastic community) and *Guillelmum Abbatem*, a monastic treatise which including a criticism of excess in monastic art. The Cistercians were unique with regard to their artistic asceticism in that it was a written mandatory law.[20]

All Cistercian monks were also required to attend the annual meetings of the order's General Chapter at Cîteaux – here they could compare notes on various matters

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[15] Margaret Deansely, *A History of the Medieval Church, 590-1500,* (1972), p. 117.
[16] Ibid, p. 117.
[17] St Bernard entered the monastery of Cîteaux in 1113 and became the first Abbot of Clairvaux in 1115.
[18] John Bilson, 'The Architecture of the Cistercians, with special reference to some of their earlier churches in England', *The Archaeological Journal, Vol LXVI, 2nd Series,* (1909), p. 189.
[19] See Appendices, pp. xi-xiii.
[20] Conrad Rudolph, 'The Principal Founders and the Early Artistic Legislation of Citeaux' in *Studies in Cistercian Art and Architecture,* (1987), pp. 1-3.

including architecture, which would certainly have contributed to the order's ability to ensure a familiarity in plan among Cistercian monasteries.

As stated above, the early Cistercians, particularly St. Bernard, denounced luxury and decorative arts. William of Malmesbury[21] brought attention to another specific distinction concerning the Cistercians i.e. their artistic asceticism.[22] This rejection of sculpture and superfluous decoration forced Cistercian builders to concentrate on the practical and structural essentials, resulting in the design of their buildings becoming remarkably pure.[23] Because of the order's rejection of all things superfluous, attention turned to stone, to its careful dressing and fitting and to the proportion of the rooms that it defined.[24] Everything was built from the same, smooth-hewn stones – including the floors, doors, window-frames, walls, vaults and even the roof tiles – the Cistercian aesthetic unfolded in its world of stone, leading onto the Gothic.[25]

The three main requirements for the buildings of a monastery were places to eat, sleep and worship within a secure environment. The precious survival of the St Gall Plan[26] of the 820s provides a complete monastery in ideal form, a whole settlement with streets and blocks, the core of which becomes the standard for monastic layouts

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[21] William of Malmesbury (c1195-c1153) was an English writer and monk of Malmesbury Abbey – his most important work is the *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, a history of the kings of England from 449 to 1127.

[22] Conrad Rudolph, 'The Principal Founders and the Early Artistic Legislation of Citeaux' in *Studies in Cistercian Art and Architecture,* (1987), pp. 1-3.

[23] John Bilson, 'The Architecture of the Cistercians, with special reference to some of their earlier churches in England', *The Archaeological Journal, Vol LXVI, 2nd Series,* (1909), p. 195.

[24] Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe – The Architecture of the Orders,* (1972), p. 74.

[25] Ibid, p. 74.

[26] There are claims that the plan was composed at Reichenau under the direction of Haito, one-time abbot of Reichenau and Bishop of Hale, while others argue that the plan was a product of reforming synods of 816-817 and was intended as a model for the whole Carolingian empire

thereafter[27] (Appendix 11).[28] The St Gall plan is drawn on five sheets of parchment[29] – carefully outlined in red ink is the layout of the monastery, including not just the church and conventual buildings around the cloister, but a number of other structures including a school, an infirmary, stables, workshops and animal pens.[30] It is clear that the plan's specific allocation of functions allows for a translation of the Benedictine rule in into architectural terms.[31]

The minimum requirement for the founding of a Cistercian house was an oratory, a refectory, a dormitory, a house for guests and a gatekeeper's cell – they adopted the standard St Gall's plan with three changes – they used the west range as the conversi's dormitory, added a parallel building to it and turned the rectory onto a north-south axis.[32]

From the first, the Cistercians used the pointed arch in their churches for the main arches of construction and there can be no doubt that the Cistercian influence counted for much in popularising the systematic use of the pointed arch in the 12th century.[33] Initially, the new style appeared in secondary structures rather than in the churches but by the middle of the 1160s, the chapter house and guesthouses were rebuilt in the same mode. Early Gothic architectural detailing including waterleaf and volute

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[27] Eric Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England,* (2000), p. 149.
[28] See Appendices, p. xiv.
[29] Walter Horn & Ernest Born, *The Plan of St Gall in 3 Volumes,* (Volume III), (1979).
[30] Roger Stalley, *Early Medieval Architecture,* (1999), p. 184.
[31] Ibid, p. 185.
[32] Eric Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England,* (2000), p. 196.
[33] John Bilson, 'The Architecture of the Cistercians, with special reference to some of their earlier churches in England', *The Archaeological Journal, Vol LXVI, 2nd Series,* (1909), p. 224.

capitals, keeling[34], fasciculated piers and mouldings with gorged crowns, which were used to give an enlarged sense of space. [35]

The introduction of the stone vault allowed for the erection of two-storied buildings of architectural quality – what is amazing is that the earliest of these buildings provided accommodation not for a single family but for large communities.[36] This in turn led to serious sanitation problems as the discharge from a community of several people living in a small area would need to be disposed of quickly to prevent the spread of disease: thus the absolute requirement of situating the monastery near a stream to allow for water-borne sanitation.[37]

There were four preconditions for the novel physical appearance of the Cistercian monasteries: the ideal of poverty; the desire to escape the world; the insistence of affiliation and a new spirit of regulation.[38] These requirements meant that the Cistercians demanded a precisely determined set of buildings. While there was no chapter house[39] on the St Gall Plan of the 9th century, chapter houses started to appear within the plans of monasteries as a result of the 10th century reform movement.[40] Its construction allowed for beautiful architectural features because at the entrance end it could use the same architectural vocabulary as the cloister i.e. it usually opened onto the cloister via a three or five bay arcade, composed of two to four windows plus the portal.[41] It was the cloister that became the most enduring achievement of monastic

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[34] Keeling or keel moulding refers to a moulding whose outline is like the keel of a ship.
[35] Peter Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude, Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth-Century England,* (1984), pp. 54-55.
[36] Hugh Braun, *English Abbeys,* (1971), p. 252.
[37] Ibid, p. 252.
[38] Ibid, p. 72.
[39] The chapter house was mainly used for the reading of 'chapters' of the Rule of St Benedict.
[40] Eric Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England,* (2000), p. 201.
[41] Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe – The Architecture of the Orders,* (1972), p. 97.

builders – it was completely separated from the outside world and in visual terms it brought order to what could have been a rather untidy collection of buildings. [42]

In 1157, the Cistercian's General Chapter prohibited the construction of bell towers because they were superfluous and contrary to the humility expected from the order.[43] However, in some cases, a crossing tower was required in order to support other elements in the design of the monasteries. These towers were not primarily belfries, which would have been considered superfluous, but a structural necessity. They were used in monasteries that were designed with a regular crossing so that the four arms of the church were allowed their own spatial identity – it was here that the crossing arches needed the support of some type of tower.[44]

The Cistercian's simple liturgy required only a shallow, rectangular chancel and usually two or three adjoining, rectangular chapels projected from the east side of each arm of the transept.[45] The refectories were always vaulted and had mostly two or more aisles – they had tall, slender columns, with often tall windows.[46] The dormitory was usually placed on the first floor for reasons of security and health and to permit the warming room to be housed in the undercroft beneath – the entrance to the stairs was modest in comparison with that of the chapter house.[47] In every monastery the same simple rooms were to hold the monks: the windows would

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[42] Roger Stalley, *Early Medieval Architecture,* (1999), p. 182.
[43] Ibid, p. 180.
[44] Roger Stalley, 'The Architecture of the Cistercian Churches in Ireland, 1142-1272' in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles,* (1986), p. 127.
[45] Edwin C Rae, 'Architecture and Sculpture 1169-1603, in *A New History of Ireland II, Medieval Ireland 1169-1534,* Art Cosgrove (ed), (1987), p. 739.
[46] Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe – The Architecture of the Orders,* (1972), p. 103.
[47] Eric Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England,* (2000), p. 203.

display only colourless patterns, the walls left especially unplastered as all the architectural features to be devoid of figures. [48]

From the above, it is clear that the Cistercians not only embraced the new Gothic style of architecture, but allowed it to be transmitted throughout Europe. Gothic was ideally suited to their *reason d'etre* – a belief in simplicity, free from adornment. It is ironic that an architectural style that was considered austere among Cistercians would seem almost ostentatious upon its arrival in Ireland.

The arrival of the Cistercian Order in Ireland

It was Malachy, the Bishop of Armagh, who first invited the Cistercians to Ireland as part of his attempt to reform Irish monasticism and their stress on discipline and austerity coincided with the ascetic strain in the Irish church.[49] When it came to religious architecture, the contrast between the Benedictine monasteries of Europe and Irish Celtic monasteries was immense – the ordered sequence of stone buildings, placed around an enclosed garth, was a concept completely undeveloped in Ireland before the arrival of the Cistercians.[50] St Bernard may have believed that the Cistercians were at the forefront of artistic asceticism but compared to Celtic monasteries in Ireland, their buildings were positively luxurious.

Before the foundation of Mellifont in 1142, it was not only Benedictine monasticism which was unfamiliar in Ireland, but also its architecture – the Irish name for Mellifont, *An Mainistir Mhór* – the great monastery, gives us some idea of just how

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[48] Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe – The Architecture of the Orders,* (1972), p. 72.
[49] Roger Stalley, 'The Architecture of the Cistercian Churches of Ireland 1142-1272', in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles,* (1986), pp. 117-118.
[50] Roger Stalley, *the Cistercian Monasteries of Ireland,* (1987), p. 9.

revolutionary this new type of building was.[51] In Ireland, wooden churches were the norm and remained common on many sites until the eleventh or twelfth centuries: 'dairthech' which is translated as 'oak house' is the common word for a church in the early medieval Irish documentary sources, indicating that churches were commonly made of wood.[52] Even at the large monastic site of Glendalough, which used stone, the church was a mere sixty two feet in length and it had no transepts nor was there any clearly defined chancery.[53]

During the early years of its foundation, Mellifont was composed of a mixture of French and Irish monks that had been trained at Clairvaux, its motherhouse – for this reason the layout and plan of the abbey showed considerable French influence.[54] The general Burgundian Cistercian plan was adopted (with minor variations) by all the Irish houses – the earliest houses of the order, including Mellifont, were built in the Romanesque style, utilizing various features that the Cistercians transported all over Europe.[55] The pointed arch and pointed vault are important features at Jerpoint and Boyle and owe their inspiration to Burgundy – as stated earlier in this chapter, the pointed arch was a primary feature of Gothic architecture but the Burgundians had employed it prematurely as part of the Romanesque style.[56] Thus although Cistercians houses founded earlier than Inch and Grey Abbey did incorporate this important feature of Gothic, it was not used as part of a new architectural style but was a development within the current style of Romanesque. As stated earlier in this chapter, Gothic architecture did not just appear but developed out of Romanesque. Thus the

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[51] Roger Stalley, the Architecture of the Cistercian Churches of Ireland 1142-1272, in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles,* (1986), pp. 118-119.
[52] Nancy Edwards, *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 122.
[53] Roger Stalley, *The Cistercian Monasteries of Ireland,* (1987), p. 9.
[54] S J Connolly (ed), *The Oxford Companion to Irish History,* (1998), p. 356.
[55] Roger Stalley, *Architecture and Sculpture in Ireland, 1150-1350,* (1971), p. 91.
[56] Ibid, p. 91.

use of the pointed arch in the earliest Cistercian monasteries in Ireland cannot be used as an argument for the arrival of Gothic architecture pre-Inch/Grey. It is important to reaffirm that what constituted Gothic was more than the isolated use of single structural features like the pointed arch – the main distinction lies in the way the structural elements were used in the larger categories of architecture e.g. in redefining space or the value of light.[57]

We also know from examination of the surviving stonework, that the Cistercian monastery at Mellifont was erected by Irish masons.[58] And there was another feature that distinguished Mellifont from other daughter-houses of Clairvaux: the use of rubble masonry – in France and England Cistercian churches were noted for the precision of their stone, but Mellifont and other Irish houses were built in areas where the building tradition was not so sophisticated and where large quarries had not yet been developed.[59]

Despite this, many of the features of the first Cistercian monastery in Ireland directly resulted from its affiliation with Clairvaux. Although we do not know for sure if Mellifont originally had any large scale vaulting, the fact that these vaults are found in churches of the Mellifont affiliation and that barrel vaults were a feature of Burgundian Cistercian Romanesque churches, leads us to this conclusion.[60]

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[57] Peter Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude – Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth Century England*, (1984), p. 54.
[58] Roger Stalley, 'Mellifont Abbey: A Study of its Architectural History', in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Volume 80 C, Number 14, (1980), p. 345.
[59] Ibid, p. 344.
[60] Tadhg O'Keefe, *Romanesque Ireland – Architecture and Ideology in the Twelfth Century*, (2003), p. 109.

The 1954-5 excavation of Mellifont uncovered a number of stones – these remained in storage in the south range until 1977, when Roger Stalley examined them with the aid of a grant from the Stackpole Fund.[61] There was no stonework from the twelfth century that could be attributed to French masons and thus, within the first church built at Mellifont, Burgundian influence was restricted to broad architectural forms.[62] This confirms Stalley's assertion that the building that emerged at Mellifont was a severe and reactionary version of Burgundian Romanesque.[63] Bearing in mind that this monastery was founded in 1142, it adds weight to the argument that it was John de Courcy who brought to Ireland the first examples of Gothic architecture – the Cistercians may have already been in Ireland, but it was the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in 1169 that introduced the larger structural elements of Gothic architecture here.[64]

The Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169 provided a further boost to the Cistercian order, as many of the invaders who settled in Ireland founded additional Cistercian monasteries. One of the intentions behind the foundation of these new abbeys was that they would make their own contribution to the settlement of the newly conquered territories and would become an important feature of the Anglo-Norman lordship of Ireland. [65]

A further ten houses were developed under the colonists and they came to form a separate group from those affiliated with Mellifont: this was due to the fact that these

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[61] Roger Stalley, 'Mellifont Abbey: A Study of its Architectural History', in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 80 C, Number 14, (1980), p. 315.
[62] Ibid, p. 315.
[63] Ibid, p. 340.
[64] Roger Stalley, 'The Architecture of the Cistercian Churches of Ireland, 1142-1272', in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles,* (1986), p. 120.
[65] Ibid, p. 16.

monasteries were daughter houses of English and Welsh foundations and were filled with monks from these countries, which allowed a clear racial division within the Cistercian order in Ireland. [66] The Church was reluctant to admit that the monastic orders in Ireland were divided into two distinct blocks, the Irish and the English/Welsh, because both blocks were part of the same Church. [67] In any event, the development of the Cistercian order (both native and foreign) had a profound impact on the life and culture of Medieval Ireland - between 1142 and 1272, the Cistercians founded over 30 monasteries here.[68]

John de Courcy, as Lord of Ulster, founded two Cistercian abbeys in County Down: the first was Inch, which he filled with monks from Furness in Lancashire in 1180, and the second was Grey Abbey, founded with his wife Affreca and colonized with monks from Holm Cultram in Cumberland in 1193. It can be argued that it was de Courcy's political aims which made him link his two Cistercian monasteries to houses in northern England, rejecting both the Irish supremacy of Mellifont over other Cistercian houses in Ireland and links with southern English houses which were open to royal influence.[69] This was an example of de Courcy asserting his independence and affiliating himself and his foundations with his homeland in northern England.

As Anglo-Norman colonists like de Courcy settled in Ireland, English Gothic art and architecture began to spread due to the arrival of many craftsmen who had been trained in English workshops – as a result during the late 12th century and throughout

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[66] Roger Stalley, *The Architecture of the Cistercian Churches of Ireland 1142-1272,* in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles,* (1986), p. 119.
[67] J P Mallory and T E McNeill, *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonisation to Plantation,* (1991), pp. 274-275.
[68] Colmcille Ó Conbhuidhe, *Studies in Irish Cistercian History,* (1998), p 1.
[69] J P Mallory and T E McNeill, *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonization to Plantation,* (1991), p. 278.

the 13th century, Irish Gothic design was almost indistinguishable from that in England.[70]

We now need to analyse the archaeology of two of the monastic foundations (Inch Abbey and Grey Abbey) established by John de Courcy in County Down. We will begin by studying the archaeological features of their mother-houses, in order to determine any distinctive regional style that will confirm the argument that it was in fact de Courcy, through his Cistercian foundations, who imported Gothic architecture to Ireland.

Inch Abbey

One of the first buildings to introduce a fully developed version of Early Gothic architecture was Furness in Lancashire, a region that had seen very little twelfth century monastic building (Plate I).[71] It fulfilled the Cistercian requirement of isolation as the only access to the monastery was over the sands of Morecambe Bay.

An abbey for the monks of Savigny had originally been founded at Tulketh in 1125 by Stephen, Count of Boulogne and Mortain (later King of England).[72] Stephen soon after refounded the abbey on a better site at Furness in 1127[73] which went on to become one of the largest houses of the Cistercian order, with several colonies of monks sent out to establish abbeys elsewhere.[74] Stephen's foundation charter of 1127

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[70] Roger Stalley, 'Gothic Art and Architecture' in *The Illustrated Archaeology of Ireland,* (1991), p. 172.
[71] Peter Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude, Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth-Century England,* (1984), p. 54.
[72] David Knowles, R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Houses, England and Wales,* (1971), p. 119.
[73] S B Gaythorpe, 'On the date of the foundation of Furness Abbey' in *Transactions of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society,* Volume 29, (1929), p. 214.
[74] David Knowles, R Neville, *Medieval Houses, England and Wales,* (1971), p. 119.

acknowledges his contribution. [75] It states 'I therefore return, give and grant, to God and St Mary of Furness, all Furness and Walney with the privilege of hunting...and all my lordship in Furness'.[76]

The claims of the abbey to be the first northern building with clustered piers (Plate II), a specific Gothic feature, are reinforced by its considerable importance: its endowments and privileges were substantial, it owned lands as far apart as Ireland and Yorkshire and had the right to elect the Bishop of the Isle of Man. At the dissolution, Furness was the second richest Cistercian house in England, after Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire.[77]

The first permanent buildings at Furness were erected before its transfer to the Cistercians. It was some years after the Cistercians took over the monastery that building resumed, i.e. around the 1160s, when a specifically Cistercian plan was substituted for the earlier Benedictine plan, and this involved the destruction of Furness I.[78] The original church was rebuilt and enlarged with longer transepts, which had chapels in their eastern aisles. Rib vaults were added to cover the chapels, a feature which allowed for expansiveness and luminosity, and was Gothic in character.[79] The original cloister was enlarged by the total destruction of the first frater, which was rebuilt in the Cistercian mode of right angles, leaving the garth oblong in shape.[80]

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[75] T J Beck, *Annales Furnesienses, History and Antiquities of the Abbey of Furness,* (1984), p. 284.
[76] Thomas West, William Close, 'Translation of the Foundation Charter of Stephen, Earl of Bologne' in *The Antiquities of Furness'*, (1805), pp. 76-77.
[77] Lionel Butler and Chris Given-Wilson, *Medieval Monasteries of Great Britain,* (1979), p. 243.
[78] Peter Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude, Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth-Century England,* (1984), p. 56.
[79] Ibid, p. 58.
[80] David Knowles and J K S St Joseph, *Monastic Sites from the Air,* (1952), p. 78.

PLATE I
Furness Abbey in Lancashire

http://john_keats.at.infoseek.co.jp/image4/tayori/IMG0136.jpg

PLATE II

Clustered piers along the nave at Furness Abbey

http://www.visitcumbria.com/sl/furnabb.htm

The work on Furness II was undertaken in different stages. It began on the south aisle and nave (which was extended to the eighth bay west), followed by the rebuilding of the presbytery and the north transept and finally, the north aisle and final two west bays.[81] It is possible to reconstruct numerous features of the three storied nave: 1. the piers alternated between fasciculated and round, the former with eight colonettes, separated into major/minor shafts; 2. rib vaults covered the aisles, in the south with single shafts and in the north with triple shafts, while the vaults included a wall rib; 3. the crossing piers were dressed with shafts in massed groups on a rectangular core and the inner face of the shafts were supported on consoles decorated with a beaded ribbon-scallop and flat pattern-iron motif (these particular features were exclusive to Cistercian churches).[82] All of the above were elements of Gothic architecture.

The east wall of the chancel contains a great east window, which has lost both its head and tracery, while the north wall of the chancel contains two large windows and the south wall two much smaller windows (Plate III) – the sedilia is amongst the finest in the country containing four seats with a piscine (Plate IV).[83]

In the early thirteenth century the main conventual buildings were remodelled when a sacristy was built along the south wall of the presbytery and a great chapter house (measuring 20 by 13 ft) was erected adjoining the transept.[84] Originally vaulted in twelve bays, it has now lost its vault but still retains the bases of the eight-shafted piers – in the east wall the trio of windows (as well as the window in the north wall)

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[81]Peter Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude, Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth-Century England,* (1984), p. 58.
[82]Ibid, p. 58.
[83] Lionel Butler and Chris Given-Wilson, *Medieval Monasteries of Great Britain,* (1979), p. 244.
[84] David Knowles and J K S St Joseph, *Monastic Sites from the Air,* (1952), p. 78.

are all formed by twin lancets with elaborate *paterae* in the spandrels.[85] The dorter (the longest in England) ran over the whole range at first floor level and rere-dorter was situated parallel to the range, half way down its length – these two buildings were connected by a covered bridge.[86] The infirmary was constructed to the east of these buildings.

At Furness, the main surviving parts of the church are the western tower, transepts and chapel. The abbey was three-storied and spacious with modern detailing (resulting from the importation of new forms) and introduced to northern England a fully developed version of French Gothic architecture.[87]

On May 30th, 1180, John de Courcy founded the abbey of Inch on what was originally an island in the marshes beside the River Quoile and gave it as a daughter house to Furness abbey, together with land for the monks to erect their buildings.[88] The outline of a previous monastery was recently detected in aerial photographs – this was the monastery known as *Inis Cumhscraigh.*[89] Reeves tell us that a church existed here two centuries before de Courcy's time and that its real name was *Inip Cumpcpaib*, pronounced Inis-corrscry.[90] No buildings from this Celtic monastery have survived above ground level.

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[85] Lionel Butler and Chris Given-Wilson, *Medieval Monasteries of Great Britain,* (1979), p. 244.
[86] Ibid, p. 78.
[87] Peter Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude, Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth-Century England,* (1984), p. 55.
[88] W T McIntire, 'A Note on Grey Abbey and other religious foundations on the Strangford Lough affiliated to the abbeys of Cumberland' in *Transactions of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society,* Volume, (1941), p. 166.
[89] Roger Stalley, *The Cistercian Monasteries of Ireland,* (1987), p. 246.
[90] Rev William Reeves, *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor and Dromore (consisting of a Taxation of those Dioceses*), (1992), p. 92.

PLATE III

The transept at Furness, with the great window in the eastern wall of the chancel.

http://www.jodi.ws/england/cumbria/lakedistrict2/furness.html

PLATE IV
Sedilia at Furness Abbey

http://www.jodi.ws/england/cumbria/lakedistrict2/furness.html

There was another abbey *(Erenagh)* in the immediate vicinity, which had been founded in 1126 by Magnell MacNeill, King of Ulster – this abbey was destroyed during de Courcy's conquest of Ulster and he built Inch Abbey to replace it. This was a smart move on de Courcy's part – it was a way of easing his conscience if there were any doubts over his moral right to the land, and it provided a public demonstration of thanksgiving for recent success.[91] Gwynn and Hadcock argue that the remaining monks of *Erenagh* had the new monastery of Inch founded for them in 1180, when they were affiliated with Furness Abbey and were joined by English brethren, who helped to construct the new abbey.[92]

Among the monks who came from Furness to colonise Inch Abbey was the chronicler Jocelyn of Furness, author of the Life of St Patrick – it was Malachy, Bishop of Armagh, who confirmed to Adam (the first abbot of Inch) and his monks the right to build their monastery at Inch.[93] Thus, even though there was a definite racial division between native Irish Cistercian foundations and those colonized with English monks, there was still a requirement for co-operation between these two distinct groups.

Adam, the first abbot at Inch, erected a truly Gothic building – its purity of form was compounded by its subtle verticality, which was achieved at its east end with graduated lancets, the use of pointed bowtell mouldings and its rib vaulting in the eastern chapels.[94]

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[91] Rev William Reeves, *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor and Dromore (consisting of a Taxation of those Dioceses)*, (1992), p. 16.
[92] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, Ireland,* (1988), p. 135.
[93] W T McIntire, 'A Note on Grey Abbey and other religious foundations on the Strangford Lough affiliated to the abbeys of Cumberland' in *Transactions of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society,* Volume, (1941), p. 166.
[94] T E McNeill, *Anglo-Norman Ulster,* (1980), p. 47.

The church consisted of a square-ended presbytery, with transepts (which had pairs of eastern chapels) and almost certainly a centre tower with an aisled nave.[95] The nave was 29.8m wide by 19.3m long with five bays – the bases of about half the pieces are still in position (albeit much restored).[96] Apart from the east end of the church, which is well preserved, the buildings have been reduced to foundation level.

The presbytery has flat pilaster-buttresses at the angles which end below eaves which are level with weathered offsets – this square end presbytery, which has seven tall lancet windows and 2 ribbed vaulted chapels in each transept, form a striking early Gothic composition (Plate V).[97]

The cloister, which measured 25 x 23 m (and was thus relatively small), has alleys of varying width: the east and south side of the cloister retain their foundations but the west range may have been constructed in wood as there are no remains at all today (Plates VI and VII).[98]

The buildings at Inch were laid out according to the standard Cistercian plan. At its centre was an open cloister garth, surrounded by buildings on all four sides. The church was on the north side; the chapter house, with its choir monk's dormitory over it (linked by stairs into the south transept) was on the east side; the monk's refectory was on the south side and the lay brother's dormitory and refectory were on the west

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[95] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 279.
[96] Ibid, p. 279.
[97] Roger Stalley, *The Cistercian Monasteries of Ireland,* (1987), p. 246.
[98] J P Mallory and T E McNeill, *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonisation to Plantation,* (1991), p. 279.

PLATE V

Three of the tall lancet windows in the presbytery – there are a further four windows, two on the left and two on the right.

PLATE VI

Foundations at east side of the cloister

PLATE VII

Foundations at south side of the cloister

side.[99] The triple lancet windows in the east gable of the choir are the only features to have survived relatively intact; however the transepts (with their rib vaulting) and the buildings to the east of the cloister garth are sufficiently well preserved to allow us to form an impression of their former appearance (Plate VIII).[100]

De Courcy's main political aim in relation to the monasteries he founded in County Down was to link them to the north of England. These northern links are confirmed by the architectural style of Inch – the pointed windows and stone carvings in the arches, together with the type of vaulting over the chapels, are all elements specific to the Gothic style of northern England.[101] As Stalley points out, the connection between Inch and the north of England is obvious as, (contrary to the usual Irish practice), the chapels were treated as an open aisle with piers of octofoil plan, while four of the shafts were keeled - the alternation of circles and keels is reminiscent of the piers at Byland, another daughter-house of Furness.[102]

There is further archaeological evidence which confirm's Inch's northern links with regard to architectural style. The east end of the church has 3 pointed windows, simple but lofty,[103] making a striking group internally, where the splays of the wide embrasures meet in three quarter round shafts, flanked by hollows.[104] Furness also had a trio of windows in the east wall which, together with window adjoining them in the north wall, are all formed by twin lancets with elaborate paterae in the spandrels. At

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[99] History of Ireland and Information on Inch Abbey http://www.goireland.com/scripts/low/xq/asp/areaid.1/areatype.1/eat.0/SubjectID.151/PremisesID.13996/qx/premises.htm.

[100] Ibid..

[101] J P Mallory and T E McNeill, *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonisation to Plantation,* (1991), p. 278.

[102] Roger Stalley, 'The Architecture of the Cistercian Churches of Ireland, 1142-1272', in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles,* (1986), p. 120.

[103] The central light is twenty-three feet high; the flanking lights just two feet lower.

[104] Harold Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings,* (1966), pp. 48-49.

Inch the church included a central tower and an aisled nave which, Jope argues, was hardly completed before c. 1200.[105] There are two vaulted chapels to each arm of the transept, not separated by solid walls in the usual way but having a pillar and response of the early clustered type, the pointed section alternating with half-round shafts – this column-plan type is regional, peculiar to the north of England (Plate IX).[106] Furness also has a tower and an aisled nave, with the tower protruding into the western bay of the nave, following which there are a further nine bays with north and south aisles, transepts with eastern chapels and a small square-ended chancel.[107]

An essentially Gothic feature of both Inch and Furness was the pointed heads of windows and arches, visual effects which forced the visitor's eye to follow the lines of the building upwards and not so much along its length (Plate X).[108]

Taking all the above into consideration, it can be argued, with a fair degree of certainty, that Inch marked the arrival of the new Gothic style in Ireland. It is true that Mellifont was founded over forty years before a stone had been laid at Inch. The Cistercians order spread through Ireland, with Mellifont eventually affiliated with twenty-two other monasteries. But these native Irish abbeys, although in general following the Cistercian plan for monasteries, produced a type of Burgundian Romanesque with an Irish twist. They did contain pointed arches, an essential feature of Gothic architecture, but this was only due to the fact it had been used prematurely in Burgundy and it still went by the mantel of Romanesque. Mellifont was typical of Cistercian design in the middle of the twelfth century, notwithstanding a number of

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[105] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 274.
[106] Harold Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings,* (1966), p. 49.
[107] Lionel Butler, Chris Given-Wilson, *Medieval Monasteries of Great Britain,* (1979), p. 244.
[108] J P Mallory and T E McNeill, *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonization to Plantation,* (1991), p. 278.

PLATE VIII

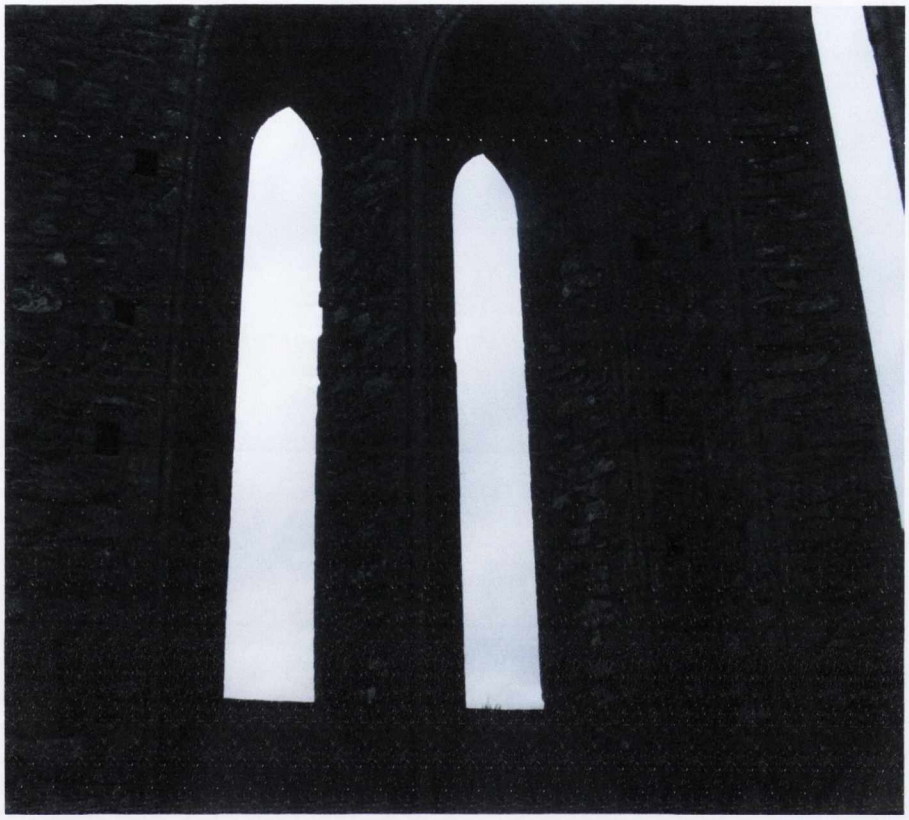
This transept to the left of the presbytery clearly shows the original ribbed

PLATE IX

The two chapels were separated by a pillar and response of the early clustered type, the pointed section alternating with half-round shafts

PLATE X

Lancet windows with pointed heads at Inch Abbey.



features peculiar to Ireland. It was at Inch that we first see the true signs of Gothic – the pointed windows and arches, which created lines which forced the eye's upwards. These features, together with the carving of the stones in the arches and the form of vaulting over the chapels, were all part the Gothic style which gradually replaced Romanesque throughout Europe in the succeeding decades.[109]

Grey Abbey

De Courcy's championing of the new Gothic Style and his continuing connections with the north of England are confirmed by the foundation of Grey Abbey c. 1193. But before we examine the archaeological evidence for Gothic architecture at Grey, we need to turn to Holmcultram, its motherhouse in Cumberland (Plate XI).

Holmcultram was founded in 1150 by Henry, son of David I, King of Scotland (then ruling Cumberland), and was filled with monks from Melrose. When the district was recovered by England, Henry, King of England, took the abbey under his protection.[110] We know that the abbey was connected to John de Courcy through his wife Affreca – her father, Godred, King of Man, granted a charter to the abbey, sometime during his reign,[111] allowing the monks free entrance and exit to the Isle of Man with leave to trade without tolls.[112] Fergusson argues that the abbey must have been in existence by the early 1160s, because the standing parts of the church (i.e. the last parts to be built) have been dated to c. 1175-1180.[113]

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[109] J P Mallory and T E McNeill, *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonization to Plantation,* (1991), p. 278., p. 278.
[110] David Knowles, R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Houses, England and Wales,* (1971), p. 120.
[111] Godred II was King of the Isle of Man from 1155 to 1187.
[112] F Grainger and W C Collingwood, 'The Register and Records of Holmcultram' in *Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Record,* Series 7, (1929), p. 141.
[113] Peter Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude, Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth-Century England,* (1984), p. 62.

The remains of the church today contains six of the original nine bays of the nave which is the result of restoration begun in 1703 and further work done in 1883 and 1912 and there are also the remains of the magnificent Gothic arch at the west doorway and a fine arcade of pillars in the side walls.[114]

The first abbot of Holmcultram, Everard (1150-1192), had to ship stone from a considerable distance, as the area around the abbey was poor in stone.[115] There are a number of architectural similarities (and differences) between Holmcultram and Furness: like Furness, string courses alone divide the elevation at Holmcultram,[116] giving the stories a firm layered quality; also similar to Furness was detailing such as capitals, bases and fasciculated piers; however, the plain, rectangular mouldings of the arcade at Holmcultram differ from the rolls and hollows of the mouldings at Furness.[117]

We know that Grey Abbey was founded by Affreca and colonised by the monks of Holmcultram c. 1193. She called the new foundation the Abbey of St. Mary de Jugo Dei.[118] In the early years of its foundation, Grey Abbey maintained close ties with its motherhouse and in 1222 and again in 1237, former abbots of Grey became the abbots of Holmcultram.[119]

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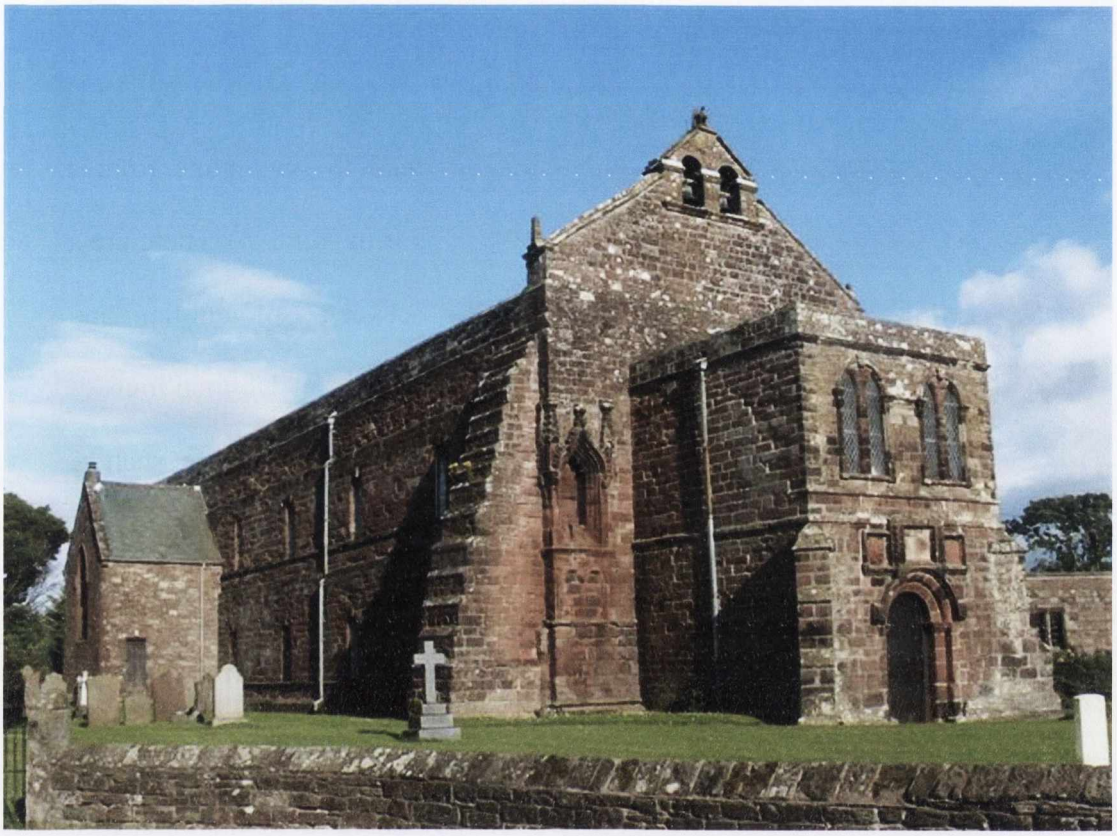
[114] Information on Holmcultram Abbey http://www.visitcumbria.com/wc/chw10.htm.
[115] Peter Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude, Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth-Century England,* (1984), p. 62.
[116] At both abbeys, no vertical articulation was used.
[117] Peter Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude, Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth-Century England,* (1984), p. 62.
[118] W T McIntire, 'A Note on Grey Abbey and other religious foundations on the Strangford Lough affiliated to the abbeys of Cumberland' in *Transactions of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society,* Volume, (1941), p. 171.
[119] Roger Stalley, *The Cistercian Monasteries of Ireland,* (1987), p. 245.

PLATE XI

Holmcultram Abbey as it stands today.



www.visitcumbria.com

Grey Abbey is situated in the east of County Down, on the north west bank of Strangford Lough (Plate XII). Two other monasteries were situated in close proximity – Inch was only sixteen miles away (across Strangford Lough), while Comber (founded six years later) was a mere eight miles from Grey Abbey.[120]

Grey was evidently built by English stonemasons, as many of them engraved their mason's mark; it was occupied largely by English monks and its architectural style, with its crossing tower and pointed lancet windows, is a good example of north English Gothic.[121] The church (which followed the standard Cistercian plan) consisted of a square ended presbytery, transepts (with pairs of square ended chapels), central towers and, unusually, an aisleless nave.[122] The cloistered buildings[123] are laid out along the usual lines. The presbytery stands on a chamfered plinth and has pairs of pilaster-buttresses with two tiers each of three graded lancet windows on the east side (Plate XIII).[124]

The nave contains a west door of elaborate design with a two-centred head of four moulded orders with filleted rolls and a single band of dog-tooth enrichment and a carved mask over the apex (Plate XIV).[125]

The pointed arches at Grey rise high above the nave's top walls and Leask argues that this was the reason for the construction of a tower – the main roofs of the church could not run level and unbroken, and a tower over the crossing solved this structural

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[120] Roger Stalley, *The Cistercian Monasteries of Ireland,* (1987), p. 245.
[121] C E B Brett, *Buildings of North County Down,* (2002), p. 8.
[122] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 275.
[123] These buildings are rectangular shaped with alleys of varying width.
[124] E M Jope (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 275.
[125] Ibid, p. 275.

problem. In other words the roofs could butt up against the walls of the tower allowing the transept arches to be as high as those of the nave and presbytery.[126]

There are four chapels leading off the presbytery, two in the northern transept and two in the southern. In the northern transept, the most northerly chapel has almost disappeared but the south chapel is better preserved and includes a pointed barrel vault, a piscine and a narrow window now blocked. The southern transept also has two chapels and these were entered from the cloister through a pointed headed door. The chapels include the base of a small night stair leading to the monk's dormitory

.

Grey Abbey, although much less elaborate then Inch, took surprisingly longer to finish (for example the west door probably took until the 1220s to be completed).[127] The most obvious reason for this is that while Inch was founded on a pre-existing site, with an already established economic base, Grey was founded on a virgin site. As Mallory and McNeill put it, Inch had a ready organised estate when it was founded, taken over from the earlier monastery and it was also in existence for nearly twenty years of de Courcy's patronage as Earl of Ulster – Grey Abbey had only been founded for ten years when Hugh de Lacy replaced de Courcy.[128]

There are a number of beautiful features still standing at Grey. In the north wall of the choir there are two lancet windows, as well as a fine east window composed of three

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[126] Harold Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings,* (1960), p. 42.
[127] T E McNeill, *Anglo-Norman Ulster,* (1980), pp. 13/14.
[128] J P Mallory and T E McNeill, *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonisation to Plantation,* (1991), p. 277.

PLATE XII

Grey Abbey, approached from the north.

PLATE XIII

The two tiers of lancet windows on the east side of the church at Grey Abbey.

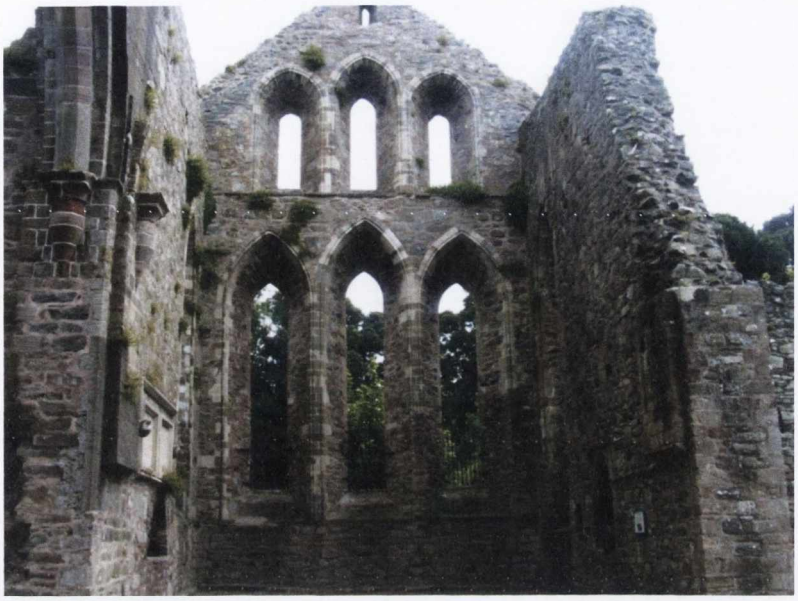

PLATE XIV

The entrance the nave at Grey Abbey, with its carved mask over the apex.

lancets, almost 6.6m high.[129] Of the conventual buildings, there are the well-built foundations of a chapter house, slype and dorter undercroft as well as the refectory (Plate XV), with three lancet windows in the south gable.[130]

The remains of the chapter house include the bases of six columns supporting the vault of twelve bays: thus the room must have been vaulted in twelve bays (Plate XVI). This building, which was used by the monks for reading a chapter from their 'Rule' on a daily basis and to discuss administrative matters, was lit by five windows, three in the east wall, one in the north wall and finally, one in the south wall. Another impressive building at Grey Abbey was the refectory, which was one of the largest in Ireland. Remaining features include the serving hatch and steps leading up to the pulpit (Plates XVII and XVIII). Within the choir there are two recumbent effigies, (said to represent de Courcy and his wife), finely carved in freestone.[131] According to the *Chronicle of Man*, in 1204 Affreca was buried at Grey Abbey.[132]

Grey further cements the argument that it was de Courcy who imported the first examples of Gothic architecture into Ireland, through his Cistercian foundations. The east window of the church is a wonderful example of Gothic architecture while the use of stone, together with its purity of form with regards to space and elevation, are central to the themes of this architectural style. While Grey may not have been as expressive or extensive as Furness, Holmcultram or other northern English abbeys

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[129] W T McIntire, 'A Note on Grey Abbey and other religious foundations on the Strangford Lough affiliated to the abbeys of Cumberland' in *Transactions of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society*, Volume, (1941), p. 173.
[130] Roger Stalley, *The Cistercian Monasteries of Ireland*, (1987), p. 245.
[131] Samuel Lewis, Lewis' *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, (1837), p. 674.
[132] W T McIntire, 'A Note on Grey Abbey and other religious foundations on the Strangford Lough affiliated to the abbeys of Cumberland' in *Transactions of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society*, Volume, (1941), p. 171.

(like Fountains or Rievaulx), it is in the same league in the sense that it is an excellent example of the 13th century Gothic style.[133] It contained many of the classic features of Cistercian architecture, including pointed lancet windows, pointed arches, flying buttresses and a crossing tower.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Gothic architecture changed the way the structural elements were used in the larger categories of architecture e.g. in redefining space or the value of light. This new style was openly embraced by the Cistercian order, as it ideally suited to their requirements of functionality and regulation. The constitution of the Cistercian order must have acted as a powerful influence in promoting uniformity in the character of their buildings – the constant association of the rulers of the order in the annual general chapter and in the visitation of monasteries by the abbots of their mother houses, must have tended to produce this result.[134] The reason why a great number of them show a strong family likeness i.e. a similarity of plan and a budding Gothic style applied in a particular manner, was due to the fact that monks from the chief houses of the order were sent out to direct the operations of new houses.[135] The essential features of the Cistercian monastic plan were developed and perfected by St. Bernard between 1130 and 1140 and once this pattern was complete, as Braunfels argues, 'the next three centuries involved simply fiddling with the trimmings'.[136]

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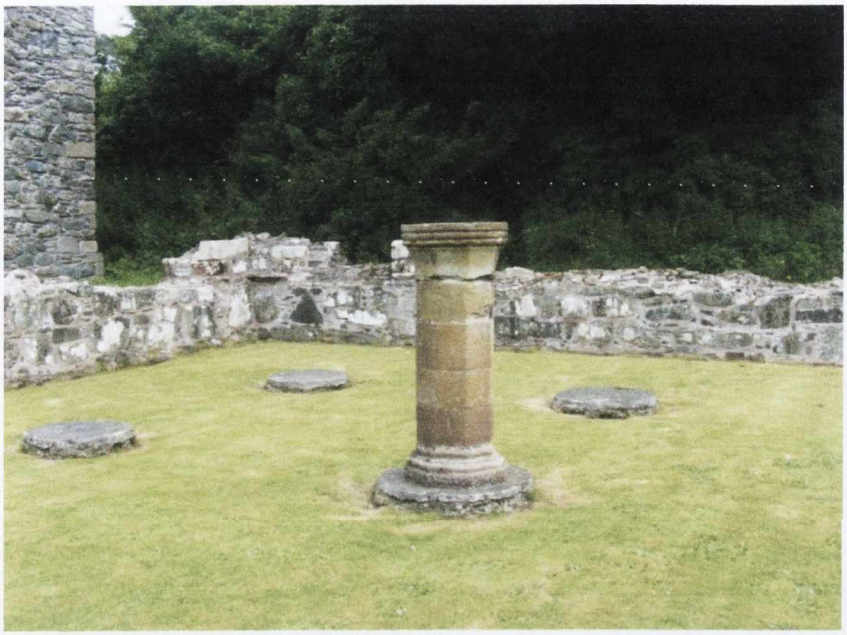
[133] C E B Brett, *Buildings of North County Down,* (2002), p. 9.
[134] John Bilson, 'The Architecture of the Cistercians, with special reference to some of their earlier churches in England', *The Archaeological Journal, Vol LXVI, 2nd Series,* (1909), p. 196.
[135] John Bilson, 'The Architecture of the Cistercians, with special reference to some of their earlier churches in England', *The Archaeological Journal, Vol LXVI, 2nd Series,* (1909), p. 188.
[136] Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe – The Architecture of the Orders,* (1972), p. 85.

PLATE XV

The three lancet windows of the refectory at Grey Abbey.

PLATE XVI

Some of the column bases in the chapter house including a reconstructed column, built by the Environment Service in 1993.

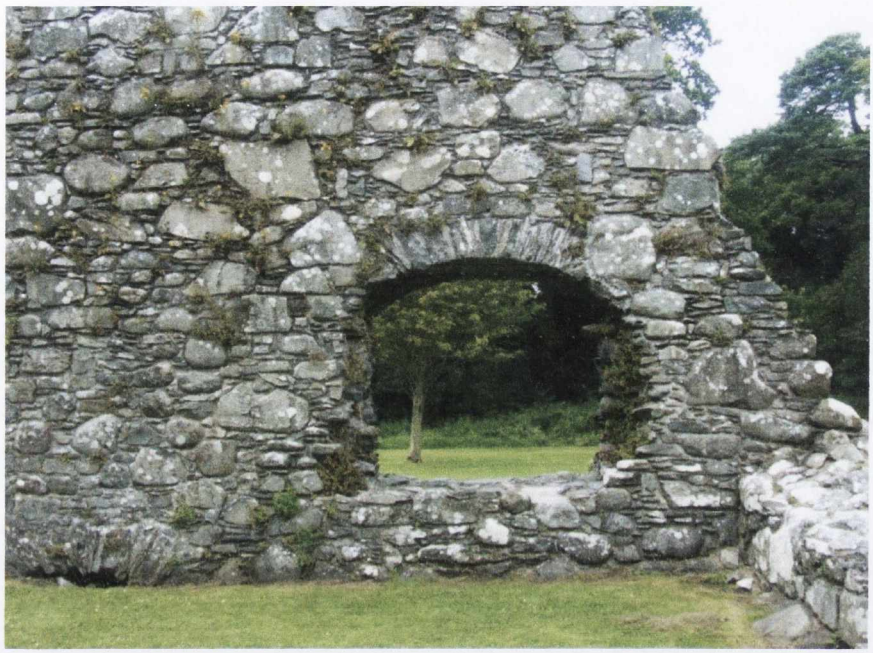


PLATES XVII

The steps in the refectory walls leading up to the pulpit and the serving hatch, leading through to the now vanished kitchen.

PLATE XVIII

The serving hatch, leading through to the now vanished kitchen.



Although Mellifont was the first Cistercian abbey in Ireland, it was constructed before Gothic had developed into a specific architectural style. It is more representative of the Burgundian Romanesque style of architecture. Even the use of pointed arches at some of the houses affiliated with Mellifont do not constitute what became known as Gothic. It is concerned with more than just one particular feature; it was an imaginative use of stone, an architectural style of integrity and purity. Furthermore, although the construction of Mellifont was directed by Robert of Clairvaux, it was Irish stonemasons who erected the buildings, while at Inch and Grey, the stonemasons themselves were English and thus incorporated features which were peculiar to the north of England, the region where Furness and Holmcultram, the motherhouses of these two abbeys, were founded.

Both Furness and Holmcultram form a distinct regional variation of Cistercian architecture (none of the other Cistercian abbeys treated elevation in precisely the same manner), and this is reflected in the architecture of their daughter-houses in County Down. Although there may not be a large number of precise architectural links between Grey and Inch and their respective mother-houses, there are a number of definite distinctive features, as outlined in this paper, which are representative of a Gothic style specific to the north of England.

The presence of early English lancets at both abbeys, which are graded in triplets in the eastern facades of the church, would have opened up the high altars to natural light and provided a stark contrast to the dark barrel-vaulted chancels of earlier

Cistercian houses.[137] While acknowledging that by international standards the design of Grey and Inch provide us with a 'muted' form of Gothic, (for example the churches are relatively simple and the stone roofs are only reinforced by thin ribs),[138] these abbeys with pointed lancets, crossing towers and English Gothic detailing gave an important stimulus to Irish church architecture.[139]

The buildings of both abbeys also illustrate the interlocking of monastic regime and ideals and the influence of the lord, in this case John de Courcy, who founded them.[140] Thus, while Malachy, Bishop of Armagh, was the first to welcome the Cistercians into Ireland with the foundation of Mellifont in 1142, it was John de Courcy, who hailed from northern England, who provides us with the first examples of Early Gothic architecture in Ireland.

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[137] Roger Stalley, 'The Architecture of the Cistercian Churches of Ireland, 1142-1272', in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles,* (1986), p. 128.
[138] Roger Stalley, 'Gothic Art and Architecture' in *The Illustrated Archaeology of Ireland,* (1991), pp. 172-173.
[139] Roger Stalley, 'The Architecture of the Cistercian Churches of Ireland, 1142-1272', in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles,* (1986), p. 128.
[140] J P Mallory and T E McNeill, *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonisation to Plantation,* (1991), p. 276.

Chapter 4

The de Verdons

When Prince John landed in Waterford on April 25th 1185, among his close companions was a knight and royal administrator named Bertram de Verdon[1]. Over the next four years Bertram would play a critical role in the founding of the town of Dundalk. His ancestors would continue to play an essential part in the development of the town in the following years, establishing medieval monuments that remain on the landscape to this day. These included monastic settlements within the town of Dundalk as well as Roche Castle, which still overawes the landscape on the Louth-Armagh border. The de Verdon's role within the town was at times altruistic i.e. their founding of St Leonard's Hospital, and at times assertive i.e. the building of Roche Castle was intended to reinforce the de Verdon's overlordship of the entire area.

The following passage, from D'Alton and O'Flanagan, tells us something of Bertram de Verdon, the first member of the family to arrive in Louth: '...in a distant county of England, a Norman family was springing into power and fame, that was destined soon materially to influence the future fortunes of Dundalk. Of that illustrious race, Bertram de Verdon, having been settled by the conqueror in Leicestershire, was succeed by his son, Norman de Verdon, who, intermarrying with the daughter of Geoffrey de Clinton, the founder of Kenilworth castle, had issue by her of Bertram de Verdon[2]...he resided at Alton Castle in Staffordshire.[3]

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[1] Although the correct spelling of the family name is de Verd*un* and this spelling is still used in France, it is customary to spell it de Verd*on* in both England and Ireland.
[2] Bertram de Verdon (Junior) was Sheriff of Warwick and Leicestershire from 1170-1184.
[3] John D'Alton, J R O'Flanagan, *The History of Dundalk and its environs,* (1864), p. 18.

The name de Verdon comes from a village on the west coast of Normandy, which was located close to Vessey, itself close to the Norman border with Brittany.[4] Between 1170 and 1204, the de Verdon's possessions in Normandy had been augmented to include interests scattered across Avranches and Cotentin.[5] Bertram de Verdon I settled in Leicester after he had accompanied William the Conqueror to England in 1066. The presence of the de Verdon family in England in the aftermath of the conquest is confirmed by an entry in the *Domesday Book*, which noted that de Verdon held the manor of Farnham Royal in Buckinghamshire.[6] It was Bertram I's descendant, Bertram de Verdon III, who would play a significant role in the establishment of the town of Dundalk in the late 12th century. Bertram de Verdon III was the eldest of three sons of Norman de Verdon and Luceline, daughter of Geoffrey de Clinton, and was probably born in the 1140s[7] (Appendix 12).[8] He had supported Henry II against his rebellious sons, was regularly present as a baron of the king's court, served as an itinerant justice in eight counties and was sheriff of Warwickshire and Leicestershire from 1168 to 1183.[9]

Bertram III was not only an administrator, judge and diplomat but also a warrior knight, who supported Henry II against his sons in 1173 and had also sent supplies from his estates in Staffordshire and Leicestershire to sustain the king during his expedition to Ireland in 1171-72.[10]

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[4] L C Lloyd, *The Origins of Some Anglo-Norman families,* (1951), p. 103.
[5] R Howlett, *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry 11 and Richard 1,* (1889), pp. 333-351.
[6] The Domesday Book on-line, http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk/buckinghamshire2.html
[7] C Lynam, *The Abbey of St Mary, Croxden, Staffordshire,* (1911), pp. 8-9.
[8] See Appendices, p. xv.
[9] H C G Matthew, Brian Harrison (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* Vol 56, p. 275.
[10] Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland, The English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (1999), pp. 30-31.

In the summer of 1185, Bertram III accompanied Prince John[11] to Ireland, probably at the behest of Henry II. Charters survive which record that Bertram progressed with John from Waterford via Tibberaghny and Kildare to Dublin.[12] It is interesting to note that most of these charters refer to Bertram as 'Seneschal'. Prince John had appointed Bertram as Seneschal[13] of Ireland and also as custodian of the Castle of Drogheda,[14] both important positions in the new colony's administration and also a reflection of the esteem in which Bertram was held by both Henry II and John, Prince of Ireland.

The Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland for the years 1185-86 confirm Bertram's arrival in Ireland: 'Bertram de Verdon...renders his account; for the passage to Ireland of 9 ships with men, of John the K's son, and their harness, 23*l*, 5*s*, 4*d*; hire of a ship to carry the supplies of Gilbert Pipard from Lancaster to that country, 1 mark; for a ship to convey the supply of Bertram de Verdon to Ireland.'[15]

Bertram de Verdon and Gilbert Pipard were both granted extensive endowments covering much of the modern county of Louth. Henry II knew he could rely on both men to run his colony in his absence. Although they were men of military experience, de Verdon and Pipard were first and foremost royal servants as opposed to great landowners. The type of expertise and resource that both men possessed[16] was appropriate to Louth, a relatively stable region that had posed no major military threat

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[11] In 1177 Henry II designated his son John as Lord of Ireland.
[12] J T Gilbert, Historic and Municipal Charters of Ireland, 1172-1320, Roll Series, (1870), p. 49.
[13] The Seneschal was the steward or most senior official in the administration of the monarchy's Irish territories.
[14] Paul Gosling, *From Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), pp. 251-252.
[15] H S Sweetman, *The Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland*, Vol I, (1875), p. 11.
[16] Both Pipard and de Verdon were primarily administrators, knowledgeable of the law and diplomacy. These were very important qualities for anyone attempting to establish a new Anglo-Norman colony in an alien country.

to the English since their arrival.[17] The lands granted in Louth to Bertram were extensive. Sir James Ware[18] details the grant as follows: 'About the close of the reign of Henry II to his son John, the so-called Lord of Ireland and the Earl of Morton, granted to Bertram de Verdon, Seneschal of Ireland (who afterward died in Palestine in the year 1192), four cantrels of land in Uriel, and have a cantred in Luva (Louth) being that part of it, which lies towards the sea, to hold by the service of twenty knights'.[19]

This area covered most of North Louth, including the Cooley peninsula and corresponds roughly to the present day baronies of Upper and Lower Dundalk.[20] The grant also included the eastern part of the barony of Louth, as well as lands stretching far north into County Armagh, though no attempt seems to have been made to occupy these lands, with de Verdon contenting himself with drawing rents from the Irish kings.[21] Ware also mentions Bertram's death in Palestine – this refers to his decision to leave Ireland and his lands in Louth barely four years after his arrival, in order to join the Third Crusade.[22] It may also explain his devotion to St Leonard, which we will examine in more detail below[23].

Bertram chose Castletown as the site for his chief manor in North Louth[24] and by the time de Verdon left Louth for the Crusade in 1190, his frontier castle had become

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[17] Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland, The English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (1999), p. 31.
[18] Sir James Ware was a highly respected 17th century antiquarian.
[19] Walter Harris, Robert Bell, *Works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland'* (1762), p. 197.
[20] Paul Gosling, *From Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), p. 251.
[21] A J Otway-Ruthven, *A History of Medieval Ireland,* (1980), p. 70.
[22] Ibid, p. 252.
[23] See pp. 110-112.
[24] The word manor is mainly defined as the house or castle of a lord and the land attached to it, which would often include some form of town or village established by the lord.

associated with a church and borough, all of which stood within a newly formed parish.[25]

Almost certainly built by Bertram III, the remains of a motte and bailey castle can still be seen at Castletown in Dundalk. The fact that the site controlled a wide landscape, including the ford over the Castletown River at Toberona and the main route into Ulster via the Moyry Pass, was probably the main reason that Bertram chose to establish his caput in this area.[26] This motte consists of a massive circular mound, c 68m in diameter at its base and 45m across its top and stands about 8-10m above the bottom of a broad U-shaped fosse.[27]

The motte is mentioned as 'the castle of Dundalc' in the marriage settlement between Bertram's daughter, Leselina de Verdon and Hugh de Lacy: 'Agreement made between Thomas de Verdon and Hugh de Lacy...Thomas has given to Hugh de Lacy with Leselina de Verdon, his sister, in frank marriage, the moiety of his land of Ireland in Eirgall...Thomas has given to Hugh two and a half knight's fees in a suitable place, in exchange for a like number retained to grantor and his heirs around the castle of Dundalc'[28].

Just how large the settlement at Castletown was remains unclear. Medieval sources refer to it as the 'villa de Castletown' – yet, as Bradley points out, historians are in general agreement that the term 'ville' or 'villa' was used very loosely in medieval

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[25] Mark S Hagger, *The Fortunes of a Norman Family – The De Verdons in England, Ireland and Wales, 1066-1316,* (2001), p. 53.
[26] Ibid, p. 52.
[27] Victor Buckley, *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* (1986), p. 86.
[28] J Mills and M J McEnery, *Calendar of the Gormanstown Register*', (1916), p. 144.

times.[29] Regardless of the size of the settlement at Castletown, the establishment of the new town of Dundalk, sometime in the early thirteenth century, would soon overshadow it.

The new medieval town of Dundalk was erected c 2km east of Castletown (Appendix 13).[30] The main factor influencing this move was probably the fact that although Castletown overlooked the river-ford at Toberona, the river was actually quite shallow and thus would have been unable to accommodate sea vessels. Trading along and across the Irish Sea had grown in importance by the late 12th century. Relocating the settlement further downstream to the area around Seatown allowed for the development of a port capable of accommodating shipping.

Seatown is situated on a low east-west gravel ridge and although the two religious foundations discussed in this chapter held extensive lands in and around the area, the actual built-up area of Seatown was small and probably only covered about ten acres – this included areas on both sides of Seatown, stretching from its junction with Chapel Street to the west end of Mill Street (Plate I).[31] Many writers on the history of Dundalk, argue for an early 13th century date for the town's foundation, despite the fact that the earliest reference to the new town is from 1279-80, when Nicholas de

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[29] J Bradley, 'Planned Medieval Towns in Ireland' in The *Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe: Ireland, Wales, Denmark, Germany, Poland and Russia from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Century,* (1985), p. 418.
[30] See Appendices, p. xvi.
[31] Paul Gosling, 'A Survey and Report on the Archaeology of the Town and District of Dundalk, (1983), p. 83.

PLATE I

The junction of Chapel Street – the remains of the priory are just to the left of the picture, behind the old Dundalk library.

Verdon's widow Basilia, claimed dower in 'the new and old ville of Dundalk' at the Court of Common Pleas in Dublin.[32] Gosling argues that the presence of the emerging new town as early as 1226 could be inferred from the licence granted for an annual fair at the 'manor of Dundalk' to Nicholas de Verdon for that year.[33] The search for a date for the founding of the new town of Dundalk leads us onto the founding of the hospital and priory of St Leonard's in Seatown..

St Leonard's Priory and Hospital

D'Alton and O'Flanagan state that 'Bertram de Verdon founded a friary here (Dundalk), for the Cross-Bearers, following the rule of St Augustine, which he dedicated to St Leonard. It was afterwards a hospital for both sexes, and admitted the sick, the aged and the infirm and supplied the place of poor house and infirmary without the modern appliances of rates and taxes'.[34] Sir James Ware confirms the establishment of St Leonard's when he wrote 'Priory or Hospital of the Crucifers or Crouched Friars, founded under the role of St Augustine:

Place of Title of Dedication	Near Dundalk Parish of St Leonard
Founder	Bertram de Verdon
Time	Century 12
Grantees and Assignee	Nicholas Draycot Esq[35]

[32] H S Sweetman, *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland, 1252-1284,* (1875).
[33] Paul Gosling, From *Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), p. 264.
[34] John D'Alton, J R O'Flanagan, *The History of Dundalk and its Environs,* (1864), p. 22.
[35] Walter Harris, *Works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland,* (1762), p. 273

In 1654, Sir James Ware argued that St Leonard's was founded during the reign of King John (1199-1216).[36] Gwynn and Hadcock support the idea of a pre-1216 date, stating that of the sixteen houses of this order founded in Ireland, fourteen, including Dundalk, were most likely established sometime between 1188 and 1216.[37] The houses in Ireland were of Augustinian hospitallers from the beginning and at least three of their houses, (in Dublin, Ardee and Dundalk), had sisters as well as brethren.[38] The argument here is not that the new town of Dundalk was founded as early as 1188, merely that the priory of St Leonard pre-dated the new town - as Gosling puts it 'the fact that he (Bertram) chose to locate the new friary and hospital not at Castletown but 2km to the south-east, on the low-lying coastal plain, suggests that he was presaging the developing of the new town itself'.[39]

It is not only the exact date of the founding of St Leonard's that remains obscure. The origins of the Cross-Bearers[40] are also ambiguous. There are claims that these brethren emerged from the earliest times of Christianity in the East[41] and that their work included the founding of a hospital monastery in Jerusalem.[42]

In the *Louth Archaeological Journal* in 1907, Laurence Murray wrote a paper, which examined the founding of this order in more depth. Towards the end of the 12th century, the Saracens had conquered large areas of south-east Europe, capturing Christians and forcing them into slavery and as a result, two holy men, John of Matha

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[36] Walter Harris, *Works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland,* (1762), p. 273.
[37] A Gwynn and R N Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses in Ireland,* (1970), p. 265.
[38] Ibid, p. 209.
[39] Paul Gosling, *From Dún Delca to Dundalk, The topography and archaeology of a medieval frontier town, AD c.1187-1700,* (1993), p. 265.
[40] They were also known as the Cruciferi and the Crutched Friars.
[41] They are sometimes recorded as the Order of St John of Jerusalem.
[42] A Gwynn and R N Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses in Ireland,* (1970), p. 208.

and Felix of Valouis founded an Order under the patronage of the Most Holy Trinity, which would function by the same rules as the Regular Canons of St Augustine.[43] Originally, the main aim of this order was to collect alms for the ransom of slaves but over time their vocation extended to serving the sick, poor and afflicted and it was in this role that they exercised their holy calling in Ireland.[44]

By the twelfth century the order had become known as 'Crosiers' or 'Cross-Bearers[45] because of their robe which incorporated a cross.[46] In fact their habit actually consisted of a long white robe with a red and blue cross embroidered on the right breast.[47] After their introduction into England as sister houses of the Flemish Fratres Cruciferi (Appendix 14)[48], they became known as 'crutched' friars.[49]

There is also an absence of information surrounding St Leonard himself – it would appear that he was born in the 5th century to a noble Frankish family and that he entered a monastery at Micy, near Orleans and later, on a grant of land by King Clovis, he founded a monastery at Nobilac near Limoges.[50] By the 11th century, devotion to him was widespread across Europe, mainly because of the many favours attributed to his intercession, including the release of prisoners, and he was revered as

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[43] For this reason, the Fratres Cruciferi are sometimes confused with the Augustinians.
[44] Laurence Murray, 'The Post-Norman Monasteries of Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Volume I, No. 4, (1907), pp. 75-83.
[45] In 1245 Pope Innocent IV ordained that they should carry a cross in the hand – at some later date this custom would appear to have changed to wearing a cross on the shoulder of their habit.
[46] Harold O'Sullivan, *The House on the Ridge of the Weir,* (1998), p. 22.
[47] Laurence Murray 'The Post-Norman Monasteries of Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Volume I, No. 4, (1907), pp. 75-83.
[48] See Appendices, pp. xvii-xxxiii.
[49] Laurence Murray 'The Post-Norman Monasteries of Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Volume I, No. 4, (1907), , p. 22.
[50] Arthur Curran, 'The Priory of St Leonard, Dundalk' in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society Journal,* Volume XVII, (1971), pp. 131-140.

the patron saint for a safe deliverance and as such was prayed to by many crusaders.[51] In England, there are 177 churches and hospitals dedicated to St Leonard.[52] It is interesting to note that St Leonard was also revered for interceding on behalf of both man and beast afflicted with disease; this may explain the reason why so many hospitals were devoted to him.[53] In 1222, the Council of Oxford prescribed St Leonard's feast as a holy day.[54]

The question remains why Bertram de Verdon was responsible for the only church dedicated in Ireland to St Leonard, run by the Fratres Cruciferi, in the new town of Dundalk.[55] The church in the old town of Dundalk (i.e. Castletown) had been dedicated by Bertram to St John the Baptist. This is confirmed by an early charter, preserved in the *Register of Documents of St John at Newgate, Dublin*: 'To all Christ's faithful people, that shall see or hear these letters, Bertram de Verdon greeting. Know the whole of you that for the sake of charity I have been granted and by the present charter confirmed, to God and St John the Baptist's Church of Dundalk, in frankalmoigon for the welfare of my soul and for the welfare of Dame Rosia, my wife, and of all my ancestors titles and all the ecclesiastical benefices of my whole land of Dundalk…'[56] As explained above, the new town of Dundalk was not yet established when the Augustinian Hospitallers arrived in Louth, so to dedicate

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[51] Arthur Curran, 'The Priory of St Leonard, Dundalk' in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society Journal,* Volume XVII, (1971), p. 132.
[52] Alban Butler, David Hugh Farmer, *Butler's Lives of the Saints,* (1995), p. 46.
[53] Catholic Encyclopaedia, St Leonard of Limonsin.
http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09178b.htm
[54] John Hennig, 'St Leonard in Ireland', *The Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Volume X, No. 4, Hennig, (1944), pp. 297-301.
[55] Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland, The English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (1999), p. 60.
[56] C MacNeill, 'The De Verdons and the Draycotts: Norman Grants in County Louth' in the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society Journal,* Volume V, No 3, pp. 166-72.

the monastery to the same saint (i.e. St John the Baptist) as the church in Castletown, would only have created confusion.[57]

The reason for Bertram's devotion to St Leonard may have been concerned with the saint himself. Earlier in this chapter it was stated that St Leonard was known as the patron saint for safe deliverance. He was also the saint of captives and prisoners-of-war and was revered by many of the crusaders to the Holy Land; this consideration may have weighed heavily with Bertram in his choice of dedication, as he prepared to go on crusade.

This is another factor that lends weight to an early date for the establishment of St Leonard. Bertram's devotion to this saint is easily explained and supports the argument that it was he who founded the priory in Seatown. And we know that he left for the Third Crusade sometime towards the end of the 1180s. This Crusade was proclaimed by Pope Gregory VIII following the defeat by Saladin of the field army of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem at the Battle of Hattin (1187) and his subsequent capture of the Holy City itself. After his coronation the call to the Crusade was taken up by King Richard I (1189-1199) – Bertram's decision to follow him may well have been a political move both to demonstrate his loyalty to the crown and to secure his position at court.[58] The Crusade departed from Vézelay in Northern France in the spring of 1190 – though we do not know the exact date that Bertram left Ireland, it must have been before this date. And, in fact, contemporary documents state that he

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[57] Arthur Curran, 'The Priory of St Leonard, Dundalk' in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society Journal,* Volume XVII, (1971), pp. 131-140.
[58] Paul Gosling, From *Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), p. 252.

was present at the court of King Richard at Geddington on 16th September 1189.[59] Thus, if it was Bertram who founded St Leonard's, it is entirely possible it was founded sometime before 1189.

Finally, as stated earlier, Bertram de Verdon was sheriff of Warwickshire and Leicestershire from 1168 to 1183 and had also served as an itinerant justice in eight counties. As such, he would have been well travelled and almost certainly familiar with Leicester Abbey, founded in 1138 and constructed within the open fields to the north of the medieval city of Leicester and its suburbs.[60] Leicester Abbey was an important medieval religious foundation. After the initial distribution of land in the late 11th century, several of the largest lay estates shrank over the following two centuries with monastic holdings, particularly those of Leicester Abbey, developing to the point where they held nearly one seventh of the whole county area (Plate II).[61] Between Leicester Abbey and the town lay the hospital and church of St Leonard.[62]

St Leonard's hospital and church in Leicester were founded in 1189 (or earlier)[63], probably by William the Leper, the son of Robert Blanchmains, Earl of Leicester.[64] In the medieval period there was a need for somewhere for the lesser aristocracy, suffering from long-term illnesses or even old age, to reside and receive the necessary care and this may explain why William founded the hospital at Leicester.[65]

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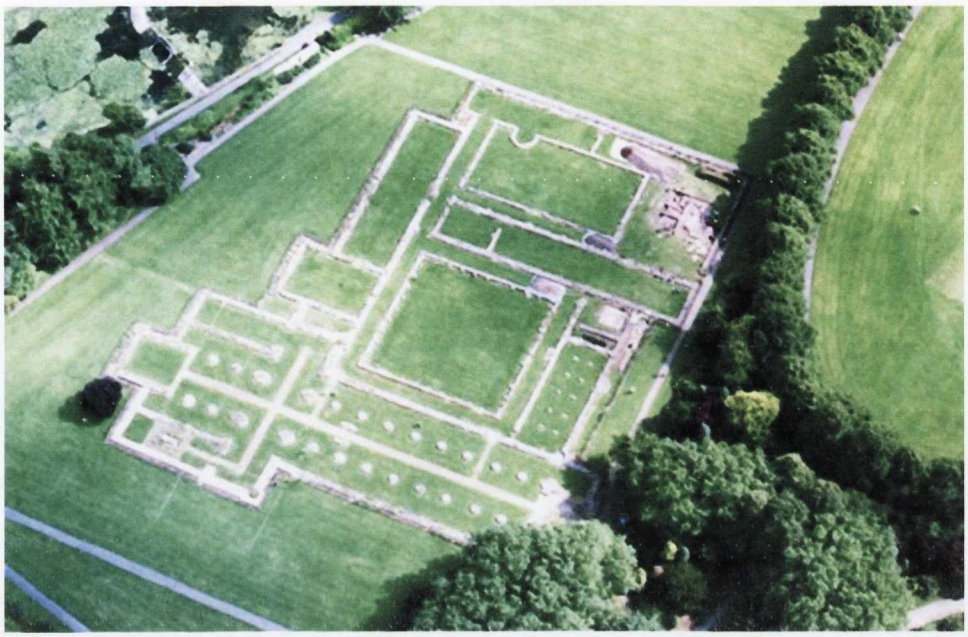
[59] L Landon, 'The Itinerary of King Richard I' in *The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society,* Volume 51, (1935), pp. 7-27.
[60] Richard Buckley, 'Abbey Park, Leicester: An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment and Survey,' University of Leicester Archaeological Services, 1997. http://www.le.ac.uk/archaeology/modules/ar2026/abbeydeskstudy.pdf.
[61] Anthony Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales, 1300-1500,* (1999), p. 172.
[62] Ibid.
[63] 'St Leonard's Hospital, Leicester' in *Monasticon* http://monasticmatrix.org/monasticon/index.php?function=detail&id=973
[64] John Curtis, *A Topographical History of the County of Leicester,* (1831), p. 110.
[65] Nicholas Orme, Margaret Webster, *The English Hospital, 1070-1570,* (1995), p. 112.

PLATE II

The foundations of Leicester Abbey church, cloister and other ranges.



http://www.leicester.gov.uk/index.asp?pgid=2658

Neither St Leonard's hospital in Dundalk or Leicester can be assigned a definite date for their foundation. What can be said is that they were both founded sometime in the late 12th century and that St Leonard's hospital and priory in Dundalk were constructed by Bertram de Verdon, the Sheriff of Leicestershire, while St Leonard's hospital and church in Leicester were built in the most important town of that county. It would not be too far a leap to suggest that the hospital in Leicester was constructed first, and that Bertram was familiar with it.

Bertram died at Joppa, (today a port in Western Israel incorporated into Tel Aviv in 1950), in August 1192, either from a battle wound or disease.[66] His possessions in Louth and elsewhere then passed to his son Thomas de Verdon[67], who died in 1199, and then to his other son, Nicholas de Verdon, who obtained a royal order and a licence from King John in 1203 to enter said possessions: '1204-05. Warwick/Leicestershire; Nicholas de Verdon owes 100 marks, a war-horse and a palfrey, for having lands in Ireland, whereof Bertram, his father, was seized in his demesne as a fee for his death, for having custody during the K's pleasure of the lands which were acknowledge to belong to the Primate of Armagh...[68]

The above refers to the patronage of the crown and the king's rights regarding the church which meant that during vacancies in the Archbishopric of Armagh, he could give custody of its extensive lands to colonists like the de Verdons – it was during the vacancy caused by his refusal to recognise Echdonn MacGilla Uidhir as archbishop in the early twelfth century, that King John awarded custody of the lands of the arch

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[66] C Lynam, *The Abbey of St Mary, Croxden, Staffordshire,* (1911), pp. 8-9.
[67] Two sons of Bertram, Thomas and William, died childless in 1199. Thomas was actually buried in St Leonard's Prior.
[68] H S Sweetman, *The Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland,* Vol I, (1875), p. 38.

diocese of Armagh to Nicholas de Verdon.[69] Over a century later, when a vacancy again arose, the Prior of St Leonard's was chosen as the guardian of these lands. Although Bertram founded St Leonard's in the late 12th century, it was probably Nicholas[70] who was responsible for the enlargement of the priory and hospital to meet the increasing demands for the hospitalisation of the sick, aged and infirm.[71]

The priory of St Leonard depended on the benefices of the wealthy in order to continue in their ministrations to the needy. There are numerous examples of this within the *Dowdall Deeds*[72] including the following: 'Philip the Vintner grants to Roger of Sidan in a message of land...to hold...rendering three pence to the Prior and the Convent of St Leonard of Dundalk.[73]

We know that St Leonard's gained in importance as both a hospital and priory because in 1270 Patrick O'Scanlon, the Archbishop of Armagh, died within its walls: 'Patrick O'Scanlon: he died the fifteenth of March, 1270, at St Leonard's Abbey at Dundalk (a house of Crouched Friars, of the order of St Augustine) and was buried in the Dominican Convent at Drogheda.'[74]Although there were other reasons for his choosing St Leonard's as his residence for his final days, (including the fact that he may well have actually come from Dundalk and also because he had been consecrated as Bishop of Raphoe in the Franciscan monastery in Dundalk, which was located very

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[69] Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland, The English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (1999), p. 129.

[70] The de Verdons were a family who had provided much patronage to religious foundations in England - in 1176, Bertram de Verdon founded Croxden Abbey, a Cistercian monastery, colonised by monks from Aunay-sur-Odon, a couple of miles north of Alton

[71] Arthur Curran, 'The Priory of St Leonard, Dundalk' in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society Journal,* Volume XVII, (1971), pp. 131-140.

[72] A collection of deeds which contains numerous grants relating to Dundalk.

[73] Charles McNeill and A T Otway-Ruthven (eds), *The Dowdall Deeds,* (1960), p. 1.
This deed is undated by McNeill and Otway Ruthven argue that through palaeographical evidence it can be roughly dated to the mid-13th century.

[74] Walter Harris, *Works of Sir James Ware Concerning Ireland,* (1762), p. 67.

close to St Leonard's), it must be concluded that it was primarily his need for medical attention that drew him to St Leonard's.[75]

Much the above information regarding St Leonard's development as a hospital and priory comes from written sources including the *Dowdall Deeds* and the *Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland.* It is when we turn to the archaeology of this priory that we begin to encounter difficulties. Little is known of the exact location or extent of the buildings included in St Leonard's priory. There have been two minor excavations of the priory and both were the result of modern building works. In 1911, during the construction of the Electric Light Works (which later became the ESB office and yard), ten stone lined graves were uncovered – the 1982 survey into the archaeology of Dundalk argues that these graves were part of the original graveyard of the monastery of St Leonard.[76] In 1995, human remains were discovered when a Telecom Eireann crew were digging a trench for cables at the corner of Seatown and Chapel Street and as a result, a salvage excavation was undertaken on behalf of the County Museum.[77] A charnel pit of disarticulated bone was exposed at the west end, where the trench was widened for the construction of a manhole, while parts of four in-situ human remains were excavated at the east end of the trench.[78] A dump of stone rubble with roof slate and small fragments of medieval ridge-tile were uncovered close to the charnel pit and pottery shards of 13-14th century date were found within one of the burial sites: all the deposits continue north under the garden

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[75] Arthur Curran, 'The Priory of St Leonard, Dundalk' in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society Journal,* Volume XVII, (1971), pp. 131-140.
[76] Paul Gosling, 'A Survey and Report on the Archaeology of the Town and District of Dundalk, (1983), p. 83.
[77] A Report on the Excavations of St Leonard's Gardens, Dundalk. www.excavations.ie
[78] Ibid.

wall of the old county library (Plate III).[79] Tradition has it that the site of St Leonard's priory lays beneath the old Technical School and the county library.[80]

Although St Leonard's was occupied until its suppression in 1539, we have no information regarding its original layout, its scale or architecture. What we do have is a list of the Priory's possession at its dissolution in 1540: Patrick Galtrym, the last prior of St Leonard's listed the buildings of the priory including a church, a chapter house, a dormitory, a hall and other buildings.[81] We can presume that many of these buildings must have been destroyed in the immediate aftermath of the priory's dissolution as by 1540, the following was recorded: 'no superfluous buildings here, but there now remains the house of the aforesaid hospital, which is well and sufficiently repaired and well victualled for the defence of the town of Dundalk and suitable to the necessary use of the farmers dwelling there. And the said circuit and precinct of the same hospital contains by estimation two acres…'.[82]

Unfortunately, only fragment remains of the original priory in the north boundary of St Leonard's Gardens in Seatown, which consists of a small pointed under croft, c 6.5 m long, 2.85m high and 3.25m wide. This is rectangular in plan and opens at the west end and was probably part of a vaulted ground floor within a two-storey domestic

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[79] A Report on the Excavations of St Leonard's Gardens, Dundalk. www.excavations.ie.

[80] Paul Gosling, 'A Survey and Report on the Archaeology of the Town and District of Dundalk', (1983), p. 83.

[81] M Archdall, *Monasticon Hibernicum -A History of the Abbies, Priories and Other Religious Houses in Ireland,* (1786), p. 463.

[82] T McNeill and M O'Farrell, 'Possessions belonging to the late Hospital of Saint Leonard Near Dundalk' in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society Journal,* Volume VI, (1928), pp. 194-98.

PLATE III

The old County Library adjacent to St Leonard's Gardens, originally the priory and hospital of St Leonard.

building (Plate IV).[83] However this fragment is enough for us to determine that the style of architecture applied at St Leonard's was Gothic.

In 1996 archaeological investigations were undertaken on two areas around St Leonard's gardens – the second test-pit discovered loose sandy fill with mortar, brick etc.[84] The fill covered a stone wall, aligned east to west, the top of which lay at a depth of 0.5m below the surface of the lawn, which can be identified as the north wall of a building shown at this location on the Clanbrassil Estate map of 1785.[85] Further excavation is required to establish whether this building was a surviving part of the priory.[86]

The position of these remains also allows us to infer something regarding the siting of the priory. It is juxtaposed with the boundary wall of Seatown Graveyard behind the old Dundalk library building, which, together the VEC school, at one stage formed an imposing block of Corporation buildings in the very centre of Dundalk town.[87] Surrounding the priory are a number of streets that are accessed from the principal thoroughfare through Dundalk. Thus, if we take into account that the priory was situated almost exactly at the town centre and the fact that a large number of streets actually surround it, we can infer that the town may actually have developed around St Leonard's (Plate V). The priory is also situated a short walk from the harbour of Dundalk, and Gosling argues that St Leonard's was deliberately chosen by the de

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[83] Paul Gosling, From *Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), p. 313.
[84] LH007-11918 – notes within the SMR record for St Leonard's Priory, accessed from the Office of Public Works on 8th September, 2008.
[85] Ibid.
[86] LH007-11918 – notes within the SMR record for St Leonard's Priory, accessed from the Office of Public Works on 8th September, 2008.
[87] T Murphy, *Dundalgan, its Churches, Shrines and Religious Orders*, (1909), p. 25.

Verdons to secure the Castletown River estuary – he also argues that it may have acted as a focus for settlement as trade began to develop in the estuary.[88]

This argument is also supported by the fact that from its foundation to the fifteenth century, the town of Dundalk was restricted to the northern end of the natural ridge on which it was built, close to the river, and covered an area of c.48 acres.[89] It is interesting to note that the town only began to spread outwards after the dissolution of St Leonard's. The priory may indeed have acted as an 'anchor', playing an indispensable role in aiding the townsfolk, who may have wished to remain contained within the area surrounding the priory. This is not purely guesswork – St Leonard's was certainly part of the earliest settlement of Dundalk, built long before the first documented reference to the new town of Dundalk by Basilia de Verdon in 1279.

One problem when trying to determine the layout of St Leonard's concerns the fact that the remains of the 15 other Cross-Bearer foundations within Ireland are not sufficient enough to allow us to determine whether there was any recurrent layout of the houses of this order – a number of churches did have towers but there is no reference to any tower in the 1540 survey completed after the priory's dissolution.[90] It is interesting to note the word 'defensive' within the 1540 survey: 'remains the house of the aforesaid hospital, which is well and sufficiently repaired and well victualled for the defence of the town of Dundalk...[91] This statement hints that the architecture of the town may have incorporated some form of defensive feature. However, although the town's defences are mentioned first in the sources in 14th

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[88] Paul Gosling, From *Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), p. 265.
[89] V M Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth*, (1991), p. 215.
[90] Ibid, p. 313.
[91] T McNeill and M O'Farrell, 'Possessions belonging to the late Hospital of Saint Leonard Near Dundalk' in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society Journal*, Volume VI, (1928), pp. 194-98.

PLATE IV

The remains of the original undercroft of St Leonard's Hospital and Priory

PLATE V

Streets off St Leonard's Priory

century there are no references to any defensive features within St Leonard's in any sources pre-1540.[92]

Gwynn and Hadcock inform us that both sisters as well as brethren resided at St Leonard's.[93] This, together with the fact that the hospital would have admitted both male and female patients, must have meant there was separate accommodation for both the community as well as the hospital patients.[94]

The de Verdon's association with St Leonard's continued throughout the medieval period. In 1287 Theobald de Verdon, in accordance with family tradition, made a grant to Prior Ossegod of certain benefices and lands for a yearly rent of 17½ marks, in consideration of which the prior was to pay Theobald £100 in silver.[95]

It can finally be argued that the role of the Order of the Fratres Cruciferi in St Leonard's Priory, Dundalk was much more than purely spiritual, concerned only with their communal affair, as from its earliest foundation the brethren of the order were closely associated with the care of the sick and public ministry and were in receipt of several benefices: by the mid-fifteenth century around one-third of the benefices of County Louth were held by priests who had been attached to the Cruciferi.[96] Until its dissolution, the priory played an essential role within the life of the town of Dundalk and it stood as a testament to the de Verdons. Bertram had founded the abbey

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[92] This does not mean that there were no defences pre-1315 – murage grants were made in Drogheda in 1234 and it is likely that Dundalk would have also received grants not much later.
[93] A Gwynn and N R Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, Ireland,* (1970), p. 209.
[94] Paul Gosling, From *Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), p. 313.
[95] M Archdall, *Monasticon Hibernicum - A History of the Abbies, Priories and Other Religious Houses in Ireland,* (1786), p. 461.
[96] Arthur Curran, 'The Priory of St Leonard, Dundalk' in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society Journal,* Volume XVII, (1971), pp. 131-140.

sometime before leaving Ireland in 1189. As argued above, he may have been familiar with St Leonard's hospital in Leicester. It is impossible to carry out an archaeological comparison because there are no remains in Leicester of St Leonard's. However, within our appendix on the Fratres Cruciferi (Appendix 14)[97] we have studied the archaeology of other hospitals built by the order in Ireland, at Athy and Rindoon.

We now turn to the second friary established by the de Verdons in the town of Dundalk – the Grey Friary in Seatown, which was a First Order Franciscan House (Plate VI).

The Grey Friary, Seatown

The location of the church of Grey Friary in Seatown, Dundalk, ran east and west from the surviving bell-tower, so the foundations of it are probably found along the north side of Mill Street and beneath Castle Road (Plate VII).[98] The site of the friary graveyard may have been to the east of the church as a number of graves were discovered around 1900, approximately 30m to the east of the tower on the north side of Mill Street.[99]

The arrival in Ireland of the Franciscans owes its origins to the first band of missionaries of the order to cross the Alps into Northern Europe – they established

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[97] See Appendices, xvii-xxxiii
[98] Paul Gosling, 'A Survey and Report of the Archaeology of the Town and District of Dundalk, (1983), pp. 83-84.
[99] Ibid, pp. 83-84.

PLATE VI

View of the Grey Friary along from St Leonard's garden.

PLATE VII

Grey's Friary situated at the junction of Castle Road and Mill Street

themselves in England in 1224, and by 1231 there were some 19 Franciscan houses in the provinces of Canterbury and York.[100]

In the same year they had dispatched Friar Richard of Ingleworth to Ireland.[101] Within 20 years 11 friaries had been established.[102] The friary in Dundalk was in existence by 1246, when a mandate was issued to the guardian of the Order of the Franciscans in Dundalk. Sir James Ware ascribes the foundation of the monastery to John de Verdon: 'Monasteries of Franciscans or Grey Friars, commonly called Friary Minors –

Place and Title of Dedication	Dundalk Friary
Founders	John de Verdon
Time	13 century
Assignees	James Brandon'[103]

John de Verdon was the son of Rohesia de Verdon and the great, great grandson of Bertram (Rohesia had married Theobald Butler in 1225 but their son used her name as was known as John de Verdon).[104] Gwynn and Hadcock suggest that it may in fact have been Rohesia, wife of Theobald Butler, who founded the Grey Friary. Rohesia was a remarkable character – in the *Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland* for the year 1236, we learn that 'Rohesia De Verdon, having fortified a castle in her own land against the Irish, which none of her predecessors were able to do...the K commands the Justiciary of Ireland to cause her to have the K. service of Meath and Uriel for 40 days for this purpose'.[105]

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[100] A Gwynn, N R Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses in Ireland,* (1970), p. 236.
[101] Harold O'Sullivan, *The Franciscans in Dundalk,* p. 33.
[102] It was during these years that they came to the Diocese of Armagh and they established themselves, firstly in Dundalk and then in Drogheda.
[103] Walter Harris, *Works of Sir James Ware Concerning Ireland,* (1762), p. 278.
[104] T Duffus (ed), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium in turri Londinensi Assevati – 1224-27,* (1835), p.60.
[105] H S Sweetman, *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland 1171-1251,* Vol I (1875), p. 347.

We will study Rohesia in more depth further on in this chapter but what we can state at this juncture is that it is entirely possible that she was the original founder of another important medieval monument in Dundalk: the Grey Friary. Proof of this is the fact that we know the friary was in existence in 1246 because of the mandate already mentioned, and yet John de Verdon only succeeded to his family estate in 1247. But there is no definitive answer here. D'Alton writes that 'this great lady died in 1247, not leaving any trace of her name in connection with Dundalk. Her son...John de Verdon, however, a few years before his mother's death, erected the Grey Friary here.[106] What is not in doubt is that John was a principal patron and benefactor to the infant Franciscan community and a substantial contributor to the erection of the friary's church and buildings.[107]

While this chapter provided numerous reasons for Bertram III's devotion to St Leonard, the reasons why John selected to support a Franciscan friary in Dundalk are more obscure. Like his great, great grandfather Bertram, John held land throughout England, including Alton, Staffordshire, Farmham, Buckinghamshire, Bittesby, Lutterworth, Warwickshire and Wilshire.[108] He also held land throughout Leicestershire. Sometime before 1230 a Franciscan friary was founded within the city of Leicester.[109] The foundation of the friary has often been attributed to Simon de Montfort, who was Earl of Leicester from 1238 to 1265.[110] However, as he did not actually hold any lands in Leicester before 1231, the argument that de Montfort

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[106] John D'Alton, J R O'Flanagan, *The History of Dundalk and its Environs,* (1864), p. 32.
[107] Harold O'Sullivan, *The Franciscans in Dundalk,* p. 33.
[108] Douglas Richardson, Kimball G Everingham, *Magna Carta Ancestry,* (2005), p. 889.
[109] A. G. Little, *Studies in English Franciscan History, 5; De Adventu Fratrum Minorum in Angliam,* (1951), p. 38.
[110] C J Billson, *Medieval Leicester,* (1920), p. 78.

founded the friary here is questionable.[111] Regardless of the founder, the Grey Friars (also known as Friars Minor) established a friary and church with large gardens and grounds (Appendix I5)[112] extending from the upper end of Market Place to the old High Street in Leicester.[113] Unfortunately, there has been no archaeological investigation of the site and there are little or no surviving documents – Chris Wardle, the City Archaeologist for Leicester City Council states that after the Dissolution the friary was sold off and a mansion was built somewhere in the precinct, while the rest of the precinct became a garden.[114] Overtime the house and the garden declined and in the early-mid 18th century a large part of the precinct was sold off for development.[115]

As with the earlier argument that Bertram de Verdon would have been familiar with St Leonard's hospital and church in Leicester, so it can be argued that John de Verdon may also have been familiar with the Grey Friars priory at Leicester. Like Bertram, he was an itinerant justice and thus would have been well travelled throughout the county. It is impossible to provide a definitive connection between de Verdon and the Franciscans of Leicester because of the almost total destruction of the order's written records.[116] However, it is interesting that John de Verdon founded a friary for the Grey Friars, sometime before the mid-13th century, not long after a friary for the same order had been founded within Leicester, a town which both he and his ancestors were very familiar with.

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[111] L. Fox, 'The Honour of Leicester; Origin and Descent', E.H.R. liv, 395-6
in *'Friaries: Friaries in Leicester', A History of the County of Leicestershire: Volume 2* (1954), pp. 33-35.
http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=38172.

[112] See Appendices, p. xxxiv.

[113] C J Billson, *Medieval Leicester,* (1920), p. 78-79.

[114] Personal communication (via email) between myself and Chris Wardle (1st Sept, 2008).

[115] Ibid.

[116] John Schofield, Alan Vince, *Medieval Town – the archaeology of British towns in their European setting,* (2005), p. 199.

Like St Leonard's, Patrick O'Scanlon, the Archbishop of Armagh, is associated with the Grey Friary – it was here in 1253 that he was consecrated Bishop of Raphoe.[117] The *Annals of Ulster* state for the year 1253: 'Mael-Padraig Ua Sgannuil... was consecrated in the Monastery of the Friars Minor of Dundealgan on the First Sunday of the Advent of the Lord (Nov 30).[118] O'Scanlon's association with the monastery in Dundalk may have been due to the fact that he obviously had a special affection for the Franciscans as, when he became Archbishop of Armagh, he founded a friary for them in the primatial city.[119]

The Grey Friary was situated 250m to the east of St Leonard's, on the outskirts of the new town of Dundalk. Today the remains consist of a 15th century bell-tower – this was part of the friary church that stood right on the street front.[120] The original friary extended from Chapel Lane to Brown's Mill in Dundalk.[121] This was also the harbour area, and the friary's northern boundary was the water of the tidal estuary.

By the end of the twelfth century, Dundalk was an important trade and market town and a centre for the export of corn, fish and other foodstuffs, as well as being a considerable importer of wine – tradition records that the hospitality (which included the offer of wine) shown by the friars to the sailors using the port was known throughout the area.[122]

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[117] A Gwynn, N R Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses in Ireland,* (1970), p. 245.
[118] B MacCarthy, (ed), *The Annals of Ulster, Vol II, AD 1057-1131: 1155-1378,* (1893), p. 317.
[119] Harold O'Sullivan, *The Franciscans in Dundalk,* p. 34.
[120] Paul Gosling, From *Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), p. 313.
[121] Brown's Mills was situated at the end of Mill Street, at the corner of Seatown Place and Barrack Street.
[122] Antony Marmion, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Maritime Ports of Ireland,* (1855), p. 278.

D'Alton's 'History of Dundalk' contains a map of 'The Towne and land of Dundalk in the year 1655' which shows the Franciscan Abbey. Murphy stated that the friary seems to have been of Gothic architecture with a central campanile or bell-tower dividing the façade and terminating in elongated wings on either side: the front elevation was extensive and imposing.[123] The campanile was higher than either of the wings and had three windows, one above the other; two doors were either side with two windows in a line above each and two windows one above the other in each of the wing facades.[124]

The Grey Friary's buildings were listed at the time of its dissolution in 1540. Archdall sites a survey conducted from the Office of the Chief Remembrancer' which states that the friary consisted of 'a church, belfry and dormitory, a park, an orchard, two gardens, one messuage, a park called Brandon's Park and a rood of land, all of the annual value of 10s beside reprises.'[125]

The bell-tower at the Grey friary is today four storeys in height, with a rooftop parapet and measures c.3.65m internally, at ground level (Plate VIII).[126] There is a corbelled stone vault between the fourth storey and a parapet on the roof and a wickerwork centred barrel vault between the ground and first storey.[127] The ground-storey vault has pointed stone arches opening towards the east and west and access appears to have been always via the doorway on the first storey in the north wall.[128]

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[123] T Murphy, *Dundalk, Its Churches, Shrines and Religious Orders,* (1909), p. 32.
[124] Ibid, p. 32.
[125] M Archdall, *Monasticon Hibernicum - A History of the Abbies, Priories and Other Religious Houses in Ireland,* (1786), p. 464.
[126] Paul Gosling, *From Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), p. 314.
[127] Ibid, p. 314.
[128] Ibid, p. 314.

There has been much debate between archaeologists regarding the position of the tower in relation to the church of which it originally formed a part. Leask argues that it stood at the junction of the choir and nave, the usual position for Franciscan church towers.[129] However, the small size of the ground-floor vault and the fact that the roofline on the east and west faces of the tower do not coincide with it, make this an unlikely argument.[130] Davies argues that it probably stood at the southwest corner of the church, with the nave extending beyond the west face of the tower.[131]

There is a further mystery surrounding the Grey Friary: in Grose's late eighteenth century drawing of the tower (Appendix 16)[132] there is a wall visible to the west of the tower, running north and south. It is also possible to see the remains of two rather large opes, and Gosling argues that its position and alignment suggest that it was part of the western wall of the building which must have abutted the western face of the tower and thus it was possibly a transept of a separate chapel.[133] But it is only through archaeological excavation that this could be confirmed.

This thesis has compared various structures built by the main Anglo-Norman families of Louth and Down and compared them to similar structures in their homelands in England, looking for archaeological similarities. However, there are difficulties when attempting to compare Franciscan friaries constructed in Ireland, with similar structures in England. As mentioned above, there is a dearth of written records belonging to the order. There is also a lack of archaeological evidence, due to the fact

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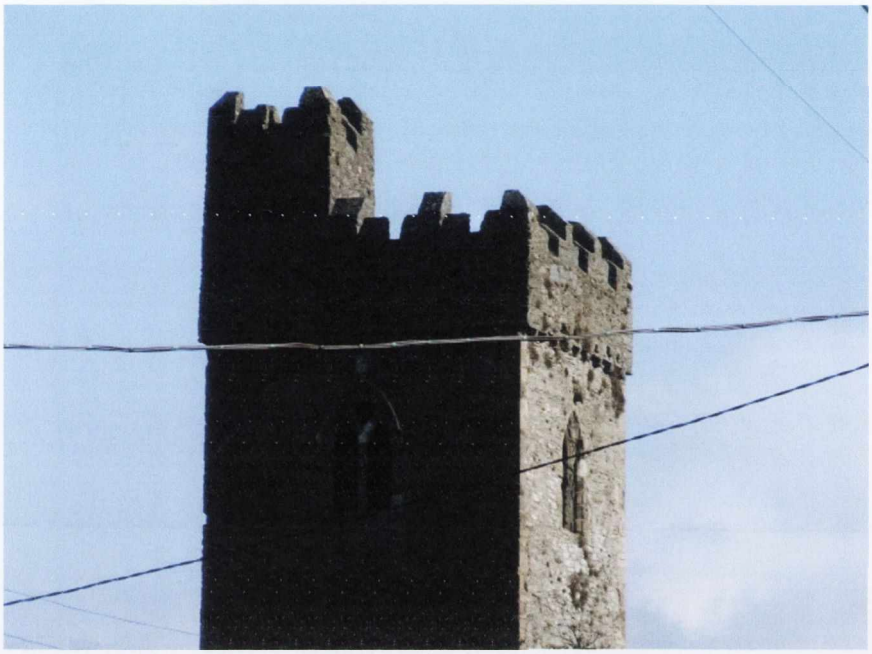
[129] Harold Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings II, Gothic Architecture to A.D. 1400*, (1966) p. 47.
[130] Paul Gosling, *From Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), p. 314.
[131] O Davies, 'Old Churches in County Louth in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society Journal,* Volume X, (1941), pp. 5-23.
[132] See Appendices, p. xxxv.
[133] Paul Gosling, *From Dún Delca to Dundalk*, (1993), p. 314.

PLATE VIII

Roof-top parapet of Grey's Friary



that out of the 270 houses constructed by the order in England, only 15 friaries have any substantial remains.[134] In Ireland the Franciscan friaries have fared better, with 57 surviving above ground.[135] While this thesis suggests that John de Verdon may have been influenced by the founding of the Franciscan friary in Leicester, we cannot complete an archaeological comparison due to the fact little or nothing remains of both friaries.

As such, it is necessary to take a more general look at the 'standard' architecture of early Franciscan friaries and compare them to the Grey Friary at Seatown. It has been said that the formation of the Franciscan (and Dominican) orders in the early 13th century is the most distinctively and uniquely urban contribution made by the church in the history of Christianity.[136] But although the Order may have contributed to the development of the towns where they were established, the initial contribution of the friars to art and architecture was not comparable to that of the earlier orders, such as the Cistercians. St Francis himself stated 'Let the Brothers take great care not to receive churches, habitations, and all that men build for them'.[137] The Franciscan Order, when founded by St Francis, was based on the ideal of absolute poverty, not only individual, but corporate as well. It should be noted, however, these ideals would become compromised throughout the 13th century as the friars gained patronage and wealth.

There have been numerous excavations of friaries in England, which have shown that there are a number of general characteristics: the church is often developed from a

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[134] J Patrick Greene, *Medieval Monasteries,* (2005), p. 169.
[135] Ibid, p. 169.
[136] John Schofield, Alan Vince, *Medieval Towns, the archaeology of British towns in their European setting,* (2003), p. 199.
[137] George Zarnecki, *The Monastic Achievement,* (1972), pp. 114-115.

simple two cell structure to gradually encompass a long nave and aisles, allowing for the large congregations who came to hear the friars preaching; the chancel, which contained the choir and high altar, often remained relatively small; this was separated from the nave by a 'walking space' under the church tower, which were originally simple belfry towers.[138]

Friaries were often settled both on the outskirts of town and on marshy ground.[139] These criteria can be applied to the Franciscan friary at Dundalk. The Franciscan's main aim was to preach to as many people as possible and this influenced both the siting of their friaries and the development of their architecture.[140] The cloister was often located within the friary so as to allow the church to be constructed near the approach road, while the cloister and other friary buildings were placed on the other, private side.[141] This was the case with the Grey Friary at Dundalk, where the friary church was built right alongside the street.

While it is true that within six years of the Franciscans arrival in 1224 they had constructed over a dozen friaries throughout England (in various locations including Leicester, Norwich, Nottingham, Gloucester, Cambridge and Lincoln), the fact is that there are little or no remains of the majority these early monasteries. There have been some excavations – at Norwich these uncovered the cloister and some internal buildings of the friary.[142] And at King's Lynn in Norfolk, Greyfriar's tower is all that

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[138] J Patrick Greene, *Medieval Monasteries,* (2005), p. 170.
[139] John Schofield, Alan Vince, *Medieval Towns, the archaeology of British towns in their European setting,* (2003), p. 201.
[140] Ibid, p. 201.
[141] Ibid, p. 201.
[142] Current Archaeology.co.uk., *AD 1200: Norwich: the second largest medieval city* http://www.archaeology.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=32&Itemid=30

remains of the Franciscan Friary (Plate IX). This is in fact, one of only three Franciscan friary towers surviving in England. It may originally have been a bell tower and is hexagonal above its base and has large windows to allow light into the crossing place.[143] But in order to get a clear image of the archaeological elements of a Franciscan Friary contemporary to that at Seatown, it is necessary to look within Ireland.

The typical medieval Franciscan friary in medieval Ireland consisted of a narrow church running east to west, with a main altar at the eastern end, often beneath a large (and sometimes ornate) east window.[144] The choir was situated at the eastern end of the church, with the nave at the western end; these features were often divided by a slender tower and there was often a small transept chapel, usually containing two altars, to the south of the junction of nave and tower.[145] With regards to the other structures within the friar, the residential buildings normally consisted of three ranges built around a cloister on the north side of the church.[146]

Castledermot Franciscan friary was constructed c.1240[147] but only the church survives from this period.[148] The church is, in many ways, a 'standard' 13th century Franciscan friary church, in that it consists of a long, narrow, rectangular building.[149] Stalley states that the plainest part of the church, especially the nave, would have been

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[143] 'Grey Friars Tower'
http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/programmes/restoration/2003/#greyfriarstower
[144] Patrick Conlon, *Franciscan Ireland,*(1988), p. 97.
[145] Ibid, p. 97.
[146] Ibid, p. 97.
[147] It should be noted that while it is impossible to assign a definite date for the founding of this friary, Stalley argues that it was up and running by 1247.
[148] Andy Halpin, Conor Newman, *Ireland – an Oxford archaeological guide,* (2006), p. 277.
[149] Ibid, p. 277.

constructed around this time.[150] It is probable that the first church at Seatown also consisted of a plain, long, rectangular building. At Castledermot the choir was lengthened in the early 14th century and a transept added to the north.[151] The transept included three chapels on the east side and an aisle to the west, which were separated by an arcade – the chapels contained very large windows with an early example of Irish 'switch-line'[152] tracery.[153] Due to the fact it is easy both to design and to build, this sort of tracery would soon become a standard type in Ireland.[154] Again, because we have no remains of the church at Seatown, we cannot state whether this type of tracery was used here.

Both the friary at Seatown and Castledermot had a 15th century tower added. However, while the tower at Seatown was a bell-tower, the one at Castledermot was built as a three-storied fortified residence.[155] The cloisters at Castledermot were built on the south side of the church but all that remains now is a blocked pointed doorway in the wall of the nave.[156] The plan of Castledermot (Appendix 17)[157] provides us with a general idea of how the Grey Friary at Seatown may have looked, particularly the church, constructed while John de Verdon was patron, which is long and narrow, like most Franciscan friary churches constructed in this period.

Like St Leonard's, the Grey Friars also depended on the benefices from the better off members of society in order to survive. Various examples of these grants are

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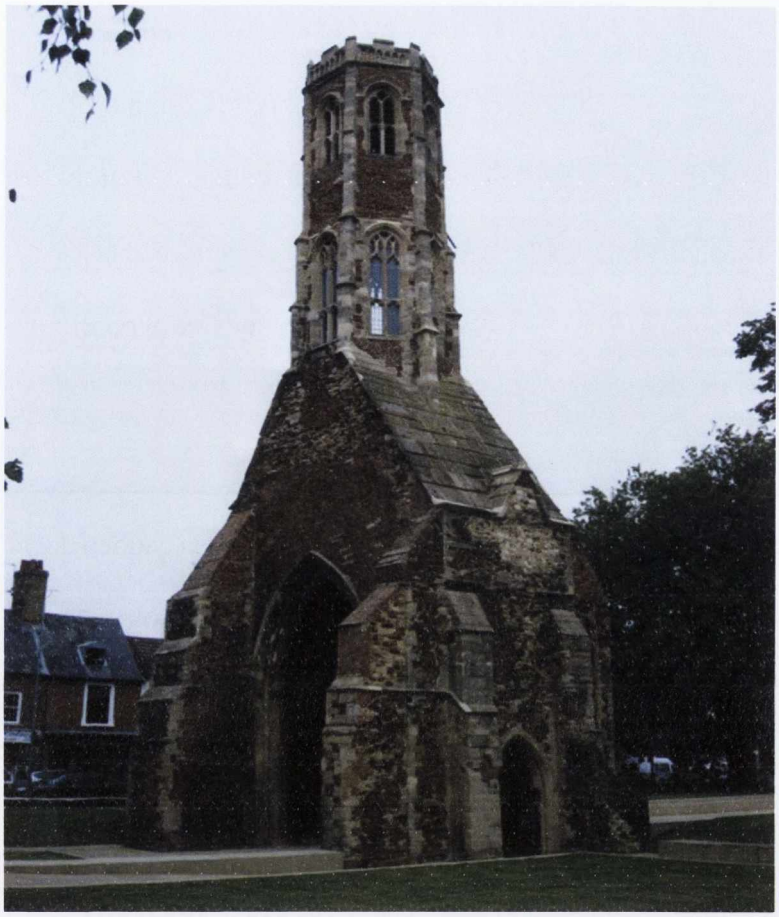
[150] Roger Stalley, *Architecture and Sculpture in Ireland, 1150-1350,* (1971), p. 139.
[151] Ibid, p. 139.
[152] Switch-line tracery is when the vertical mullions of a window divide near the top and curve away, while those in the centre cross each other.
[153] Andy Halpin, Conor Newman, *Ireland – an Oxford archaeological guide,* (2006), p. 278.
[154] Roger Stalley, *Architecture and Sculpture in Ireland, 1150-1350,* (1971), p. 140.
[155] Andy Halpin, Conor Newman, *Ireland – an Oxford archaeological guide,* (2006), p. 278
[156] Ibid, p. 278.
[157] See Appendices, p. xxxvi.

PLATE IX

Grey Friar's Tower, Kings Lynn, Norfolk



http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/523888

contained within the *Dowdall Deeds*, such as the following: '1335, Sept 16: Inventory of the goods of Richard Tanner of Dundalk... Item... to the Friar Minors of Dundalk, half a mark.'[158]

The de Verdons maintained their association with the Grey Friary as the thirteenth century progressed. In 1277, Theobald de Verdon proffered the services of one knight's fee for the inheritance of his father. Like St Leonard's, the Grey Friary gained prestige as time went on. In 1282 a chapter of the order was held in the Grey Friary. [159] The association of the de Verdons with the churches of Dundalk continued long after the death of Bertram de Verdon, the original member of the family dynasty that became such an integral part of Dundalk and its monasteries.

Roche Castle

We will now study Rohesia de Verdon in relation to Roche Castle, one of Ireland's most impressive medieval castles. As noted earlier, she was a formidable character, credited with being the only female to build a major castle in Ireland. It was known originally as 'Castellum de Rupe' or de la Roche – the Castle of the Rocks. Few buildings so vividly evoke the establishment of Anglo-Norman military power in Ireland as Castle Roche (Plate X).[160] It stands on the Louth-Armagh border and is accessible from the road south of the Drumbilla crossroads. This little known castle is among the most spectacular in Ireland, crowning a rocky outcrop in the hills north of Dundalk.

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[158] Charles McNeill, A J Otway-Ruthven, (eds), *Dowdall Deeds,* (1960), p. 122.
[159] John D'Alton, Jocelyn R O'Flanagan, *The History of Dundalk and its environs,* (1864), p. 23.
[160] Christine Casey, Alistair Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland – North Leinster,* (1993), p. 349.

Roche Castle was the largest fortress to be built by any de Verdon and it resulted in Rohesia being named 'Róis Mhór Ní Ghairbhe' by the native Irish, meaning the 'Great Lady Rose of the Rock'.[161] A story about the building of Roche Castle survives to this day and reinforces the idea of Rohesia as a lady to be reckoned with. Tradition has it that when the castle was complete, Rohesia had the architect thrown from one of its windows in the northern tower to preserve the secrets of the design of the castle.[162] Although there is no historical record of this event, it served its purpose in cementing Rohesia's reputation as a strong and determined woman. A final point in confirming Rohesia's ability to construct such as impressive castle as Roche is the fact that her maternal grandfather was actually Geoffrey de Clinton, the builder of the magnificent Kenilworth Castle.[163]

There is another mystery surrounding the building of Roche Castle which has never been answered – why Rohesia chose to move the family seat to Roche. The reason may be symbolic as she may have wanted to establish the family's headquarters outside of the town of Dundalk to reinforce the image of the de Verdon family's overlordship of the entire area. She might also have wanted to assert her own individual identity within the family's history and as such chose to build a castle that would forever be associated with her. The most probable explanation is that Roche Castle was built for purely defensive purposes, as it controlled the Moyry pass into Armagh and would enable the de Verdon's to protect the northern area of their lordship. It was also a naturally defensive site, encompassing as it did a rocky outcrop.

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[161] Róis is the Irish form of Rohesia and is Gaelic for rose. Mhór denotes the position of power which she held – she was obviously held in awe by the native population.
[162] G Clarke and H O'Sullivan, *Dundalk and North Louth*, (1997), p. 14.
[163] Margaret R G Shepherd, *The Illustrious de Verduns, An Historical Biography, Part I – The de Verduns from 992-1275*, p. 166.

PLATE X

Roche Castle

Roche Castle was one of the first and grandest frontier castles of the Pale. It was begun by Rohesia in the 1230s and completed by her son John de Verdon by the time he died in 1247. The *Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland* for that year stated: 'John de Verdon made a fine with the K of 1,300 marks to have seisin of the lands, both in England and Ireland, which belonged to Rohesia de Verdon, his mother, and whose heir he is.'[164]

It is almost certain that John was the builder of the greater part of the castle, which rises from its rocky outcrop and is almost cliff-like on three of its sides.[165] Raised on this high limestone outcrop, the bulk of the castle is truly impressive and, when seen from close quarters on a dull or stormy day, the height and scale of the south face can even now seem threatening.[166]

Roche Castle commanded a strong defensive position, sited as it was on a large rock outcrop, which drops dramatically on all sides but the east. On this side a ditch has been cut through the bedrock and the entrance to the castle is across this ditch and through an imposing entrance, flanked by half-round towers, which are the remains of what was originally a massive gate-building (Plate XI).[167]

A battlement curtain wall, with two massive circular bastions, flanks the entrance to the east. Like the earliest part of King John's Castle at Carlingford, Roche Castle is essentially one great walled enclosure, roughly triangular in shape, as dictated by the

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[164] H S Sweetman, *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland,* Vol I (1875), p. 249.
[165] Harold S Leask, *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses,* (1973), pp. 61-62.
[166] Michael Ryan, *The Illustrated Archaeology of Ireland,* (1991), p. 187.
[167] Ibid, p. 187.

irregular form of the hill and bounded by high curtain walls with battlemented wall-walks.[168]

The towers are four storied with barrel vaults over the ground-floor level and their bases at the front or to the east of the curtain walls are stepped out and slightly battered up to a height of around three metres above the bedrock.[169] They have a number of narrow opes up to 0.7 metres long, facing in various directions and at several levels to cover the curtain walls as well as the gateway. The entranceway has a segmental arch showing its west face, presumably the remains of a vault that would have covered its passage.[170]

The interior of the castle has a large rectangular hall in the southeast angle and the tops of the walls have crenellations with arrow slits and square holes below them, which were used to carry a wooden hoard or galley (Plate XII).[171] A smaller rectangular building was later added to the north side of the hall and the remains of an arch of a doorway to this annexe can be seen in the existing portion of the hall's north wall. High curtain walls were used to enclose the whole, except where the gate-building and the great hall form parts of the perimeter. The former is of the double-tower type but its inner sections are in ruins.[172] The great hall has three very large

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[168] Christine Casey, Alistair Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland – North Leinster,* (1993), p. 349.
[169] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), pp. 334-335.
[170] Ibid, pp. 334-335.
[171] Michael Ryan, *The Illustrated Archaeology of Ireland,* (1991), p. 187.
[172] Harold S Leask, *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses,* (1973), pp. 63-64.

PLATE XI

Gatehouse at Roche Castle

PLATE XII

Crenellations along the walls of Roche Castle

windows and although it is sited in the southeast angle and was thus protected by a very sheer drop, the windows may have had wooden shutters to add to their defensiveness.

There is a featureless freestanding structure in the ward, but its use and date have proved to be problematic (Plate XIII). Its size and shape might suggest that it was a tower which fitted into an earlier curtain wall but this would mean that the curtain wall was originally set back quite a distance from the rock precipice, making it vulnerable to attack.[173] It was probably a later structure – the building consists of uncoursed rubble masonry of poor quality, making it unlikely that it could have survived to the present day if it had been built at an earlier stage.

The main buildings consisted of the gatehouse, which had rooms on three levels, the round bastions and the great two-storey hall, whose pointed first-floor windows were the only large window openings in the entire structure.[174] Whilst in a poor state of repair, the internal arrangements can still be seen. Due to the depth of the walls, various passages and walkways are still visible and indeed, can still be explored.

Roche Castle was obviously built on a site chosen for strategic reasons, mainly for its defensive capabilities. The fact that Louth was a frontier territory meant that it was ripe for frequent attack by Irish lords such as O'Reilly, MacMahon, O'Donnell and O'Neill.[175] As such it required strong defensive castles to allow the Anglo-Normans to protect their lordship.

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[173] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 336.
[174] Christine Casey, Alistair Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland – North Leinster,* (1992), p. 349.
[175] Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland – The English in Louth,* (1999), p. 264.

The siting of Castle Roche is very similar to those of Beeston Castle in Cheshire, which is found about ten miles southeast of Chester in England. Beeston was started about 1225 by Ranulf, Earl of Chester (who died in 1232) and it was still unfinished at his son's death in 1237.[176] This was the year before the report that Rohesia de Verdon had built the castle in Louth – the design of Castle Roche must be based on that of Beeston, which was itself one of the first in England to rely on a curtain wall, towers and gatehouse for strength.[177]

The context of the construction of Beeston Castle was the systematic reorganisation of the earldom on Ranulf's return from the crusades – the choice of site reflects the need to control one of the main medieval routes linking Chester with the midlands and the south of England.[178] This is comparable to Roche, where Rohesia wanted to control the pass into Armagh and defend the North East area of Dundalk.

This description of Beeston by William Camden[179] could well be applied to Roche: 'A place well guarded by walls of a great compass, a great number of towers and by a mountain of very steep ascent.'[180] Like Roche, Beeston Castle was known Castellum de Rupe – the castle of the rock – and this was how they were both referred to throughout the Middle Ages.

Beeston Castle is roughly rectangular in shape, with its front entrance comprising of a central gateway with D-shaped towers – on both sides of this entrance there is

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[176] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in a Gaelic World,* (1997), pp. 86-87.
[177] Ibid, 86-87.
[178] Peter Ellis (ed), *Beeston Castle, Cheshire,* (1993), p. 211.
[179] In 1582, William Camden (a historian and antiquarian) travelled throughout Britain, gathering bits of folklore and researching for his works *Britannia* (1585), a study of the British Isles and *Annales* (1615 and 1625), a eulogistic account of Queen Elizabeth I.
[180] Ibid, p. 100.

PLATE XIII

Featureless free-standing structure within Roche Castle

impressive curtain walling.[181] The castle contains a number of other D-shaped towers and is roughly coursed in red sandstone.[182] It stands over 500ft above the Cheshire plain[183] and, at the time of its construction, it was acknowledged as a masterpiece of military construction (Plate XIV).

If Roche is comparable to Beeston, Beeston is comparable to the Crusader Castle of Sahyoun in Syria, particularly with regard to its rock-cut defences (Plate XV). Though the importance of this natural defensive position had been exploited before the Crusades,[184] this castle is one of the most impressive Crusader fortresses. Of course Krak des Chevaliers (the Fortress of the Knights) is the better known Crusader castle. Built in southern Syria, it incorporated the mountainous terrain on which it was constructed to improve its defensibility.[185] It was built on a hill-top over 640 metres high and covered an area which measured 140m x 210m, making it probably the largest Crusader castle in Syria.[186] However, it was Sahyoun Castle, not Krak des Chevaliers, which would influence the design of Beeston Castle.

Like Beeston (and Roche Castle), Sahyoun Castle is a prime example of military architecture. The castle sits on top of a flat-bottomed, narrow canyon[187] with sheer vertical sides, the walls of the castles smoothly continuing the line of the rock face, forming one towering cliff of stone (Plate XVI).[188]

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[181] Archaeology Report on Beeston Castle.
http://homepage.mac.com.
[182] Beeston is actually built on a massive red stone rock which is known locally as Beeston Rock.
[183] English Heritage website.
http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.4726
[184] Like Sahyoun, the site of Beeston Castle had also been previously utilised – remains of early settlements dating back to 800BC have been discovered on this site.
[185] Kelly de Vries, *Medieval Military History,* (1992), p.231.
[186] Ibid, p. 231.
[187] This canyon is actually man-made
[188] Terry Carter, Lara Dunston, Andrew Humpreys, *Syria and Lebanon,* (2004), p. 150.

It was impossible to reach except on foot or horseback and even then it was a very difficult climb – the castle was completely isolated from the plateau by a deep ditch which was 156m long, 18m wide and 28m deep.[189] It comprises fine vertical walls made from smooth, yellow rock. In 1957 Sahyoun was renamed Salah Al Din Citadel, to commemorate the capture of the fortress from the Crusaders by the great Islamic hero of the same name.[190]

Although we cannot be sure whether Ranulf actually saw Sahyoun at first hand, it must have been during his two years crusading in Egypt that he would have heard of castles in Syria and the Holy Land with sophisticated defences on hill-top sites with vast rock-cut ditches. He had obviously taken account of and incorporated Sahyoun's reliance on curtain walls, towers and massive gatehouse for strength when constructing Beeston. While Sahyoun guarded an important route in Syria, Beeston also guarded one of the main routes in medieval England. And one of the major reasons for the construction of Roche Castle was that it controlled the pass from Dundalk into Armagh.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed archaeology of the monuments built by one of the most important Anglo-Norman families to arrive in County Louth after the invasion of Ireland. The town of Dundalk itself was founded under Bertram de Verdon, whose archaeological legacy includes St Leonard's hospital and priory at Seatown. A

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[189] Sahyoun Castle.
http://www.visit-syria.com
[190] Ibid.

PLATE XIV

Beeston Castle, Cheshire

www.english-heritage.org.uk/beestoncastle

PLATE XV

Sahyoun Castle, Syria

http://images.google.ie/flickr.com/photos/traces/2245656351/

PLATE XVI

Sahyoun Castle, with its walls smoothly continuing up from the rock face.

http://images.google.ie/flickr.com/photos/traces/2245656351/

number of reasons were put forward for Bertram's devotion to St Leonard and it was also argued that he may have been familiar with a similar hospital and priory in Leicester. Only fragments of the original priory remain but we know that at its suppression in 1539 the buildings of the priory included a church, a chapter house, a dormitory, a hall and other buildings. Because so little remained of both the Seatown and Leicester friaries, it was necessary to look at the archaeology of other priories and hospitals run by the Fratres Cruciferi in order to gain some insight into the original layout and architecture of St Leonard's priory in Seatown.

Grey Friary, was another religious foundation located in Seatown, Dundalk. It was asserted that John de Verdon may also have first come across the Grey Friars at Leicester. A comparative study of the Grey Friary and other 13th century Franciscan friaries in England and Ireland, proved that the friary at Seatown contained certain similar features, including a long, narrow church constructed directly onto the street, the friary located on the outskirts of town and constructed on marshy ground and the later addition of a tower.

Finally we turned to Roche Castle and argued that not only can its archaeology be compared to Beeston Castle in Cheshire but also to Sahyoun, the great Crusader Castle of Syria. In Chapter V, we shall analyse the remains of these three castles in much greater detail, in order to produce an in-depth archaeology comparison

Chapter 5

A Comparative Study of Castle Roche, County Louth and Beeston Castle in Cheshire

Roche Castle, which is sited about seven km west by northwest from Dundalk, was known originally as 'Castellum de Rupe' or de la Roche – the Castle of the Rock. This spectacular castle was constructed in the mid-thirteenth century and fully utilises the natural defences provided by its position on the edge of a very precipitous rock. Although not the first castle in Ireland to use massive half-round gate-towers to defend its entrance, this feature, together with its natural defensive siting, marks Roche Castle as one of the most innovatively designed castles of its time. And it is these features, together with strong curtain walls, that have resulted in Roche being compared to Beeston Castle in Cheshire.

Beeston was also referred to as Castellum de Rupe, the Castle of the Rock, throughout the medieval period.[1] It was started sometime in the early 1220s by Ranulf de Blundeville,[2] and it is fair to argue that the design of Roche Castle, which was begun in 1238, must have been based on that of Beeston because it was one of the first castles in England to rely on curtain wall, towers, siting and gatehouse for strength.[3] These features meant the design of Beeston Castle was very innovative - this castle's strength did not centre on its keep - in fact it did not have a keep.

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[1] Laurence Keen, Peter Hough, 'Beeston castle, Cheshire – A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 100.
[2] He was actually the third Ranulf and the sixth Earl of Chester.
[3] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in a Gaelic World*, (1997), pp.. 86-87.

This essay will provide a complete archaeological comparison of Roche and Beeston Castle, as well as a detailed background regarding their construction. This will require an analysis of the following themes: the development of the castle in the thirteenth century focusing specifically on the influence of the Crusades on castle design; the circumstances under which both castles were built, including a profile of both Rohesia de Verdon (who constructed Roche) and Ranulf de Blundeville and a comparative study of the archaeology of both castles. This will allow us to conclude that there are as many differences, as there are similarities, between these two great Norman castles.

The influence of the Crusades on castle design in Western Europe

Emmanuel Guillaume Rey[4] was the first historian to claim that the development of the Crusading military architecture was influenced both by the European motte and bailey castle and the Oriental-Byzantine fortress – however he considered the contribution by the latter to be the most important.[5] Rey argued that as the Crusaders advanced through the Holy Land, they encountered the concentric castle and over time became capable of constructing and even improving these constructions – these designs would then be 'exported' to their countries of origin.[6] Rey concluded that the construction of concentric castles in the East preceded the building of similar castles in the West.[7]

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[4] Emmanuel Guillaume Rey (1837-1916) was a historian with a special interest in the Crusades. He made three visits to Syria to examine the major Crusade fortifications. His most important work on Crusading Military Architecture was published in 1871.
[5] Ronnie Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories,* (2007), pp.. 62-63.
[6] Ibid, pp.. 62-63.
[7] Ronnie Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories,* (2007), p. 63.

One of the earliest opponents to this viewpoint was T E Lawrence[8] who outright rejected the claim that the Crusader fortresses were developed along Oriental lines and argued that the Crusading architects were for many years copyists of the Western builders.[9]

For many years this was the debate regarding the concentric castle - was Rey correct in claiming that we should look for the origin of the concentric castle in Byzantine military architecture or was Lawrence correct when he stated that the architectural origin of this castle should be sought in the West.[10] However, it is now believed that developments in castle design were happening apace in both areas and that the development of the concentric castle gradually occurred throughout the 12th century in France, England and the Holy Land.[11]

This idea of a concentric castle, with towers placed at regular intervals, meant that if part of the wall was breached, attackers would still be flanked by defenders on towers. By the thirteenth century, another innovation, the gate-house, made of stone and incorporating towers, drawbridges, portcullis and other features, would became one of the most important defensive points of the castle.

The earliest example of a twin-towered gatehouse was probably that at Chepstow Castle in Wales, which has been dated to the 12th century.[12] The gate-house consists of two round towers, each with two upper floors and a long passage extending

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[8] T E Lawrence (1888-1935) was a an archaeological scholar, adventurer, military strategist and author of 'The Seven Pillar of Wisdom' in 1927, an account of the Arab revolt against the Turks.
[9] Ronie Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories,* (2007), p. 65.
[10] Ronnie Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories,* (2007), p. 70.
[11] Jim Bradbury, *Companion to Medieval Warfare,* (2004), p. 314.
[12] Richard Avent, 'William Marshal's building works at Chepstow Castle, Monmouthshire, 1189-1219' in *The Medieval Castle in Ireland and Wales, Essays in honour of Jeremy Knight,* (2003), p. 55.

through a narrow accommodation area at its rear.[13] While acknowledging that the gate-house at Chepstow pre-dated that at Beeston Castle, it is the latter building which we will compare to Roche. That is because there are several comparable features between both castles apart from their twin-towered gatehouses, including their incorporation of the natural defences gained from each castle's siting.

We know that Ranulf de Blundeville, the Earl of Chester, went on crusade in 1218[14] - it is clear the he must have appreciated and studied the castles he came across while in the Holy Land.[15] If Roche Castle can be compared to Beeston, Beeston is comparable to the Crusader Castle of Sahyoun in Syria, particularly with regard to its rock cut defenses. Even today Sahyoun remains an early example of military architecture in castle design, consisting of a fortress constructed on the highest point of a narrow ridge.[16]

Sahyoun is located about 37 km from Lattakia, on top of very treacherous route up a mountain – one of the most magnificent features of this fortress is a ditch c. 28m deep, 128m long (on its east side) and approximately 18m wide (Plate I).[17] It is triangular in shape[18] as dictated by its siting on a rock over 150m high. It is protected on two sides by vertical inclines and on its east side by the hand hewn ditch described above (Plate II).

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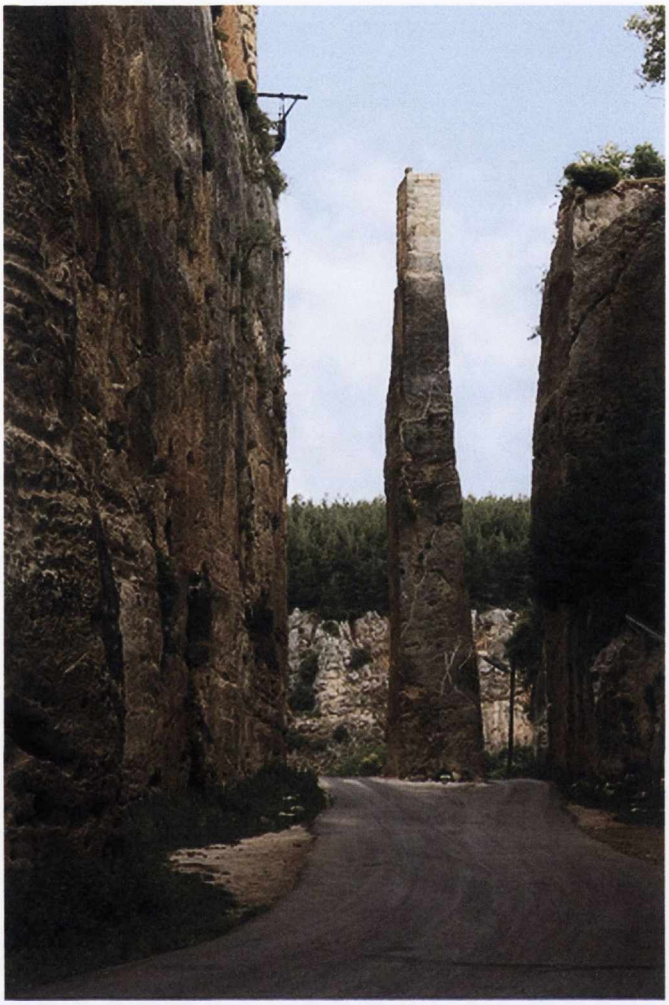
[13] Richard Avent, 'William Marshal's building works at Chepstow Castle, Monmouthshire, 1189-1219' in *The Medieval Castle in Ireland and Wales, Essays in honour of Jeremy Knight,* (2003), p. 56.
[14] Laurence Keen, Peter Hough, 'Beeston castle, Cheshire – A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 94.
[15] The call for a new crusade was led by Innocent III and lasted from 1217-1222. An army sent to Syria in 1217. A second expedition departed in 1218 went first to Acre, and then on to Damietta, strategically situated in the Nile delta and past which ships had to travel to reach the capital, Cairo. The crusaders, led by papal legate, Cardinal Pelagius, eventually captured Damietta. A number of lords accompanied the Fifth Crusade, including Ranulf, Earl of Chester.
[16] Adrian J Boas, *Crusader Archaeology – the material culture of the Latin East,* (1999), p. 115.
[17] Saladin's Castle
http://syriagate.com
[18] This is comparable to Roche, which is also roughly triangular in shape, as dictated by the irregular form of the rock on which it is built.

PLATE I

Sahyoun Castle with its ditch, measuring 28 metres deep.



www.farm4.static.flickr.com

PLATE II

Sahyoun Castle, sited on top of a rock over 150 metres high.

http://images.google.ie/imgres?imgurl=http://farm3.static.flicr.com

The castle was known by many names: the Arabs called it Qalaa't Sahyoun (from the Arabic word for horseback), the Franks called it Chateau de Saon.[19] It was recently re-named as Salah al-Din, to commemorate its capture in 1188 by the great Islamic hero, Saladin. The original castle was constructed in ancient times by the Phoenicians[20] and surrendered to Alexander the Great c.334 BC. It was then taken over as a Byzantine castle and fortified and garrisoned c.975 and but was only fully developed by the Franks[21] during the second quarter of the twelfth century.[22] It was assigned as a fief to Robert of Saone by Roger of Antioch.[23] Because the land rose overlooking the great ditch on the eastern side, the Franks had to construct various defences including a number of towers.[24] However, in 1188 Saladin, the Muslin leader, captured Saone Castle after a sustained using six mangonels.[25]

Although we cannot be sure whether Ranulf actually saw Sahyoun first hand, during his two years crusading in Egypt he would have heard of castles in Syria and the Holy Land with sophisticated defences on hill-top sites with vast rock-cut ditches. As Ridgeway and Cathcart King argue 'the experience gleaned from the Crusades cannot be overlooked and to this day some of the best 13th century castles are to be found in Syria…these lessons were put into practical use in both England and France.[26]

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[19] It has also referred to as Saone, Saona, Sehunne and Seun.
[20] An ancient maritime country of southwest Asia consisting of city-states along the eastern Mediterranean Sea in present-day Syria and Lebanon. Its people became the foremost navigators and traders of the Mediterranean by 1250 B.C. and established numerous colonies, including Carthage in northern Africa.
[21] A Germanic tribe which conquered most of Gaul and eventually established a powerful state with its centre in what is modern France and Germany, but whose borders extended well beyond
[22] Peter Willey, *Eagle's Nest, Ismaili Castles in Iran and Syria,* (2005), p. 241.
[23] Ibid, p. 241.
[24] Jonathan Philips, *Crusader Castles, 1095-1197,* (2002), p.85.
[25] A type of catapult that uses twisted ropes or cords to store up the energy necessary to fire it.
[26] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 6.

Castles in the medieval period were often constructed as defensive strong points which served to isolate and contain districts which were potentially rebellious,[27] but also as a key point of communications, especially along border areas. In fact throughout the 13th century, military considerations remained a matter of priority for castle-building.[28] These facts are true of both Roche and Beeston.

Roche was built on the Louth-Armagh border and it allowed for the control of a pass into Armagh, while Beeston, was built on an isolated crag dominating a gap in the mid-Cheshire ridge, which incorporated the main route from Chester to the south-east.[29] As Peter Ellis puts it 'the choice of site reflects the need to control one of the main medieval routes linking Chester with the Midlands and the south of England.[30]

With regards to controlling potentially rebellious districts, it is necessary to examine both lordships in more detail.

Ranulf de Blundeville, Earl of Chester and Rohesia de Verdon, Lady of Dundalk

Ranulf de Blundeville was the most powerful of the earls of Chester (Appendix 18)[31]. He would hold the earldom for over 50 years, from 1181 to 1232 and in Cheshire he inherited the capital of one of the most important lordships within England.[32] When William the Conquer succeeded in defeating Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, he decided that England should be divided into great estates granted

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[27] O H Creighton, *Castles and Landscapes,* (2002), p. 37.
[28] Dorothy Sylvester, *A History of Cheshire,* (1971), p. 27.
[29] Peter Carrington, *Book of Chester,* (1994), p. 80.
[30] Peter Ellis, *Beeston Castle, Cheshire,* (1993), p. 211.
[31] See Appendices, p. xxxvii.
[32] B M C Husain, *Cheshire under the Norman Earls,* 1066-1237, (1993), p. 91.

on the basis of military service.[33] The idea that his followers be granted districts of lands, becoming his tenants while vowing to render military service was in accordance with Norman custom and also necessary for William's consolidation of power.[34] In 1069, William granted Gerbod the Fleming the Earldom of Cheshire, but when, in the following year, Gerbod returned to the continent to look after his interests there, the king granted it to his nephew Hugh D'Avranches.[35]

By the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086[36] Earl Hugh held many lands in Cheshire: 'Earl Hugh holds Wivreham (Weaverham) in demesne...there are 13 hides that pay geld. There is also land for 18 ploughs...there is a church and a priest and a mill serving the hall and 1 acre of meadow...to this manor belong 10 burgesses in the city. The same earl holds Doneham (Dunham)...Eltone (Elton)...Menlie (Manley)...Frotesham (Frodsham)...Edebernie (Eddisbury)'.[37] The list of the earl's possessions is very lengthy within the survey (he held over 48 estates in Cheshire) and yet it was from his estates outside Cheshire that he received his main source of wealth – in 1086 Earl Hugh received £200 in rents from his Cheshire estates but £700 from all other areas.[38]

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[33] William brought Feudalism to England – this was a medieval contractual relationship among the upper classes, by which a lord granted land to his men in return for military service. Feudalism was further characterized by the localization of political and economic power in the hands of lords and their vassals. This created a pyramidal form of hierarchy

[34] Kenelm Edward Digby. William Montague Harrison, *An Introduction to the history of the law of real property,* (2005), p. 34.

[35] P W Cullen and R Horden, *The Castles of Cheshire,* (1986), p. 6.

[36] The Domesday Survey is really two independent works. One, known as Little Domesday covers Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex, while the other, Great Domesday covers the rest of England, except for lands in the north that were under Scottish control at the time. The major cities of London and Winchester were excluded from the Survey, due to their size.

[37] James Tait (ed), *The Doomsday Survey of Cheshire,* (1916), pp.. 101-103.

[38] P W Cullen and R Horden, *The Castles of Cheshire,* (1986), p. 6.

The Earls of Chester, like those of Shrewsbury and Hereford were marcher lords.[39] They were expected to undertake a policy not merely controlling but conquering the Welsh on their borders (Appendix 19)[40]. The Welsh resisted this attempt at Norman control and the battles that ensured were ferocious. We can gather just how ferocious from the account recorded in *The Chronicle of the Abbey of St Werburg at Chester in 1170*: 'In this year also, Hugh, Earl of Chester, slew a multitude of Welshmen, near the bridge of Baldert, out of whose heads one of the mounds at the hospital for the sick outside Chester is formed .'[41]

Although when creating the Marcher lordships, William I had granted virtual independence to his supporters, it was only successive Earls of Chester who managed to maintain this independence – the administration of Cheshire was independent from Crown interference and each earl maintained his own court, presided over by a justice, as well as arranging for his own financial administration to be supervised by a chamberlain.[42]

By the time Ranulf III became Earl of Cheshire, he held lands as far south as Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. He was ambitions and set out to expand his territories and power even further. In 1188, the year he was knighted by Henry II, Ranulf increased his power when he married Constance, widow of Geoffrey Plantagenet, the king's third son.[43] From this extremely useful marriage alliance, Ranulf became son-in-law to Henry II, brother-in-law to Richard I and Duke of Brittany and Earl of

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[39] The term 'March' is taken from the Anglo-Saxon 'mearch' meaning boundary. The Welsh Marches included the Marchia Wallia, which was made up of lordships created by William and granted to his supporters in this region and Pura Wallia, native Welsh lands to the west.
[40] See Appendices, p. xxxviii.
[41] Christie, R C (ed.) *Annales Cestrienses; or, Chronicle of the Abbey of S. Werburg, at Chester.* Manchester: Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire 17 (1886), p. 10
[42] P W Cullen and R Horden, *The Castles of Cheshire,* (1986), p. 7.
[43] Laurence Keen, Peter Hough, 'Beeston castle, Cheshire – A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 93.

Redmond, through his wife.[44] When Ranulf suffered the loss of his lands in Normandy, due to its annexation by King Phillip Augustus of France in 1204, this ambitious man naturally turned his attention to England, in order to increase his power.

As part of his duty as a marcher lord, Ranulf sided with King John as he gathered a large army at Chester in 1211, to subdue Llywelyn ap Iorwerth of Gwynedd.[45] It wasn't until two years after John's death in 1216 that Llywelyn came to terms with Ranulf and sued for peace.[46] Ranulf could now feel secure from disturbance, having safeguarded his Welsh flank, and could now play an even stronger role in English politics.[47] As Keen and Hough argue, 'the singular status and independence of Cheshire allowed it to obtain a separate Charter of Liberties[48] from its Earl.[49]

By 1218 Ranulf felt his Earldom was secure enough to allow him to go on crusade. He commissioned the construction of Beeston almost immediately on his return and it was to be the expression of a new age, incorporating the features he had observed during his time in the Holy Land. But one wonders whether he built this castle in order to control potentially rebellion districts, which was one of the main reasons for castle-building? At this stage he had made his peace with Llywelyn, the only obvious local rebel. The answer to Ranulf's castle construction programme may in fact have been a reaction to his conflict with Hugh de Burgh, regent of England in the time of

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[44] B M C Husain, *Cheshire under the Norman Earls, 1066-1237,* (1993), p. 91.
[45] Laurence Keen, Peter Hough, 'Beeston castle, Cheshire – A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 94..
[46] This peace was sealed two years later with the marriage of Ranulf's nephew, John le Scot, to Llewellyn's daughter, Helen.
[47] B M C Husain, *Cheshire under the Norman Earls, 1066-1237,* (1993), p. 91.
[48] The Charter of Liberties, also called the Coronation Charter, was a written proclamation by Henry I of England, issued upon his ascension to the throne in 1100. It bound the king to certain laws regarding the treatment of church officials and nobles. It is considered a landmark document in English history and a forerunner of Magna Carat.
[49] Laurence Keen, Peter Hough, 'Beeston castle, Cheshire – A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 94.

the minority of Henry III, who had succeeded John on his death in 1216. This conflict developed into an open confrontation in the winter of 1223-4 when Ranulf, among others, briefly tried to resist de Burgh's policy of resumption of sheriffdoms and royal castles. This confrontation resulted in Ranulf being forced to give up the castles of Shrewsbury, Bridgenorth and Lancaster. Although we cannot be certain of the exact date that Ranulf ordered the construction of Beeston, it is fair to assume that military considerations must have played a role in the siting and defensive capacity of this great castle. Furthermore, although Ranulf had secured peace with Llywelyn, this was by no means guaranteed and Llywelyn would only maintain any treaty as long as it suited him.

The Chronicler Ranulf Higden argued a date of c. 1220 for the building of Beeston (on Ranulf's return from the Crusades) and also for the construction of Chartley and Staffordshire Castles, all paid, he claimed, by a tax that was levied throughout Cheshire.[50] Ridgeway and Cathcart King agree with Higden, stating 'the earliest reference to the building date is Higden in *Polychronicon* over a century after 1220, but there is no reason to disbelieve it and it fits perfectly, both in style and circumstances'.[51]

Like Beeston, Louth was also divided up into lordships in the aftermath of the Anglo-Norman invasion of 1169 and also like Beeston, Roche Castle was constructed within a potentially rebellious area. If Ranulf was one of the most powerful Earls of Chester, Rohesia was one of the most famous members of the De Verdon family, who had established the town of Dundalk. She was the granddaughter of Bertram de Verdon,

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[50] Ranulf Higden (c. 1280-1364), the English chronicler, was a Benedictine monk of the monastery of St Werburg in Chester. Famous works including the Polychronicon, which was both a chronicle and history of Cheshire.

[51] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 8.

the first member of the family to arrive in Ireland as part of Prince John's expedition of 1185. Bertram had received substantial lands from John in 1189, as we can see from this extract from Bertram's grant: 'John, Earl of Morteyn and Lord of Ireland...know that I have given and granted by this my present charter have confirmed to Bertram de Verdon, for his homage and service, four cantreds of land in Uriel and one half cantred of land of Luna (Louth)...'[52] Castletown mount, the largest motte in north Louth, would remain the headquarters of the de Verdons until Roche Castle was constructed in the 1230s.[53]

When Bertram died in 1192, he was succeeded by his eldest son, Thomas. However, on Thomas's death in 1199, he was subsequently succeeded by his brother Nicholas, who obtained royal license to take possession of his father's land in 1204, suggesting he was still a minor until then.[54] Nicholas spent most of his life in Dundalk and fathered only one daughter, Rohesia and it was probably during his long stewardship (which lasted for over 27 years), that the de Verdons consolidated their holdings around Dundalk.[55]

Thus we come to Rohesia, who inherited her father's lands, both in England and Ireland, upon her father's death in 1231, making her an extremely wealthy heiress. In 1225, Rohesia received a letter from the King, recommending her to marry Theobald le Buteler (Butler) of the Ormond family – the marriage in fact took place but Rohesia proved to be a champion of woman's rights, a medieval feminist so to speak, by

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[52] D MacIomhair, 'The Boundaries of Fir Rois', in *County Louth Archaeological Jou*rnal, Volume 15, No. 2, p. 169.
[53] Paul Gosling, From Dún Dealca to Dundalk, (1993) p. 253.
[54] C Lynam, *The Abbey of St Mary, Croxden, Staffordshire,* (1911), p. 16.
[55] Ibid, pp.. 18-19.

maintaining her maiden name.[56] Because of her assertiveness, her descendants retained the family name of de Verdon. Even contemporary documents took note of Rohesia's capabilities. She is referenced in the close rolls for the year 1236 as follows: 'Rohesia de Verdon, having fortified a castle in her own land against the Irish, which none of her predecessors was able to do.'[57]

Rohesia's chief residence was at Alton in Staffordshire and through Nicholas, she also held lands in Leicestershire and Warwickshire. It is interesting to note that Staffordshire borders Cheshire, where Beeston Castle was built. Taken into account the fact that Roche is remarkable similar to Beeston, she must have been familiar with this structure.

It was Rohesia who ordered the building of Roche Castle, which would be become one of the strongest outposts of the region, standing on an enormous rock, west of Dundalk.[58] Louth was an area ripe for attack from the native Irish in the medieval period. Major tenants like the de Verdons played a vital role in shaping the county's military profile and they were expected by the crown to have both the determination and the ability to engage in warfare if it became necessary.[59] By 1200, King John had ordered that all those holding lands in Louth must fortify them or face forfeiture, and early grants in Louth were bestowed on condition the grantees both secured and colonised their lands.[60] In fact the original grant bestowed on Bertram (Rohesia's grandfather) required that the town of Dundalk was enclosed by walls and towers to

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[56] Rev Denis Murphy, 'The de Verdons of Louth, *in The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquities of Ireland,* (1895), p. 321.
[57] H S Sweetman, (ed), *The Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland,* (1875), p. 347.
[58] Ibid, p. 321.
[59] Brendan Smith, *Colonization and Conquest in Medieval Ireland – the English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (1990), p. 44.
[60] H S Sweetman, (ed), Calendar *of Documents Relating to Ireland,* (1875), p. 125.

protect it from the raids of the O'Neills.[61] It also stated that the grant was held 'by the service of twenty knights'[62] Furthermore, after the castle at Roche was constructed, all the de Verdun's free tenants were required to do service at the castle.[63]

In 1221, Hugh O'Neill is mentioned in *The Annals of the Four Masters*, when he joined Hugh de Lacy against the English.[64] They also record for the year 1224 that 'the harvest (in Louth) remains unreaped till the festival of St Brigid, by reason of war and the inclemency of the weather.'[65] The town of Dundalk itself was attacked and besieged by the native Irish at least fourteen times between 1300 and 1600, an average of once every 20 years.[66] Thus it can be argued, with a fair degree of certainty, that one of the main reasons for the construction of Roche Castle, was to contain a potentially rebellious area.

A Comparative study of Beeston and Roche Castles

There are a number of elements in both Beeston and Roche, which are good examples of the development of the castle throughout the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Firstly, we should consider the siting of these castles. There has in fact been very little written about the reasons why castles were built at particular sites on the landscape: as Creighton argues, this is most likely because of a lack of documentary evidence regarding the decision making process behind castle siting.[67] However, from the above, it is clear that both Beeston and Roche were constructed along key communication routes and were both built to accommodate military and

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[61] D MacIomhair, 'The Boundaries of Fir Rois', in *County Louth Archaeological Jou*rnal, Volume 15, No. 2, p. 169.
[62] Walter Harris, *Works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland,* (1762), p. 197.
[63] A J Otway-Ruthven, *Knight Service in Ireland,* (1959), p. 7.
[64] Owen Connellan, *The Annals of the Four Masters,* (1846).
[65] Ibid.
[66] J D'Alton and J R O'Flanagan, *The History of Dundalk and Its Environs,* (1864), pp.. 51-89.
[67] O H Creighton, *Castles and landscapes,* (2002), p. 35.

defensive features. Beeston's spectacular location overlooking routes from the Midlands and Wales to the north-west, would have been a major factor in the choice of site.[68] The siting of Roche Castle must surely have been influenced by the fact that it controlled a pass into Armagh and would enable the de Verdons to protect the northern area of their lordship. Another reason for the siting of both castles may have been symbolic, intending to overawe the local landscape and provide a striking symbol of lordship.

We now turn to the archaeology of these two great Norman castles. One of the most startling features of both Beeston and Roche is their incorporation of the natural defences gained from each castles siting. Roche commanded a strong defensive position, sited on a large rock outcrop, which drops dramatically on all sides but the east. The north, south and west sides of the castle are almost cliff-like, and the height and scale of the south side in particular is extremely impressive and even today can seem threatening.[69] Beeston also used the natural strength of the prominent and dramatic rock outcrop on which it was constructed to maximum advantage – as you approach it from every direction, its defences are visible in stark outline.[70] Like Roche, Beeston also has a sheer drop on a couple of its sides.

Ranulf de Blundeville's castle at Beeston was constructed of local stone quarried on site. The main stone used in the building of this castle was grey Keuper sandstone, together with the underlying red Upper Bunter sandstone: the only stone which

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[68] Peter Hough, 'Beeston Castle' *in Current Archaeology,* No. 91, p. 245.
[69] Michael Ryan, *The Illustrated Archaeology of Ireland,* (1991), p. 49.
[70] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 100.

needed to be dressed and finely tooled was for the construction of gateways, doorways and windows (Plate III).[71] All the walls throughout the castle were built of hewn stone with rough vertical faces but the poor quality of the construction of Beeston would have been disguised through external rendering with either lime mortar or lime wash.[72] Roche castle was constructed of roughly coursed limestone ashlar and greywacke. Parts of the castle, including the free-standing rectangular structure in the inner ward, were constructed of uncoursed rubble masonry of poor quality.[73] Externally, the building is stark, the plain limestone rubble walls relieved only by slits of arrow loops (Plate IV). [74]

William Camden described Beeston as follows: 'A place well guarded by walls of a great compass, by a great number of its towers, and by a mountain of very steep descent'.[75] The castle is sited upon a sandstone outcrop, which commands not only the Tarporley Gap but also Wales, Merseyside, the Pennines and the wide Cheshire plain, all of which can be viewed from its summit.[76] It is situated about 15 km south-east of Chester.[77] Its defences incorporates and takes complete advantage of the natural strength of this prominent and dramatic outcrop.[78] The sandstone outcrop is about 152.4 meters above sea level at its summit (Plate V).[79] Although Beeston was

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[71] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 101.
[72] Ibid, p. 101.
[73] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 333.
[74] Christine Casey, Alistair Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland – North Leinster,* (1993), p. 350.
[75] William Camden (1551-1623) the historian and antiquarian, who travelled throughout England in 1582, gathering bits of folklore and teaching himself Welsh and Anglo-Saxon in order to be able to study ancient accounts of Britain. This began for him the long research that would be published in 1586 as in his Latin works *Britannia* (from which the above quote is taken), a study of the British Isles.
[76] P W Cullen, R Horden, *The Castles of Cheshire,* (1986), p. 18.
[77] Peter Carrington, *Book of Chester,* (1994), p. 80.
[78] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 100.
[79] Plantagenet Somerset Fry, *Castles of Britain and Ireland,* (1996), p. 125.

planned in two parts – an Inner Bailey and an Outer Bailey – for the purpose of comparing its similarities with Roche, we shall examine only the Inner Bailey.

The Inner Bailey[80] at Beeston is in a very dramatic position, completely isolated and yet still dominating the Outer Bailey. This site incorporates a rock-cut ditch, a gatehouse (perhaps the earliest gate-house in England equipped with half-round, flanking towers)[81] and a curtain wall with three D shaped towers (Plate VI). The flat-bottomed ditch[82], which surrounds the Inner Bailey on its south side, was not only utilized for defence but was also the quarry for most of the stone used in the construction of this bailey – to this day wedge-holes used for extracting the stone can be seen along both sides of the ditch.[83]

The idea of a dry-ditch was not uncommon as an additional defence in the 13th century. When a castle could be constructed on a rock, as at Beeston, a wet moat was not required because the dry ditch acted as an adequate defence.[84] The ditch at Beeston is not very wide but it is extremely deep.

Roche Castle also takes advantages of its natural surroundings. Wright described it thus in 1758: 'It stands very high and commands a view of all the neighbouring country around it.'[85] Like Beeston, Roche Castle also incorporates a dry ditch.[86] This ditch separated the gateway of the castle, which is situated on the south end of the east

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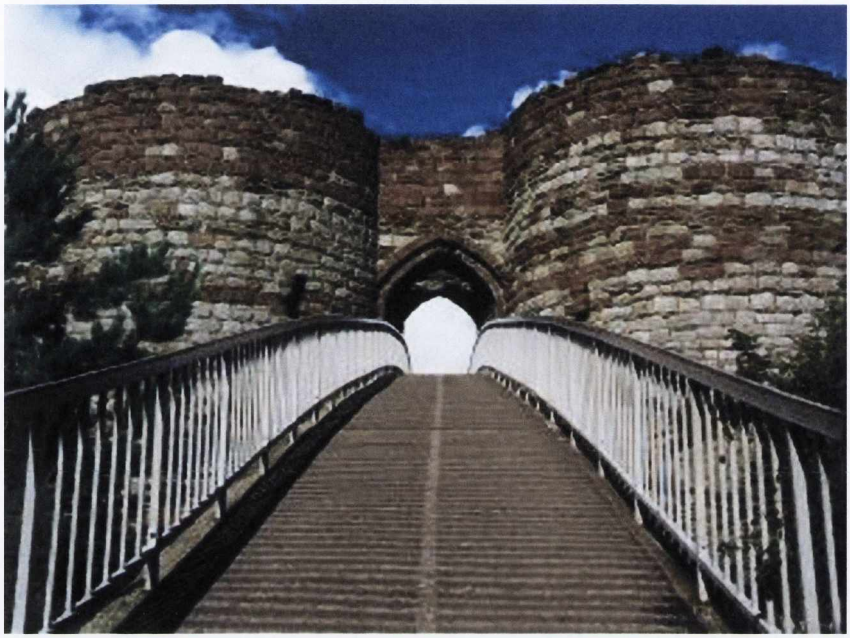
[80] For the purpose of this paper we shall use the term 'Inner Bailey', although this area is also referred to, by historians and archaeologists alike, as 'The Keep' and 'The Inner Ward'.
[81] Adrian Pettifer, *English Castles – A Guide by County,* (1995), p. 14.
[82] This ditch was dug through Keuper rock, which is extremely hard.
[83] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 101.
[84] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 6.
[85] Thomas Wright, *Louthiana,* (1758).
[86] Harold Leask, *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses,* (1941), pp.. 63-65.

PLATE III

Red Upper Bunting Sandstone gives the gate-house at Beeston its distinctive appearance.



http://www.cheshire.gov.uk/Archaeology/RCP/images/Beeston%20Castle%20Bridge%20and%20Gates.jpg

PLATE IV

Curtain wall at Roche constructed in plain limestone rubble.

PLATE V

Sandstone outcrop at Beeston 152 metres above sea level.

http://www.busybus.co.uk/images/cheshire/leisure/Beeston.jpg

PLATE VI

Half-round towers flanking towers at Beeston.

www.english-heritage.org.uk/beestoncastle

wall, from a plateau to its east (Plate VII).[87] However, unlike Beeston, the ditch at Roche is wider than it is deep – it is in fact quite shallow, although it is similar to Beeston in that it was a rock-cut fosse. In both cases, the stone which was cut out to make the ditch was used in the building of the castle – thus these ditches had both a practical purpose, as well as a defensive purpose.[88]

The gatehouse at Beeston was reached by a stone causeway 4.7 meters wide and the gap between the causeway and the entrance was spanned by a drawbridge. [89] The trunnion[90] holes of this drawbridge remain, together with a cross-fire of a pair of converging loop-holes and a portcullis with a pair of large doors behind it.[91] All these features ensured that the entranceway to the Inner Bailey at Beeston was extremely well defended. The gateway at Roche was also protected by both a causeway and a drawbridge. A gap in the causeway of approximately 3 meters wide must have been bridged and protected by an outer building – Buckley and Sweetman argue this would probably have been a barbican [92] and this is also evident from the remains of masonry within the rock-cut fosse.[93] Beeston was also protected by an outer-building, probably a barbican.[94]

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[87] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 334,
[88] The main defensive purpose of a ditch was to prevent siege towers and battering rams being used against the walls of a castle.
[89] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 104.
[90] A trunnion is a mounted device consisting of a pair of opposite projecting cylindrical pivots on which something can be rotated or tilted – as part of a medieval drawbridge, trunnions were part of the design which provided the energy required to raise or lower a drawbridge.
[91] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 13.
[92] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 334.
[93] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (2005), p. 57.
[94] Ibid, p. 334.

At Beeston, a pointed arch with two plain square orders leads to the gate passage between two gatehouse towers, which are semi-circular and open-backed.[95] As one progresses into the gate passage, which would have been originally covered by the wooden floor of the room above, its width increases with a rebate and on either side of the passage there are recesses, which once contained the crooks for a second gate.[96] Entry to the towers was not through the gate passage, but through doorways situated in the rear wall of the gatehouse – the west gatehouse tower doorway has a pointed arch, a groove for a door latch, a square-headed window with a deep external chamfer and internal display, two holes in the door rebate which mark the position of iron crooks and in the sill, two square holes for iron bars..[97] While this tower's face and flanks are of very great solidarity, its rear wall is very thin.[98] To support the wooden floor of the first floor chamber, there are six plain corbels.[99] The east gatehouse tower at Beeston is less well preserved. Its back is missing from the jamb of its basement door.

The upper storey of the gatehouse extends the whole way along the entrance passage, providing a habitable chamber, which was over 20 meters long, although admittedly very narrow.[100] Access to this level was through a doorway in the wall of the west gatehouse tower, which would have originally involved climbing an external wooden

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[95] Adrian Pettifer, *English Castles – A Guide by County,* (1995), p. 14.
[96] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 101.
[97] Ibid, p. 101.
[98] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 14.
[99] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 101.
[100] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 14.

PLATE VII

Ditch at Roche Castle is wider than it is deep.

staircase.[101] This level of the gatehouse was built mainly of red sandstone, unlike the lower floor, which was constructed from grey stone. The gatehouse at Beeston is very advanced for the 1220s in that it formed a block of buildings and it was clearly habitable.[102] This is also one of the reasons for the argument that Roche must have been based on Beeston – if the features of Beeston Castle was advanced for thirteenth century England, the same argument could be applied to Roche Castle vis-à-vis Ireland.

The gatehouse at Roche had rooms on three of its levels.[103] It is situated in the south end of the east wall, with twin towers, which are rounded at the front but squared off at the back, behind the line of the curtain wall (Plate VIII). [104] These towers are pierced by a wide entranceway, which at some stage was filled in and narrowed – the bases at the front are stepped out and slightly battered up to around 3 metres above the bedrock.[105] There is a segmental arch showing in the west face of the entranceway, which was obviously the vault that would have provided the floor for the chamber above.[106] The towers had four-stories, with barrel vaults over the ground-floor level, providing considerable living space.[107] Both towers have a number of narrow arrow loops, facing in several directions and placed at various levels, to enable this side of the castle to be protected (Plate IX). However, there were anomalies between the two towers of the gatehouse: the north tower had a window at first-floor level with a rounded arch built from sandstone blocks but there is no corresponding window in the

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[101] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 102.
[102] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 15.
[103] Christine Casey, Alistair Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland – North Leinster,* (1993), p. 349.
[104] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 57.
[105] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 334.
[106] Ibid, p. 335.
[107] Ibid, p. 335.

south tower. On the south side of the south tower, there is evidence of wicker centring in the surviving portion of the barrel vault, but there is no evidence of this in the north tower.[108]

From the above it is clear that there are similarities between the gate-house towers of Beeston and Roche, they were both D-shaped, were reached by a drawbridge and were habitable. They also both provided one of the main lines of defence of the castle. However, the gate-house at Roche was four stories high, as opposed to Beeston's smaller two storeys and while Beeston provided accommodation in the form of a long, narrow room on the first floor, Roche had rooms on three levels. This substantial accommodation within its gatehouse towers, made Roche stand out from most of the early Irish castles.[109]

Another feature common to both castles was the use of curtain walls. The Inner Bailey at Beeston was protected not only by a strong curtain wall but also by three additional towers, which are also D-shaped. Thus the overall 'built' defences of Beeston's Inner Bailey[110] consisted of a curtain wall, with five half-round towers (two of which formed the gatehouse), which measured a total length of 110 meters (Plate X).[111] The towers are spread at fairly even intervals along the curtain wall. The south west tower is interesting in that it provides the only evidence of a heated chamber in the Inner Bailey – excavations provided evidence that the first floor chamber in this

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[108] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 335.
[109] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 76.
[110] It is actually the south and east sides of the Inner Bailey, fronting the great ditch, which are also protected by the curtain wall. The west and north face of the castle are naturally protected by a very steep precipice. The east was also partly protected by its natural surroundings, but together with the south side, its real defence was provided by the rock-cut ditch.
[111] B M C Husain, *Cheshire under the Norman Earls, 1066-1237,* (1993), p. 103.

PLATE VIII

Gatehouse at Roche with its twin towers.

PLATE IX

Narrow arrow loops in the gatehouse at Roche.

PLATE X

Curtain wall of Inner Bailey at Beeston.

http://farm1.static.flickr.com/26/38706702_465f90e776.jpg?v=0

tower had a fireplace.[112] The largest tower is the south east tower – as stated above it is D-shaped but it is slightly flattened to allow it to fit upon the limited space on the rock on which it was constructed.[113] This tower's arrangements are very similar to the gate-house towers, with thick face and flanks, thin wall to the back, a door jamb and a splayed window to the rear of the tower.[114] Of the five towers constructed to defend the Inner Ward, the east tower is the smallest. It differs in one aspect in that its basement appears to have been polygonal but otherwise it follows the same pattern as the other towers, with door and windows situated at its back end.[115] Like the gate-house towers, accommodation was provided by chambers in at least two of the towers within the Inner Bailey.[116] Within the remaining fragments of the curtain wall, merlons, embrasures and sockets for hoardings are visible, along the south east corner of the wall.[117] To the west of the Inner Bailey, there is a substantial gap within the curtain wall, where the natural rock forms a ledge overhanging the cliff below – this is known as 'The Pulpit Rock'.[118] The curtain wall at Beeston was of no great height – merely ten feet – but from the outside, when seen together with the great ditch and the towered gatehouse, it would have made the castle seem formidable.

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[112] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 102.
[113] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 15.
[114] Ibid, p. 15.
[115] Ibid, p. 15.
[116] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 100.
[117] P W Cullen and R Horden, *The Castles of Cheshire,* (1986), p. 24.
[118] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 103.

The curtain wall at Roche has only one projecting tower, situated at the north-east angle to provide flanking fire (Plate XI).[119] Like the gatehouse, this tower was on four levels – the ground floor level has a north-south barrel vault with the remains of wicker centring (like that in the south tower of the gatehouse) and there are also holes on the tops of the walls to carry wooden beams for support during construction.[120] Unfortunately, the remains of this tower are very fragmentary, with only the south wall of the upper levels still in existence. But this one remaining wall does provide us with more information – firstly, there are no openings in the wall at first-floor level but there are two openings on the second floor, which also incorporates the battlement level of the curtain wall (Plate XII).[121] On the second floor of the tower, the east opening is actually the remains of the doorway which accessed the tower from the wall-walk, and the west opening was a window.[122] This tower was not only an added defensive feature of the castle, but, judging from its size, it would also have provided considerable added accommodation within the castle.

The curtain walls at Roche rise directly from the edge of the bedrock on every side but the north west, where the remains of a battered plinth is still visible – both this section of the curtain, together with part of the east wall situated to the north of the gateway, have well-preserved merlons with rectangular holes below them at wall-walk level, which were probably used to carry hoards.[123]

The final comparison to be made between Roche Castle and the Inner Bailey at Beeston Castle is that of their internal arrangements – the buildings constructed within

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[119] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 76.
[120] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 337.
[121] Ibid, p. 337.
[122] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 337.
[123] Ibid, p. 334.

PLATE XI

Tower in south-east angle at Roche.

PLATE XII

Curtain wall battlements at Roche.

the wards of both castles. At Beeston the interior of the inner bailey is a rough and irregular area, with outcrops of stone, mainly in the western half of the ward.[124] The main features included a large depression to the north of the bailey, which may have been the basement for some large building and to the east, a well.[125] This is not to say these were the only structures ever constructed within the bailey at Beeston: the Cheshire Chamberlain accounts for 1241-42 suggest some wooden buildings within the inner ward including barracks, an armoury and a granary.[126] However, it is the well at Beeston which provides us with one of the most interesting archaeological features of the Inner Bailey – it was an impressive feat of engineering in the medieval period to cut a well into sandstone to a depth of about 112.8 meters.[127] The depth of wells within medieval castles varied. Bodiam Castle in Sussex had a well depth of less than 4 metres, while Norwich Castle had a well depth of around 13 metres.[128] There were deeper wells – at Dover the medieval well was lined in Caen stone[129] to a depth of 52 metres and then continues for a further 21.3 metres through bare chalk, to a total well-depth of 73.3 metres.[130] Although the well at Dover is certainly deep, it still falls far short of the well at Beeston.

At Roche Castle, to the south-west of the gatehouse there are the remains of a large rectangular building which uses the curtain as its south and east walls: this building has a ground floor which is below the level of the gatehouse because of the fact that

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[124] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 13.
[125] B M Husain, *Cheshire under the Norman Earls, 1066-1237,* (1993), p. 104.
[126] P W Cullen and R Horden, *The Castles of Cheshire,* (1986), pp.. 24-25.
[127] Plantagenet Somerset Fry, *Castles of Britain and Ireland,* (1996), p. 125.
[128] Elizabeth Shepard Popescu, 'Papers of the Medieval Europe Conference, Brugge 1997' in *Military Studies in Medieval Europe, Volume 11,* http://www.deremilitari.org/resources/articles/popescu.htm
[129] Caen Stone is a cream coloured limestone quarried near the city of Caen in Normandy. It was introduced to England by the Normans and was used in the construction of various medieval monuments including the Tower of London and Norwich castle.
[130] Roger Stalley, *Early Medieval Architecture,* (1999), p. 91.

the rock on which it was built drops sharply away to the south and west.[131] At the present time this building has only two stories but it would originally have been higher, as evidenced by its eastern wall, which rises above the rest of the present structure. The first floor level contained a hall, which was lit by three large windows in the south wall (Plate XIII). These windows have two centred-arches of diagonally tooled hard grey sandstone and window seats, together with large embrasures.[132] Entry into the hall was by a short flight of stairs in the northwest corner of the building.

On the ground floor of this structure there are four opes in the south wall – the middle two have narrow slits while the outside two have windows with sandstone round arches. On the ground floor, the east wall is a meter thicker than that of the south, so it was almost certainly designed to contain a mural passage.[133] The hall and the gatehouse were the only buildings at Roche which were roofed.

Like Beeston, Roche Castle also contains a structure whose originally purpose remains unknown. While at Beeston we can hazard a guess that the remaining feature may have been a basement for some large building, the structure at Roche is more problematic. Here it is a featureless, freestanding structure which Buckley and Sweetman argue that its size and shape '...suggest it was a tower which fitted into an earlier curtain wall but this would mean that the curtain wall was originally set back quite a distance from the rock precipice, making it vulnerable to attack'.[134] At present there are two floor levels remaining, at ground and basement level and the building

[131] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 77.
[132] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 336.
[133] Ibid, p. 336.
[134] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 336.

PLATE XIII

Windows in hall at south wall at Roche Castle.

consists of uncoursed rubble masonry, giving the structure a very rough appearance. It is for this reason that it can be argued that this building was probably built sometime later than the original castle – it is unlikely to have survived in any form due to the poor quality of its construction.

By comparing Roche Castle to the Inner Ward/Bailey at Beeston, it becomes clear that there are a number of similarities between both castles. Entry to both castles was through a gatehouse, with flanking D-shaped towers, albeit Roche's gatehouse was four storeys high, while Beeston was only two storeys. Both castles relied on the strength of their curtain walls. They also built towers as additional defensive works: Beeston had three towers, as well as the two towers which formed the gatehouse; Roche had three, one in the northern apex and a twin-towered gatehouse. They both had rock-cut ditches, requiring a causeway and a drawbridge before reaching the gatehouse. Both castles also contained a feature within their inner ward which remain unidentifiable to this day. And, perhaps most importantly, both castles relied on their natural defensive positions, exploiting the natural advantages of their sites with great effectiveness.

But there was one feature of Beeston Castle which makes it completely different from Roche: that is the Outer Bailey. The great outer bailey at Beeston covers a wide, irregular area, much of it steeply sloping and so covered in bracken that it is virtually impossible to find evidence or trace of any internal buildings.[135] This outer ward follows the contours of the hill and encloses a vast area of over 9.5 acres. The plan of

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[135] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 17.

Beeston was very much influenced by existing earthworks[136] and by the topography of the site. Part of the curtain wall can still be seen and seven towers plus the two towers that form the gatehouse from the medieval period still survive, albeit in a poor state of repair, to this day. Much of the wall was torn down when quarrymen removed the stones from the site to build 'causeways through Cheshire'.[137] The structure of the towers suggest that they were built prior to the construction of the linking wall and all of them must have been at least one storey above the level of the battlements, as is indicated by castles which have survived in better condition.[138]

Some of the towers still have arrow slits which allowed them to defend both the curtain wall and the adjoining towers – all except one of the towers were open at the back which would prevent attackers from having any cover should they gain access.[139] At the bottom floor of each tower there were embrasures with arrow loops: their position and numbers differed in accordance with the tower's position regarding the slope of the hill on which they were built.[140] As mentioned above, Beeston actually had both blocked and open towers – in fact, no two towers at Beeston were exactly alike. Each had some kind of pitched roof of timber, either straight topped (like the great Norman keep) or 'candle-snuffer'[141] fashion, as found on the continent in the medieval period.[142]

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[136] The Outer Bailey's defences were dictated by an existing Iron Age hillfort – not to have done so would have meant these prehistoric defences could have been utilised by any potential attacker.
[137] Peter Hough, *Beeston Castle,* in Current Archaeology, No. 91, p. 247.
[138] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 104.
[139] P W Cullen and R Horden, *The Castles of Cheshire,* (1986), p. 24.
[140] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 104.
[141] This refers to an implement used to extinguish the flame of a candle – it is often bell-shaped and thus can be used to describe a specific type of tower roof found at Beeston.
[142] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), pp.. 8-10.

By naming the towers 1-9, (including the two gatehouse towers) and starting at the northeast angle, it is possible to compare some of the features of these towers. Tower 1 is a very small structure, standing at just over 6 meters high and represented by a slight projection in the line of the curtain wall.[143] Nothing remains of this tower except the semi-circular ground plan. Tower 2, the largest tower in the outer ward, is similar to the majority of towers in the outer ward in that it projects boldly but is different to most of them in that it has a slight interior projection on its south side.[144] Entry to this tower was through a doorway on the south side.[145] Tower 2, like most of the towers at Beeston, consists of a damaged basement; broken loop-opening and an almost totally destroyed rear wall.[146]

The gate passage of the Outer Bailey consists solely of the features remaining in the north wall of Tower 4 – part of the portcullis slot survives, as well as a square hole. 0.26 meters deep and 0.9 meters wide, which must have been for the securing of the outer gate.[147] There is no evidence for the upper part of the gatehouse, apart from two-half round corbels in Tower 3: if we take the evidence for the Inner Bailey gatehouse, we can be fairly certain that the outer gatehouse also contained a first floor chamber occupying the space over the two towers and gate passage.[148]

Tower 6 is the smallest, best preserved and most unusual of the Outer Bailey towers. On both the north and south sides there are arrow loops in vaulted embrasures which

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[143] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 18.
[144] Ibid, p. 18.
[145] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 104.
[146] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 18.
[147] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 105.
[148] Ibid, p. 105.

cover the near sections of the curtain wall.[149] The tower has an upper floor and the beam-holes are still visible and part of the upper level of this tower is preserved, including the jambs of doors leading out on to the wall-walk.[150] There would have originally been a staircase, on the outside of the south wall of this tower, which would have given access to the first floor. It is impossible to tell if its rear was enclosed because there are no remains of the timber which would have been used to enclose it.

All the towers on the Outer Bailey had much in common and were obviously part of the same building programme. There were, however, differences between the Inner Bailey and Outer Bailey towers, especially with regards to the quality of the masonry work. The Inner Bailey used large blocks of stone from the wide range of Keuper sandstone, forming contrasted bands in the gate-towers – the blocks, which are mainly 'cube' in shape, result in an orderly and attractive experience.[151] This appearance is greatly helped by the use of small stones to fill up horizontal gaps or spallings – in the Outer Bailey this spalling is far more noticeable, the blocks often differ in size and are not carefully rectangular in shape and the course work is often extremely rough.[152]

The Outer Bailey at Beeston Castle includes both curtain wall and numerous towers. An aerial picture of Beeston (Plate XIV) gives us a better idea of just how formidable was this outer line of defences. While, as detailed above, there were many similarities between Roche Castle and the Inner Bailey at Beeston, and as such it is certainly

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[149] Laurence Keen and Peter Hough, Beeston Castle, Cheshire - A Report on the Excavations 1968-85', (1993), p. 106.
[150] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 21.
[151] Ibid, p. 22.
[152] Ibid, p. 22.

Plate XIV

Aerial photograph showing Beeston's strong defences including its strategic setting and curtain wall.

possible that the former was modelled on the later, the Outer Bailey at Beeston was a remarkable feat of engineering, sited as it is on a steep and craggy hill.

Beeston and Roche are both excellent examples of military architecture. In Beeston's case the designers put in to practice both the idea of second line of defence and curtain walls flanked by projecting towers – in other words it had concentric defences; it also included one of the earliest gate-house in England to be equipped with half-round, flanking towers; the castle was also defended by a wide, flat-bottomed, rock-cut ditch; finally, it took advantage of its natural surroundings to an amazing degree. Its position added to its already great strength: on the relatively accessible east and south sides the Inner Bailey is isolated further by the rock-cut ditch; on the west side the castle overlooks a very steep precipice, some 100 meters high and this precipice continues around to the northern side.[153]

Roche Castle also incorporated a curtain wall with a flanking tower on its north-east angle – the castle's naturally defensive site is probably the reason the castle only had one extra tower apart from the two gatehouse towers. The imposing entrance at Roche was flanked by a massive gate-building, which included half-round towers, like those at Beeston. Roche is bounded by its high curtain walls with battlemented wall-walks (Plate XV). It is also protected by a rock-cut ditch and takes complete advantage of its natural defensive site: Roche was specifically built to encompass the large rock outcrop on which it is built and it's naturally protected on three of its sides by a sheer drop.

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[153] Maurice H Ridgeway, D J Cathcart King, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire' in *The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society,* volume 46, (1959), p. 13.

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has produced a comparative study between the archaeology of Beeston Castle in Cheshire and Roche Castle in Co Louth. While Beeston was almost certainly inspired by the crusader castles in the Holy Land, the many similarities between Roche and Beeston lends weight to the argument that Roche was based on the design of Beeston. Both castles provide early examples of the developments within castle building in the 13th century, including flanking towers and a strong gatehouse. As stated earlier in this chapter, Tom McNeill argues that 'the design and siting of Castle Roche are very similar to those of Beeston in Cheshire...the design of Castle Roche must be based on that of Beeston, which was itself one of the first in England to rely on curtain wall, towers and gatehouse for defence.'[154] This has been shown to be largely the case, although the Outer Bailey at Beeston is very different than that at Roche. However, the castle's Inner Bailey bears remarkable similarities with Roche, as detailed above. Furthermore, both castles were built in potentially rebellious areas and along key communication routes.

But the most comparable feature between both castles in their amazing siting. They both exploited their natural advances effectively and even though today they are both largely ruins, they remain as visually impressive and formidable as when they were constructed in the 13th century.

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[154] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in a Gaelic World,* (1997), pp.. 86-87.

PLATE XV

Roche Castle with its high curtain walls and battlemented wall-walks.

Chapter 6

The de Lacy Family

One of the most important and influential dynasties to arise out of the Conquest of Ireland was the de Lacy family. They were a family of firsts: they were among the first Anglo-Normans to arrive with Henry II on his expedition to Ireland in 1171: Hugh de Lacy I was the first Lord of Meath; his son, Hugh de Lacy II was the first Earl of Ulster; Hugh II, as part of the second generation of Anglo-Norman settlers in Ireland, was one of the first to realise that the best land available was not that of some weak Irish kingdom,[1] but that of a fellow Anglo-Norman, in this case, John de Courcy, conqueror of Ulster. Finally, Hugh de Lacy I had much to do with the encastellation of both Meath and Leinster and in fact he arguably built the first major Anglo-Norman castle in Ireland at Trim.

Although Trim Castle was probably the most important of de Lacy's castles, the main focus of study will be two other castles attributed to the de Lacy family: King John's Castle in Carlingford, County Louth and Greencastle in County Down. Indeed, Tom McNeill has argued that Greencastle's defensive layout closely resembles that of Skenfrith.[2] In the next chapter we shall attempt to critically examine this argument in depth.

However, before we can attempt an archaeological analysis of the above castles, it is necessary to provide a historical analysis of the de Lacy family. As with previous chapters on de Courcy and the de Verdons, the argument here is that in order to

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[1] By the time the ambitious Hugh de Lacy II was ready to carve out a kingdom of his own, c.1204, most of the smaller Irish kingdoms had already been subinfeudated by the English, forcing the native Irish to live on more barren and less fertile lands, which held no interest for the Anglo-Normans.
[2] Tom McNeill, *Anglo-Norman Ulster,* (1980), pp. 24-27.

understand why the de Lacys built particular castles in certain areas, we need to understand the historical context within which these castles were built. The best way to achieve this is to examine the circumstances under which the de Lacys found themselves during the family's early years in Ireland.

To provide an in-depth historical study of the de Lacy family requires an analysis of the following themes: the earliest known member of the de Lacy family, his ancestors and their arrival in England; the de Lacy lands in England at the time of the Anglo-Norman Conquest; Hugh de Lacy's arrival in Ireland and Henry II's grant of the kingdom of Meath; Hugh's encastellation of Meath (and Leinster); Walter de Lacy, son of Hugh I and his stormy relationship with King John; Walter's brother, Hugh de Lacy II and his invasion of Ulster. This will allow us to form a clearer picture of the circumstances under which King John's Castle and Greencastle were constructed and also allow us to account for the different features incorporated into these castles.

The rise of the de Lacy family in England and Wales

One of the first problems with trying to draw up a genealogy table for the de Lacy clan is that the name of the earliest family member in Normandy is unknown. An article by Edwin V Lacy in 1994, stated that 'de Lacy Bellingari[3] claimed the name of the person in question was Hugh de Lacy. While there were at least one and probably two grandsons by that name, it seems that de Lacy Bellingari may have mistakenly attributed the name to the grandfather. In any event, he unfortunately offers no

[3] Edward de Lacy Bellingari was the pseudonym of the Reverend Edy Harnett, author of 'The Roll of the House of Lacy', which was published in 1928 and along with W E Wightman, is recognised as one of the definitive authorities on the de Lacy history.

sources and no documentation for this conclusion, nor has it been corroborated by other writers'.[4] What we do know is that this 'unknown' de Lacy got the name from the family's original seat in Lassy[5], which is situated on the road between Vire and Auvray in Normandy.[6] The de Lacy's holdings in Normandy included land throughout various locations, all held from their feudal lord, the Bishop of Bayeux.[7] The 'unknown' de Lacy was married to Emma and she (together with her son Ilbert) were named in a charter under which she granted land to the nunnery of St Amand.[8] Emma and her husband produced two sons, Ilbert and Walter (Appendix 20)[9] and while Ilbert's descendents included both Roger de Lacy, Justiciar in the time of King John and the future Earls of Lincoln, it was Walter's descendents who would go on to become the Barons of Ewias[10], Lords of Weobley and Meath and Earls of Ulster and Lincoln.

Walter de Lacy arrived from Normandy after the Conquest of England, in the train of William Fitz Osbern. Fitz Osbern was granted the title of Earl of Hereford in 1067 and he in turn granted Weobley in Hereford to Walter, who held it as Earl.[11] Walter built a castle there before his death in 1085 [12] (Appendix 21).[13] The remains of this motte and bailey castle at Weobley (Plate I) are situated on the south side of the town

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[4] Edwin V Lacy, 'The Anonymous Sire de Lacy of England and Normandy', (1994), www.gengateway.com/genealogy/sire.htm.
[5] Also referred to as Lasci in contemporary documentation.
[6] Goddard Henry Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans, 1169-1216,* Volume II, (1911), p. 51.
[7] Edwin V Lacy, 'The Anonymous Sire de Lacy of England and Normandy', (1994), Edwin V Lacy, 'The Anonymous Sire de Lacy of England and Normandy', (1994), www.gengateway.com/genealogy/sire.htm.
[8] W E Wightman, *The Lacy Family in England and Normandy, 1066-1194,* (1966).
[9] See Appendices, p. xxxix.
[10] See pp. 173-174.
[11] 'Weobley, Herefordshire – History to the Fifteenth Century', Archenfield Archaeology, http://www.archenfield.com/Weobley%202.htm.
[12] C. P. Bomford's, "The Bomford Family and Allied Families", http://www.comp.utas.edu.au/users/rsmith/bomford3/bomford3.html
[13] See Appendices, p. xl.

and include a double ditched ring work and oval bailey: the bailey is 75m x 65m in size with large ramparts on the east side – this was originally surrounded by a moat.[14]

William Fitz Osbern died in 1072 and his heir, Roger of Breteuil, forfeited his lands in 1075 for his part in a revolt against the king thus allowing Walter to become a tenant-in-chief of the crown.[15]

Walter held another area of land in the south-west of Herefordshire, which was actually part of the Welsh marches at the time of the Conquest. The marcher area that Walter controlled was known as 'Ewias', meaning 'sheep district', in the mid 10th century, when its bounds were first described.[16] After the Norman Conquest, Fitz Osbern had been entrusted with the subinfeudation of the Southern Welsh border.[17] Together with Walter de Lacy and Ralph Bernay, Fitz Osbern pushed into south Wales and soon founded castles at places like Chepstow and Monmouth. After Walter's death in 1085, the Domesday Book recorded that his son Roger held 'land called Ewias within the boundary of Ewias'.[18] Wales (like Ireland one hundred years later), was a type of piecemeal conquest, where ambitious barons were granted lordships and then attempted to defend them against both internal and external attack from Welsh princes and other Norman lords.[19]

The defence of this region would have depended on strong fortification, and in 1187 the Pipe Rolls refer to two castles *'Castelli de Ewias et Novi Castelli'* upon which £37

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[14] George Nash, Project Director, University of Bristol, http://www.lhi.org.uk/docs/fvpi_weobley_survey.rtf.
[15] Weobley, Herefordshire – History to the Fifteenth Century', Archenfield Archaeology, http://www.archenfield.com/Weobley%202.htm.
[16] P Remfry, *Longtown Castle 1048-1241,* (1997), p. 1.
[17] R Shoesmith, *Castles and Moated Sites of Herefordshire,* (1996) p. 13.
[18] John Morris, *Doomsday Book,* (1983), p. 10.
[19] Nicky Smith and David Field, 'Longtown, Herefordshire, A Medieval Castle and Borough', Archaeological Investigation Report, Series AI/26/2003, http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/Longtown_Hereford.pdf

PLATE I

Woebley motte and bailey.

http://castlewales.com/weobly1.jpg

was spent. These castles are thought to have been Pont Hendre motte and bailey and Longtown respectively.[20] Longtown consists of a motte c. 10.7 m high, inside a rectangular earthen enclosure that may been constructed during the Roman occupation of Britain (Plate II) – although this motte would have originally been crowned by a timber tower, this was replaced by a round keep in the 13th century, when Walter's great, great grandson, another Walter, had possession of the castle.[21]

It seems that the de Lacys successfully imposed not only castles but government along this dangerous border region. In fact the area gradually became known (and is still to this day) as Ewyas[22] Lacy (Appendix 22)[23].

As noted above, Roger de Lacy had possession of both Ewyas Lacey and Weobley from 1085: however, during the late 11th century he rebelled against the king on more than one occasion, resulting in his exile, and his estates were conferred upon his younger brother, Hugh.[24] These estates included Weobley and Ewyas, and Hugh ruled them until his death in 1115.[25]

With Hugh's death, the male line of the de Lacy family ended, for his only brother was a churchman who became Abbot of Gloucester, and after his death, there remained only two sisters, neither of whom inherited, as Hugh's lands escheated to the crown. Only one had a son, Gilbert, who assumed the name of De Lacy (Appendix 20)[26].

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[20] B Coplestone-Crow, 'Herefordshire Place Names', Archaeological Report 214, (1989).
[21] Lise Hull and Jeffrey Thomas, 'Longtown Castle', http://www.castlewales.com/longtown.html
[22] Although both translate as 'sheep district' both 'ewias' and 'ewyas' are used to refer to this area.
[23] See Appendices, p. xli.
[24] P Remfry, *Longtown Castle 1048-1241,* (1997), p. 5.
[25] C. P. Bomford's, "The Bomford Family and Allied Families", http://www.comp.utas.edu.au/users/rsmith/bomford3/bomford3.html
[26] See Appendices, p. xxxix.

The de Lacys in Ireland and their encastellation of their lands there

It was Gilbert's son Hugh who accompanied King Henry II on his expedition to Ireland in 1171-72. Because by that time Hugh, as a de Lacy, was one of the largest land-holders in Herefordshire,[27] the question arises as to why he needed or wanted to undertake the dangerous conquest of a foreign land. As stated above, a large part of the de Lacy landholdings was along the border or marcher region of Wales. Davies argues that there was no actual marcher aristocracy, and the attention of the Norman lords who held lands in Wales could be diverted if quicker or greater gains could be made elsewhere.[28] Although the de Lacys continued to show a sustained interest in Wales, as their main estates lay on its borders, the fact remained that 'Wales was not a land of easy opportunities or great rewards: such gains as could be made were won and retained only by continuing military effort and constant vigilance'.[29]

Giraldus Cambrensis stated in the 'Expugnatio Hibernica', 'the augmentation of a family fortune...was the primary motivation of the warriors who streamed to Ireland'.[30] This argument can obviously be applied to Hugh de Lacy.

The organising of the 'kingdom of Meath'[31] was one of the notable achievements of the Normans and this success was mainly due to the determination and ambition of

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[27] Seán Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages,* (1997), p. 83.
[28] R R Davies, *The Age of Conquest, Wales, 1063-1415,* (1987), pp. 84-85.
[29] Ibid, p. 85.
[30] A B Scott, F X Martin, *The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis,* (1978), p. 49.
[31] Called Mide by the native Irish, meaning 'middle place'.

PLATE II

Longtown motte with its cylindrical keep.

Hugh de Lacy.[32] Although Hugh was not a Geraldine,[33] he, amongst all the Anglo-Normans described by Giraldus in the 'Expugnatio Hibernica', was the one best equipped for the job at hand i.e. the gradually supplementation of the native Irish clan system by harnessing contemporary structures in England.[34] This included the swift encastellation of the region, a regular system of knight's fees and settling the area with his vassals and fellow knights (including the Plunketts, the Nugents, and the Daltons etc), while at the same time attracting the native Irish back into the region to till the land and herd the castle.[35]

In the medieval period, the area which constituted the kingdom of Meath included the modern counties of Meath and Westmeath, as well as parts of Longford and Offaly. Meath also separated the kingdoms of Leinster and Bréifne[36] in north east Connacht (Appendix 23).[37] This obviously meant that Meath was in a vital geographical position which Henry II was quick to realise. In order to counterbalance both Strongbow's growing power in Leinster and Rory O'Connor's claim to the High Kingship of Ireland from his base in Connacht, he deliberately granted Meath to Hugh de Lacy in 1172. Henry issued a charter which, for the service of fifty knights, granted Hugh the whole kingdom of Mide 'as Murchada Ua

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[32] T W Moody, F X Martin (eds), *The Course of Irish History,* (1967), p. 135.
[33] The Geraldines were descendants of Gerald de Windsor and Nest, daughter of the last native prince of Dyfed, and included the Fitzgerald's, de Barris, Carews and others who, described by Giraldus Cambrensis as "My People", were related by ties of marriage and kinship.
[34] Brendan Smith, 'Tenure and Locality in North Leinster in the Early Thirteenth Century' in *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland – Essays presented to J F Lydon,* T B Barry, Robin Frame and Katherine Simms (eds), (1995), pp. 29-40.
[35] T W Moody, F X Martin (eds), *The Course of Irish History,* (1967), p. 135.
[36] The Kingdom of Bréifne at one time encompassed parts of counties Cavan, Leitrim, Fermanagh, Sligo and Roscommon. Originally ruled by the Uí Briain Bréifne it was their descendants, the O'Rourkes (Ó Ruairc), who would be eclipsed by the expansion of the de Lacy's into their territory. However, by the late 13th century they had staged a recovery, although they would have to face ongoing challenges by the O'Reillys for control of the area
[37] See Appendices, p. xlii.

Máel Sechlainn[38] had held it.'[39] Hugh de Lacy had arrived in Ireland in 1171 with King Henry II and thus was not a member of the MacMurchada-Strongbow alliance but rather a loyal supporter of the king. This loyalty would soon be called into question – as Giraldus put it when describing Hugh 'he was avaricious and greedy for gold, and more ambitious for his own advancement and pre-eminence than was proper'.[40] Despite this description of a selfishly ambitious man, Henry II deliberately granted Hugh de Lacy the kingdom of Meath to thwart the expansionism of Strongbow and his faith in Hugh is further demonstrated by the fact that he made him the Justiciar of Ireland, as well as bailiff of the city of Dublin, which Henry retained as a royal demesne. The charter bestowed by Henry ensured him complete jurisdiction of all pleas including arson, rape, treasure-trove and forestalling and allowed him to appoint both a chancellor and a treasurer and use of all the appropriate seals of office.[41] In many ways the charter allowed de Lacy to create a palatine lordship[42] and he quickly began subinfeudating his new acquisition, dividing it out among those who had followed him to Ireland.[43] Several of his followers were granted fiefs that in fact amounted to entire baronies, and these were then further subdivided into manors.[44] One of the stipulations of these land grants was the defence of Meath from attack by the native Irish and to achieve this, his

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[38] Ua Máel Sechlainn had died as King of Meath in 1153 – by 1172 there were four claimants to the kingship including Domnall Bregnach Ua Máel Sechlainn and his brother, Art Ua Máel Sechlainn, who were recognised as the king of eastern and western Meath respectively; Strongbow, who was Diarmait MacMurchada's designated heir (MacMurchada had been acknowledged as king Of Meath and Leinster before his death in 1171; and finally, Tigernán Ó Ruairc, who even Giraldus Cambrensis referred to as the King of Meath in the Expugnatio Hibernica. Faced with so many claimants, Henry II came up with the ingenious solution of drawing the borders of Meath as they had been on Ua Máel Sechlainn's death in 1153, thus dismissing the claims of both Strongbow and the native Irish and installing de Lacy as overlord.

[39] James Mill and M J McEnery (eds), *Calendar of the Gormanston Register,* (1916), pp. 6, 177.

[40] A B Scott, F X Martin, *The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis,* (1978), p. 193.

[41] Herbert Wood (ed), 'The Muniments of Edward de Mortimer, third Earl of March, concerning his liberty of Trim' in *PRIA,* 40C17 (May 1932), pp. 312-313.

[42] Essentially refers to an independent lord - the lord of a palatine would exercise sovereign powers over his lands

[43] Seán Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages,* (1997), pp. 86-87.

[44] Ibid, p. 83.

tenants, in conjunction with Hugh, began a process of the encastellation of the area.[45]

In his recent book on Trim, Potterton argues that Hugh's method for establishing control in Meath and subinfeudating his lordship was achieved primarily by 'the systematic construction of a network of fortifications. The method of subinfeudation is illustrative of the amalgam of change and continuity.'[46] An example of this would be when Hugh replaced a local native king by one of his own Anglo-Norman knights, such as when he granted Deece to Hugh Hussy, which MacGilla Schachlin had held.[47] Thus he was confirming a pre-defined land unit, while at the same time replacing the overlordship of this unit.

As soon as the Anglo-Normans had gained military control of the area and thus the subinfeudation of the surrounding countryside, the next step was the conversion of the military outpost into manageable agricultural units, usually administered in the form of a manor: an inducement to settlement involved the establishment of boroughs[48] throughout Meath, which were given the elements of an urban constitution – as Duffy argues 'dividing Meath up into burgage[49] plots, held by burgesses on favourable terms and with their own court, borough status and the

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[45] Ibid, p. 83.
[46] Michael Potterton, *Medieval Trim, History and Archaeology,* (2005), p. 71.
[47] Walter Harris, *Works of Sir James Ware Concerning Ireland,* (1762), p. 193.
[48] In England, boroughs had developed as a method of providing a corporate identity for a town, particularly in relation to rights obtained from local barons or from the English Crown
[49] In both England and Scotland, a burgage or burgage plot amounted to a tenure under which property of the king or a lord in a town was held in return for a yearly rent or the rendering of a service.

tenurial advantage it brought, must have encouraged many to make a new home for themselves in Ireland'.[50]

The castle that will forever be associated with Hugh de Lacy is Trim Castle. O'Keeffe argues 'Trim can be regarded as being of the same architectural rank as the finest castles elsewhere...it is the most extensive castle in Ireland by some distance.'[51] This does not mean that there are no comparable castles within Ireland. Roscommon Castle (Plate III) covers an area of c.40m x 50m, with a D-shaped tower in each corner and a double-towered gatehouse along the east wall.[52]

Trim castle would go on to become the administrative centre of the kingdom of Meath and its construction must have begun almost as soon as Henry II made his grant to Hugh - the earliest reference to Trim Castle comes courtesy of *The Song of Dermot and the Earl* which stated that 'Hugh de Lacy fortified a *meisun* at Trim and threw a *fosse* around it and then enclosed it with a *hireson*'.[53] For many years it was believed that the mound on which the keep at Trim was constructed had originally been a motte. However, following P D Sweetman's excavations in 1971-4, he found that this was caused by a defensive stone plinth that had been added to the base of the keep in the 13th century. Barry argues that the above description of Trim from 'The Song of Dermot' indicated that it had the major elements of a ringwork castle as opposed to a motte.[54]

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[50] Seán Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages,* (1997), pp. 83-84.
[51] Tadhg O'Keefe, *Medieval Ireland, Archaeology,* (2001), p. 32.
[52] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in a Gaelic World,* (2000), p. 97.
[53] G H Orpen (ed), *The Song of Dermot and the Earl,* (1892), lines 3222-3341.
[54] Ibid, p. 48.

PLATE III

Roscommon Castle

http://k41.pbase.com/g4/43/664443/2/60746946.RoscommonCastleReflection.jpg

As well as the keep and curtain walls, other buildings within the castle grounds include a magnificent barbican gate (which served as the Dublin gate), a square gatehouse on the town side of the castle (known as Trim Gate), a mid-13th century great hall and a mint (Plate IV).

However, it is the stone keep at Trim that remains one of the most impressive Anglo-Norman constructions in Ireland (Plate V). It is built on top of a gently sloping hill, almost at the centre of a bawn and within the enclosure of the earlier ringwork – it consists of a most unusual plan and as Potterton states 'the keep at Trim and its design and construction must be viewed as unique'.[55] The keep has twenty different wall faces and twelve corners: its cruciform shape has been described by Stalley as more an exercise in geometry than a purely defensive undertaking.[56] Hugh de Lacy may, in fact, have been more concerned with complex Christian symbolism and display than with defensibility and it could be argued that this is confirmed by the presence of a chapel directly over the entrance to the keep.[57] However, whether de Lacy used Trim to demonstrate his spirituality, or not, the fact remains that Trim's main functions were threefold: firstly, as a caput of an ambitious lord and an extensive lordship: secondly, as a fortified market town and thirdly as a administrative centre of a virtually independent kingdom.

Of course Hugh de Lacy's encastellation and subinfeudation of Meath was not meekly accepted by the native Irish, and in fact almost immediately resulted in

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[55] Michael Potterton, *Medieval Trim, History and Archaeology,* (2005), pp. 235-237.
[56] Roger Stalley, *The Anglo-Norman keep at Trim: its architectural implications,* (1992), pp. 16-19.
[57] Tadhg O'Keeffe, *Medieval Ireland, Archaeology,* (2001), p. 37.

widespread rebellion throughout the kingdom. Rory O'Connor led an invasion in 1174 and was joined by some of the principle men of Ireland at that time including the kings of Bréifne, Airgialla and Ulaid and the kings of the Cenél nEoghan and Cenél Conaill – they quickly realised the Anglo-Normans dependence on their fortresses and destroyed the castles at both Trim and Duleek.[58]

Hugh and his followers merely responded by strengthening their fortifications. In fact, by the time Strongbow died in 1176, Hugh, as Lord of Meath, had become the most powerful baron in Ireland. We have already seen that Henry II was highly attuned to any perceived threat to his kingship in Ireland and his suspicions were further raised when c. 1180 Hugh de Lacy took for his second wife, the daughter of Rory O'Connor, the king of Connacht. While there is absolutely no proof that Hugh entered this marriage hoping to inherit Connacht, never mind the whole kingship of Ireland, that did not prevent gossip to that effect, which soon reached the king's ears.[59] Giraldus states that 'there were more and more rumours of Hugh's suspected disloyalty'[60] and by the time he married Rory's daughter, Henry II had enough and removed him as Justiciar. However, the suspicions did not go away and as a result the king's son, John was sent to Ireland in 1185 to take control of the situation. He reported to Henry that 'Hugh de Lacy...prevented the Irish kings from sending him (John) either tribute or hostages'.[61] Events would soon occur which put paid to any of the ambitions of Hugh de Lacy. In 1186 he was killed by a single blow from a battle-axe of a youth named Gilla O'Meyey, while supervising the construction of

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[58] Seán Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages,* (1997), p. 87.
[59] Ibid, p. 94.
[60] A B Scott, F X Martin, *The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis,* (1978), p. 195.
[61] John O'Donovan (ed), *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by The Four Masters,* Volume III, (1856), p. 69.

PLATE IV

'Trim-Gate' sited on the town-side of the castle.

PLATE V

The stone keep at Trim

Durrow castle, within the precincts of an old Columban monastery, near the borders of Westmeath.[62] It is also said that when Henry was told of Hugh's death, he rejoiced.[63]

Hugh de Lacy I was one of the most important and influential of the Anglo-Norman invaders; as Orpen puts it, he was 'gradually to supplant the antiquated clan system by an organisation more fitted to preserve peace and promote progress'.[64] He encastellated his land with castles and manors, in much the same manner as John de Courcy in the last decades of the twelfth century. He made a reality of his new acquisition by parcelling out his lordship to adherents of his own[65] and by the time of his death, the lordship of Meath, from the Shannon to the sea, 'was full of foreigners'.[66] He was an entrepreneur in the sense that his castle-building scheme attracted prospective tenants and was evidence of a tenant's market where magnates competed for the service of those lower down the pecking order and in fact Hugh acquired a number of his tenants in Meath by 'head-hunting' them from Leinster during the minority following the death of Strongbow in 1176.[67] But he also encouraged the native Irish to remain on the land, and through his marriage to Rory O'Connor's daughter he attempted to forge peaceful relations with the most important Gaelic Irish king in Ireland. The marriage of his niece to Meiler Fitz Henry could also be seen as an attempt to gain the support of one of his most important and influential Anglo-Norman contemporaries. His legacy was a number

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[62] Goddard Henry Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans, 1169-1216,* (1911), p. 68.
[63] Ibid, p. 68.
[64] Ibid, p. 69.
[65] Seán Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages,* (1997), p. 83.
[66] William M Hennessy, (ed), *The Annals of Loch Cé,* Volume I, (1871), p. 173.
[67] Brendan Smith, 'Tenure and Locality in North Leinster in the early Thirteenth Century', in *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland – Essays presented to J F Lydon,* T B Barry, Robin Frame and Katherine Simms (eds), (1995), p. 30.

of castles, which remain to this day, including the great motte at Mill Mount in Drogheda and the magnificent Trim Castle, arguably the most magnificent Anglo-Norman castle in Ireland.

The fortunes of the de Lacys in Ireland did not end with the death of Hugh de Lacy, the First Lord of Meath. In fact two of his sons, Walter and Hugh de Lacy II, would play an equally important role in the early decades of the settlement of Ireland. While Walter, as Hugh I's eldest son, was heir to Meath, it may have been withheld from him until as late as 1194, although he was granted the family estates in Normandy by 1189 and Herefordshire in 1191.[68] One of the reasons for this was that Hugh's sons were minors at his the time of his death and thus, until they came of age, Meath had to be governed by his officials.

Although Walter would have a difficult relationship with King John, he would in fact be a source of stability to the crown: among his achievements he gave Drogheda town a charter in 1194, he advanced the building of various castles, including Trim and he consolidated the settlement of Meath.[69] When Walter was eventually granted the charter of Meath by Richard I in 1194, it followed the same conditions that had been laid out in Henry's grant to Hugh, which included an assurance to of all liberties and free customs and in 1195, John, Lord of Ireland, reconfirmed this grant.[70]

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[68] Michael Potterton, *Medieval Trim, History and Archaeology,* (2005), p. 73.
[69] S J Connolly (ed), *The Oxford Companion to Irish History,* (1999), p. 294.
[70] James Mill and M J McEnery (eds), *Calendar of the Gormanston Register,* (1916), pp. 6-7, 177-8.

However, it was soon after this that Walter would first incur the enmity of John, who would be crowned king of England in 1199. He forfeited his land in late 1195, when he joined with John de Courcy in an attempt to conquer Munster and Leinster, and was fined 3,100 marks as a result.[71] Walter's estates were gradually restored to him and by 1208, King John confirmed the grant of Meath to him, although he kept for himself the four pleas of the crown i.e. arson, forestalling, rape and treasure-trove, thus forever limiting the authority Walter had inherited from his father.[72]

Walter married Margery, the daughter of William de Braose[73] and in time he would join with his brother Hugh in the destruction of John de Courcy. His fortunes would decline as a result of John's visit to Ireland in 1210, and the subsequent forfeiture of his lands. However by 1213, his English lands were returned to him, as were his lands in Ireland by 1215.

Frame argued that Walter de Lacy was both an Irish and an English Baron and a prominent marcher lord, as well as being a significant Norman landholder, a royal castellan, who intermittently attended court and indeed, he pointed out that the balance shifted throughout his career.[74] Walter was responsible for the construction of a number of castles in Ireland: he constructed the motte and bailey at Kilmore (an area close to the village of Crossdoney and Cavan town itself) in 1211 as part of a chain to control and contain the north.

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[71] Michael Potterton, *Medieval Trim, History and Archaeology,* (2005), p. 73.
[72] Ibid, p. 74.
[73] William de Braose was a powerful land magnate in Wales, England and Normandy who brought the kingdom of Limerick (also known as Thomond) from King John for 5,000 marks. His failure to pay resulted in the confiscation of his lands, his exile to France and the death of his family.
[74] Michael Potterton, *Medieval Trim, History and Archaeology,* (2005), p. 157.

Hugh de Lacy II, son of Hugh and brother of Walter, was the man responsible for the construction of King John's castle at Carlingford, County Louth and Greencastle, County Down (Plate VI). What was particularly fascinating about Hugh II was that as the younger son of Hugh de Lacy, he had virtually no land of his own but what he lacked in wealth, he made up for in ambition and determination. As Duffy argued, Hugh's conquest of Ulster is in fact a clash of generations: Hugh II was only a child when John de Courcy conquered Ulster and in his heyday he was a man with whom no Irish king could compete – yet he was defeated by the Anglo-Normans of Meath, led by Hugh de Lacy II.[75] John de Courcy represented the first generation of Anglo-Norman invaders, whose opposition mainly involved the native Irish. Hugh de Lacy represented a second generation of invaders and one of the first of this generation to lead the jostling taking place between the descendants of the original conquerors, as they came to realise their targets for expansion need not be petty Irish kingdoms but those belong to ageing barons like de Courcy.[76]

Before Hugh de Lacy II attempted to unseat de Courcy, he consolidated his power through an extremely important marriage to Lescelina de Verdon, the daughter of Bertram de Verdon, the foremost landholder in Louth and founder of the town of Dundalk. The marriage settlement, between Hugh de Lacy II and Thomas de Verdon, brother of Lescelina, was as follows: 'Agreement made between Thomas de Verdon and Hugh de Lacy – Thomas has given to Hugh de Lacy with Leselina de Verdon, his sister, in frank marriage, the moiety of his land of Ireland in Eirgall... Thomas has given to Hugh two and a half knight's fees in a suitable place,

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[75] Seán Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages,* (1997), p. 115.
[76] Ibid p. 115.

PLATE VI

King John's Castle, Carlingford.

in exchange for a like number retained to grantor and his heirs around the castle of Dundalc...whatever grantor and grantee can conquer in the land of war, in their parts of the land of Ergall, they will equally divide all between them... Thomas, Hugh and W de Lascy, his brother, have sworn, and they and friends on each side have pledged their faith, to observe this agreement faithfully.'[77]

The importance of the above agreement was that it meant that Hugh obtained Leselina's half of the de Verdon land in Louth, providing him with a base from which to launch his assault on Ulster, which he successfully completed in 1204. Leask argues that the construction of King John's castle by Hugh de Lacy was begun sometime between 1195 and 1210, the date of King John's arrival at Carlingford.[78] Thus it can be stated with some certainty that this castle was built as part of Hugh II's campaign against de Courcy, and then maintained and fortified as part of his subinfeudation and control of the local area.

As a result of his conquest of Ulster and his defeat of John de Courcy, Hugh de Lacy II was granted all the land of Meath, to hold of the king for the same fee as John de Courcy held on the day Hugh defeated him.[79] However, Hugh's time in King John's favour was short-lived: he forfeited his grant of Ulster during the royal expedition to Ireland in 1210 due to his alliance with William de Braose. It is interesting to note that it was during this expedition, which had clearly been organised to bring the de Lacys and their supporters under control, that King John visited Carlingford Castle,

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[77] J Mills and M J McEnery, *Calendar of the Gormanstown Register'*, (1916), p. 144.
[78] Harold Leask, *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses,* (1973), p. 61.
[79] Seán Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages,* (1997), pp. 77-78.

which had been constructed by Hugh sometime after 1195. The next chapter will argue that the building of castle at Carlingford was attributed to King John when in fact he only occupied the castle as part of his campaign against the castle's actual builder, Hugh de Lacy II. During his 1210 expedition, the king drove the de Lacys out of Ulster, and although by 1215 negotiations began for the restoration of Meath to Walter de Lacy, Hugh remained out of favour.[80]

By the winter of 1223-24, Hugh was back in Ireland, and war broke out as he provoked disturbances in Meath (where he had land and support among his brother's men) in his attempt to regain Ulster.[81] King John eventually had enough and sent William Marshall II to act as Justiciar and, with the backing of Walter, who had to render Ludlow Castle to the king as surety, Hugh's supporters were worsted at both Trim and Carrickfergus and he himself was forced to accept restoration solely on the king's terms. He did not receive the Earldom of Ulster again until 1227.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the de Lacy family came to Ireland with hopes of increasing the family fortune: they succeeded beyond their wildest expectations when Hugh I became the Earl of Meath, one of the most important kingdoms in Ireland. Hugh was the first de Lacy in Ireland who understood the importance of encastellation and the use of strong fortresses to control his territory. His caput in Meath remains the oldest and most impressive Anglo-Norman castle in Ireland and various features

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[80] Ibid, pp. 81-86.
[81] Robin Frame, *Ireland and Britain, 1170-1450,* (1998), p. 158.

from this fortress would be incorporated into castles constructed by his grandson during his conquest and consolidation of Ulster. Hugh's son Walter also built many castles in Meath and Leinster but it was Hugh de Lacy II who played a more important role within the next chapter, which focused on the castles he built to protect the Earldom of Ulster. He was a particularly interesting member of the de Lacy dynasty as he held no British property. The family's lands in England and Wales would have gone directly to Walter, as Hugh de Lacy I's eldest son; yet he was a leading figure in Ireland and would have been very close to the centre of affairs within this country, as a member of one of its leading families. It was Hugh's generation who began to realise that the native Irish had been stripped of all the decent land and it was now that we see the Anglo-Norman barons turn on each other in the search for new territory. It was as part of this search that Hugh de Lacy II turned his attention to Ulster: his fight for this Earldom would have played a part in his decision to build a castle at Carlingford. His wish to retain and secure this earldom after it had been restored to him in 1227, led him to build a second castle, just across Carlingford Louth at Greencastle. These two castles were built to secure the seaward route into the Earldom of Ulster.

Chapter 7

King John's Castle, Carlingford, Greencastle, County Down and Skenfrith Castle, Wales

Although the medieval castles known as King John's, Carlingford and Greencastle were constructed in two different counties, together they served one principal purpose: guarding the entrance to Carlingford Lough and in turn, to the Earldom of Ulster. There was another factor which connects both castles: they were both built by Hugh de Lacy II, Earl of Ulster. Finally, they both also incorporate certain similar archaeological features. However, as this chapter sets out to show, the differences between them are also numerous and striking. Furthermore, while we shall analyse the similarities between King John's Castle and certain elements at Trim Castle in Meath (also built by the de Lacy family), we shall also compare the defensive layout of Greencastle with Skenfrith Castle in Gwent, in order to determine how much influence the latter had on the construction of Greencastle.

King John's castle stands in the village of Carlingford, about 22.5 km north of Dundalk. The ordering of the building of this castle had long been attributed to King John on the occasion of his visit to the area in 1210. While is true that John is credited with the building of a castle at almost every place he visited, it is more probable that the western portion of the castle predated the King's visit [1] and was probably commissioned by Hugh de Lacy in the late 12th century. On entering the village from the south, one is immediately struck by the excellent strategic position of King John's castle, which is even more striking because it is set in such in such dramatic natural surroundings (Plate I). This Norman fortress is one of earliest known

[1] Harold G Leask, *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses,* (1973), p. 61.

'keepless' castles that occupied a rocky site and it stands on the verge of a small cliff overlooking the bay, between the hills and the seashore of Carlingford Lough, in a strong and commanding position.[2]

Greencastle was built by Hugh de Lacy II in c. 1240 to protect the southern approaches to the Earldom of Ulster, particularly the ferry that crossed from Greencastle to King John's castle, which provided an essential link to his lordship of Carlingford (Plate II). It is situated four miles south west from Kilkeel, an important fishing port, in County Down. It was escheated to the Crown after Hugh's death in 1242 and it appears to have been approaching completion by 1261, when payments are recorded for roofing shingles and lead.[3] While King John's castle is one of the earliest castles designed without a keep, Greencastle is completely dominated by a large 'hall-keep'[4] which was built within a four-sided enclosure with corner towers, much of which is now reduced to ground level.[5]

A comparative study of King John's Castle and Greencastle

Hugh de Lacy had come into possession of land in county Louth through his marriage to a member of the most prominent family in that county. The *Gormanstown Register* tells us that in 1195, Hugh de Lacy, the future Earl of Ulster, married Lescelina, daughter of Bertram de Verdun and received her half of the de Verdun lands in County Louth.[6] When de Verdun died in 1192, it was de Lacy who is credited with

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[2] Harold G Leask, *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses,* (1973), p. 61.
[3] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 211.
[4] For a long period of time the dominant building at Greencastle was regarded as a keep but has since been identified as a hall.
[5] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in the Gaelic World,* (1997), p. 88.
[6] James Mills and M S McEnery (eds), *The Gormanstown Register,* (1916), pp. 192-193.

PLATE I
King John's Castle at Carlingford.

PLATE II
Greencastle, County Down.

the construction of what was to become known as King John's Castle, between 1195 and 1210 – the year of King John's arrival at Carlingford. The castle is constructed of roughly coursed limestone blocks and greywacke.[7] It is built on a rocky outcrop, dominating a sheltered natural harbour to the east, while at the same time being protected to the west by the Slieve Foy Mountain (Plate III).

The castle would have strongly depended on its position on a steep rock outcrop as a natural defence. The east side of the castle commanded clear views of both the Irish Sea and Carlingford Lough, with both the southern and northern approaches to the castle also clearly visible. The eastern portion of the castle is considerably later than the west and is probably dated to c. 1262 (Appendix 24)[8]: this is based on a record in a pipe roll which states that a payment was made for quarrying and transport of stone to Carlingford and Greencastle.'[9]

The castle has a "D" shaped courtyard facing southwest with the remains of an entrance gate immediately north of the modern western entrance. [10] A large high wall running from north to south divides the building into two nearly equal parts (Plate IV).[11]

When Waterman excavated Greencastle in 1951, he gave this excellent description of its siting: 'The medieval fortress of Greencastle, sited on a low outcrop of rock close to the Co. Down shore of Carlingford Lough, is a prominent landmark in the coastal

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[7] This is impure sandstone consisting of rock fragments and grains of quartz and feldspar in a matrix of clay-sized particles.
[8] See Appendices, p. xliii.
[9] O Davis and D B Quinn, *The Irish Pipe Roll of 14 John,* (1941), p. 65.
[10] G Clarke and H O'Sullivan, *Dundalk and North Louth,* (1997), p. 14.
[11] Harold G Leask, *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses,* (1973), p. 61.

plain south of the Mourne Mountains, the grey bulk of its great keep conspicuous both from the hinterland and from the sea'.[12] This gives us a clear picture of the excellent strategic position of Greencastle, visible from both land and sea and guarding (along with King John's castle) the entrance to Carlingford Lough. Greencastle is also one of the only early Norman castles (apart from Trim) with a rectangular keep within a ward, to have benefited from any large scale excavation, which was begun by Waterman and Collins in 1951, continued by Warhurst in 1968-69 and then Lynn in 1970-71, and in 2001 a site adjacent to the castle was excavated by the Heritage Service of Northern Ireland in advance of a residential development.

The site of the castle covers approximately four acres and the irregular quadrilateral shape of the castle and the layout of the ward (Appendix 25)[13], must have been determined by the choice of a steeply-scarped ridge for the site of the south-east angle tower, which we shall examine in more detail below.[14]

Greencastle has been the cause of controversy due to it having originally been identified as a 'keep' within a large four-sided enclosure: Jope refers to it as such when he states that 'The keep is mainly a work of the mid 13th century'.[15] However, McNeill argues against the idea that Greencastle was a keep: '...the statement that the central block is (a keep)...In fact it is a first-floor great hall'.[16] Both O'Keeffe and Sweetman agree that the structure at Greencastle is in fact a large hall-keep (Plate V).

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[12] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1951), p. 87.
[13] See Appendices, p. xliv.
[14] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down*, (1966), p. 211.
[15] Ibid, p. 215.
[16] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in the Gaelic World,* (1997), p. 91.

PLATE III
Slieve Foy mountain at the west side of King John's castle.

PLATE IV
Western view of King John's castle with high wall from north to south dividing the castle.

PLATE V

Hall-keep at Greencastle.

As stated above, the irregular D-shaped plan at Carlingford is divided by a massive wall. This wall, which dates to sometime in the second half of the 13th century, includes a base batter at its west end which is 3.3 metres thick at its base – the fact that this wall blocks off various opes in both the north and south wall, confirms it as a later addition.[17]

This massive wall, which would form part of the great hall constructed sometime in the late thirteenth century, split the castle into almost two equal parts – Leask argues that the western portion predates King John's visit in 1210, while the eastern portion dates to around 1260.[18] The courtyard is found in the western, and thus earlier portion of the castle, and is polygonal in shape. We can infer that all the buildings (including private chambers, kitchens, hall etc) constructed when the castle was first built pre-1210, must have been built from wood as there are no internal stone structures within the curtain wall.[19] When the cross-wall was built across the middle of the existing castle, sometime c.1260, it formed the west wall of a new range of apartments – these were built over two storeys and consisted of a great hall at first floor level, constructed over a basement.[20] The hall measures 25 metres by 15 metres, and with walls approximately 2.8 metres thick.[21] There are the remains of 3 embrasures in the east of the hall at ground-floor level and the centre embrasure has window seats. [22]There are also the remains (albeit in very poor condition) of a further 2 opes at first-floor level in the eastern wall.[23] Sweetman and Buckley argue that the hall must have

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[17] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), pp. 320-322.
[18] Harold G Leask, *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses,* (1973), p. 61.
[19] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), pp. 71-72.
[20] Christine Casey and Alistair Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland and North Leinster,* (1993), p. 175.
[21] Mike Salter, *Castles and Strong houses of Ireland,* (1993), p. 50.
[22] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 322.
[23] Ibid, p. 322.

been constructed of wood and confirm that it joined with the cross-wall, which contains a spiral stairwell in the north east angle, leading to a mural passage in the first-floor level of the hall.[24] It is also interesting to note that this hall provides us with another similarity between King John's Castle and Greencastle. At Greencastle, the hall was also at first floor level and would originally have been constructed of wood.[25]

Like King John's castle, the keep-hall at Greencastle was constructed in the mid-13th century. The original building was rectangular, two storeys high, measuring 23.3 metres by 13.3 metres internally, with walls 2 metres in thickness.[26] It was built of rubble with ashlar[27] quoins and dressings with shallow pilaster buttresses at the angles and, like King John's Castle, a battered base.[28] Its entrance would have been at first floor level, near the west end of the south wall.[29] Diagonally opposite angle vaults would have been added over the ground floor to replace the original wooden floor at first floor level, while wide stairs were inserted from the ground to the first floor at the west gable end.[30] Opposite the south wall entrance there is a second entrance in the north wall, which may also be attributed to the 13th century hall-keep: Jope informs us that the opening is narrow, less than a metre wide and included a rebate for a door. [31] This entry would probably have been accessed by means of a bridge with a 13th century building standing between the hall-keep and the north wall (Jope stated

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[24] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 322.
[25] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 76.
[26] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, (1951), p. 96.
[27] Squared blocks of smooth stone neatly trimmed to shape.
[28] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, (1951), p. 96.
[29] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down*, (1966), p. 215.
[30] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 76.
[31] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down*, (1966), p. 215.

that if this building is later than the keep, the bridge would have connected to the curtain wall itself).[32]

The north curtain wall was excavated by Waterman in 1951; it remains standing to a height of 1.5 metres and was built of rubble in hard yellow-white lime mortar (Plate VI). [33] Waterman argued that the keep and curtain wall (including flanking towers) must all be viewed as a part of a single design because excavations showed clearly that the deposits within the ward had accumulated after the keep and north curtain wall had been established on virgin ground, with no sign of any disturbance pointing to a later insertion of the foundation of either structure.[34]

At King John's castle there is evidence for the remains of at least four towers: a tower projecting to the west, which probably was part of a gate-passage, a projecting tower in the south-west angle, another tower at the north, and a fourth projecting tower on the south-east side of the castle, overlooking Carlingford Lough. Sweetman also informs us that recent cleaning and conservation work below the level of the modern platform on the east side of the curtain wall, overlooking the sea, revealed garderobe chutes at the base of its north wall, thus allowing us to infer the existence of another tower.[35] In fact, the strategic position of this area of the castle, facing east over Carlingford Lough, towards the Irish Sea, would make it an ideal location for a projecting tower.

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[32] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down*, (1966), p. 215.
[33] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1951), p. 97.
[34] Ibid, p. 97.
[35] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 49.

The tower at the west side comprises the remains of a rectangular gate-tower, which must have had a centrally pierced narrow entranceway approximately 1.7 metres wide.[36] Unfortunately, only part of the west and the north wall of this tower have survived, although behind a modern wall there are the remains of a rear wall, which probably defined the gate passage – McNeill argues that because of these limited remains it is impossible to definitively state whether we should look at this structure as a single tower, pierced by a gate passage or a true double-towered gate-house.[37] However, Sweetman states that the foundation levels of this structure point to a rectangular, twin-towered centrally pierced gateway, which dates to the early 13th century.[38] What we can tell, from the remaining north[39] gate-house tower, is that it contained the remains of a stairwell in its northeast angle and provides evidence of a barrel vault at its west end, over the ground floor level - the entrance to this tower was gained through a doorway in its east wall.[40] Presumably, these features would have also been mirrored in the south gate-house tower.

Continuing north from the gate-tower, the curtain wall is built in short lengths, allowing for a very sharp bend – here we find two levels of loops in the surviving walling with 2 at the first floor level and 4 at the courtyard level.[41] It is also along this north wall, that we find the stubs of two walls on the outside, pointing to the existence of a tower at some stage which was reached by a first-floor door, now blocked by a later wall.[42]

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[36] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 320.
[37] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in the Gaelic World,* (1997), p. 41.
[38] David Sweetman, *The Medieval Castles of Ireland,* (1999), p. 47.
[39] I am referring to it as the north gate-house tower, thus implying there may have been a south gate-house tower. In the 'Archaeology of County Louth, Buckley and Sweetman make reference to this presumed south tower (p. 320).
[40] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 320.
[41] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in the Gaelic World,* (1997), p. 41
[42] Ibid, p. 41.

PLATE VI

The northern curtain wall at Greencastle stands to a height of 1.5m – notice the remains of the NE tower in the background.

As we turn south from the western gate-house, we come to the only complete tower, that at the south-west angle. Between the gate-house and this tower, there are a number of loops: 2 at courtyard level, 3 on the first floor and then the wall-walk. On the other side of the tower, towards the east, there is a loop at semi-basement level and then at first-floor level, under the wall-walk.[43] This projecting tower is almost square and has both an embrasure and a slit ope in each of its three existing ground-floor level walls – at first floor level it changes in plan, becoming five-sided (Plate VII).[44]

This is comparable to the west gate at Trim which was probably constructed by Hugh de Lacy I, Hugh II's father. At Trim, the gate-tower survives to a height of almost sixteen metres and is pierced centrally at ground floor level by a passage – at this level the plan of the tower is rectangular, while the first floor level is octagonal or five-sided (Plate VIII).[45] Potterton argues that the five-sided plan at the front of this gate-tower is a later addition/alteration[46] and agrees with McNeill's argument that both towers represented a form of nostalgia for early features found at the de Lacy castle of Ludlow.[47]

It is certainly true that Ludlow, a magnificent castle in Shropshire (Appendix 26)[48], is a very interesting castle due to the fact it contains various diverse archaeological features including a curtain wall which has both square and polygonal towers. [49] It

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[43] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in the Gaelic World,* (1997), p. 43.
[44] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 320.
[45] Michael Potterton, *Medieval Trim, History and Archaeology,* (2005), p. 251.
[46] Ibid, p. 251.
[47] Tom McNeill, 'The Great towers of early Irish castles' in *Anglo-Norman Studies,* xii, (1990), pp. 99-117.
[48] See Appendices, p. xlv.
[49] Plantagenet Somerset Fry, *Castles of Britain and Ireland,* (1996), pp. 160.

also includes a great hall within its enclosure, a feature of both Carlingford and Greencastle.

The south-west tower at Carlingford had its original entrance on the first floor level in the north-east angle, where there is still a narrow doorway of dressed sandstone, with a pointed arch above it and the remains of plank centring in the entrance passage.[50] In the south-east angle the curtain wall has been destroyed but there is evidence of an original projecting tower, mainly because of an outward splay of the remaining southern extremity of the tower.[51]

While King John's castle consists of towers built as part of a D-shaped enclosure, the towers at Greencastle are built within a curtain wall measuring 56.6 metres from east to west and 43.3 metres from north to south, with walls of random rubble masonry over 5 ft thick, on all sides but the east.[52] This four-sided enclosure had four towers in each of its corners. Both the north-east and north-west angle-towers were D-shaped in plan. The standing remains of the north-east tower include a very narrow latrine chamber built within the south-east wall of the tower, which was thickened to allow for it and entered from inside the tower through a low opening, with a pointed head and lighted from above by a narrow loop.[53] There is another latrine chamber on the floor above, and both of the latrines discharged into a ditch through openings at the external ground level.[54] The excavations in 1951 showed that the north-east tower was

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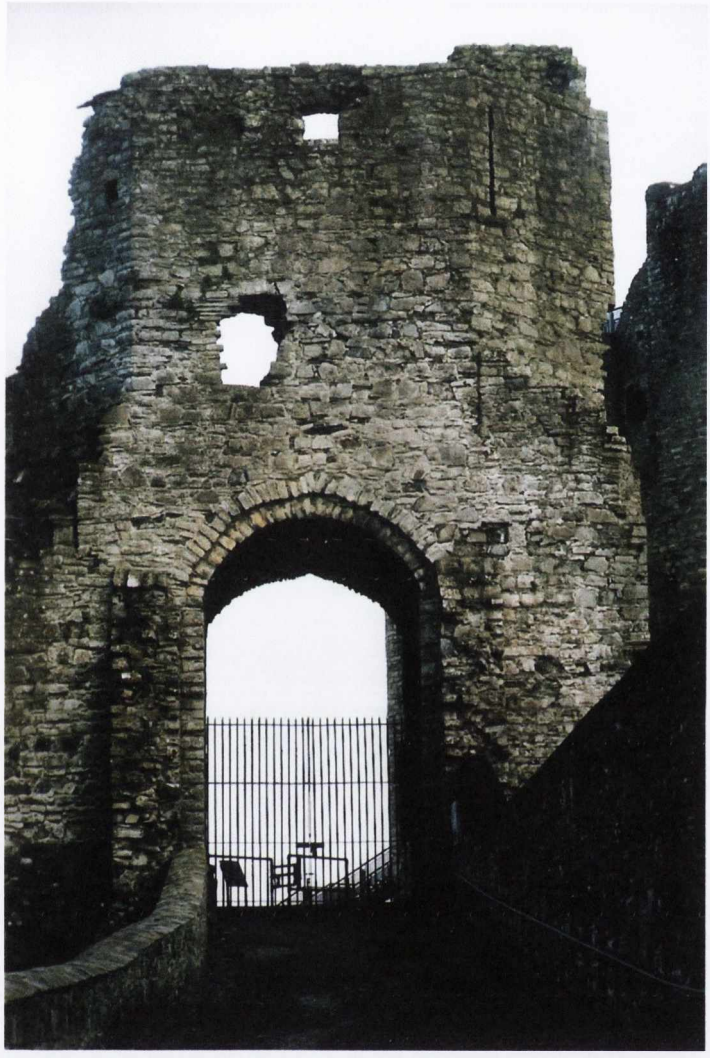
[50] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 320.
[51] Ibid, p. 323.
[52] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 213.
[53] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1951), p. 92.
[54] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 213.

PLATE VII

South-west tower at Carlingford which changes in plan at first floor level to five-sided.

PLATE VIII

West gate-tower at Trim.



built in the form of a horse-shoe and was about 9.3 metres wide.[55] Its wall was built from rubble faced masonry, about 2 metres in thickness – there was an obtuse angle between the tower and the north curtain wall and this filled in by a masonry base of a small projection, which Waterman argues is clearly the base of a garderobe chute, serving a latrine within the tower.[56] The north-east tower contained private chambers at both the ground and first floor levels and also had some sort of large building attached to it at the south, which McNeill argues may have been a great chamber.[57]

The north-west angle tower has almost disappeared and its remaining fragment was incorporated into the modern farmhouse – however what we can tell from its remains was that it was similar in plan to the north-east tower. It was entered directly from the ward by an opening with a segmental pointed head – there is a projection between the angle of the tower and the north curtain wall and this provided space for a small wall cupboard, which was lighted by a loop and also contains within its walls a shaft serving a latrine at the upper storey level.[58]

The south-east angle tower has entirely disappeared but through excavation it was possible to show that the south and east curtain wall met at a point where there is an outcrop of rock, with a steeply scarped face pointing towards both the south and east, suggesting a prepared platform for a tower at the south-east angle of the ward.[59] Although almost nothing remains of this tower, Waterman argues that in order for it to have fitted into the space available, it must have been fairly small and probably

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[55] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1951), p. 92.
[56] Ibid, p. 92.
[57] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in the Gaelic World,* (1997), p. 91.
[58] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 213.
[59] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1951), p. 93.

polygonal in plan.[60] Again, this fits in with the theory that Greencastle may in part have been designed with the de Lacy's castle at Ludlow in mind.

Finally, the south-west angle tower is an enigmatic structure, possible D-shaped in plan. Like the north-west tower, the curtain walls at the south and west meet at an obtuse angle and besides this angle, on the south curtain, is an opening containing pointed arches, both inside and out, from which there would have been stairs within the curtain wall, leading onto a wall walk (Plate IX).[61] This opening would also have led into the ground floor of the tower, which consisted of three floors: the first floor and second floors are indicated by beam holes.[62] While at ground floor level there is a possible postern of which one jamb and a piece of the arched head survive, at first floor there is evidence of a loop, while on the second floor, there was a door, which, like the ground floor, survives only in the form of a jamb and a part of an arched head.[63] Because this second storey door was built in the angle formed by the meeting of the tower with the south curtain, it was probably bridged by a squinch arch.[64]

Some of the major differences between King John's Castle and Greencastle

Unlike Carlingford, the site of the entrance of the outer ward at Greencastle has not been identified. While Sweetman argued for the entrance to the hall-keep at first floor level, there are no remains in evidence to suggest the exact whereabouts of the original entrance from the outer ward. Jope argued that it was possibly never more

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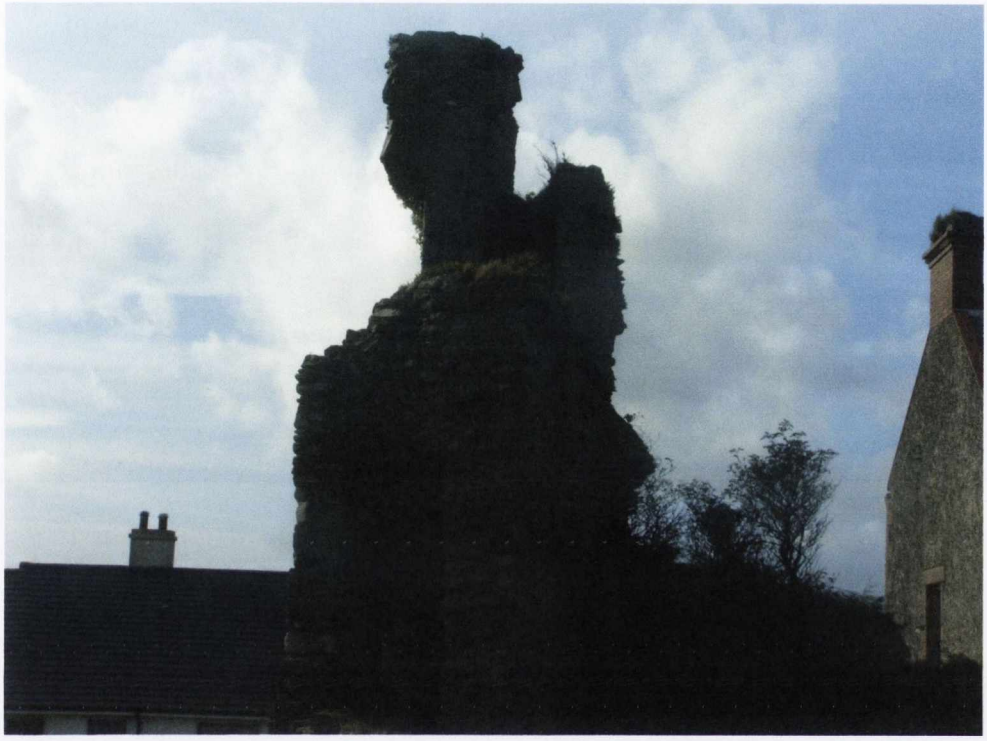
[60] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1951), p. 93.
[61] Ibid, p. 93.
[62] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* (1966), p. 213.
[63] Ibid, p. 213.
[64] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1951), p. 93.

PLATE IX

The south-west angle tower at Greencastle.



than a simple gateway and might have been anywhere on the line of the curtain but that probably had some form of flanking defence, perhaps an adjacent gatehouse. [65] If the present approach to Greencastle is actually the original approach, then there may have been a gatehouse on the line of the southern or western curtain wall (Plate X).[66]

There are also various striking differences between King John's castle at Carlingford and Greencastle. One of these is the massive north to south cross-wall at King John's, Carlingford, which has no comparable feature at Greencastle. While we know that a number of apartments (including private chambers and a kitchen) were constructed in the first phase of the castle construction, i.e. pre-1210, the cross-wall provided the western wall of a number of new apartments, constructed sometime c. 1260 and included the great hall. Another interesting feature at King John's castle was that the eastern side of this cross-wall contained a further division caused by the construction of an east-west wall.[67] This wall has surviving arcading at the first floor level, with two blocked doorways immediately below – the sole remaining intact octagonal pillar of the arcade is made from punch-dressed limestone.[68] The north-south wall contains a chimney breast with fire-places, including one at the first floor level, that has a large sandstone lintel standing on its edge – the fireplace in the west façade has punch dressed stones and it is because of the type of dressing on the arcade and on the fireplaces that we can presume that this area would have been built in the later medieval period.[69]

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[65] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down*, (1966), p. 215.
[66] Ibid, p. 215.
[67] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 323.
[68] Ibid, p. 323.
[69] Victor M Buckley and P David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 323.

Another difference between Greencastle and King John's castle is the presence of a rock-cut ditch at Greencastle. The castle was enclosed by a ditch, traces of which still remaining on the eastern side and excavation has proved that the ditch was 7.3 metres wide at the top, 3.3 metres wide at the bottom and 4 metres deep.[70] We owe much of our information about this ditch to C J Lynn, who excavated the eastern section of the fosse in 1970-71. The section concerned runs parallel to the line of the east curtain wall, with a massive bank sloping away to the east.[71]

Excavation of the ditch on the eastern side of the castle was completed (to the limits of the area at present in State care) and the ends of the cutting consolidated and grassed over (Plate XI). Before excavation, only slight traces of the ditch showed but now a 43m length of the rock-cut defence, 3.6-4.5m deep and 6.7m wide have been exposed and presented. As stated above, the ditch runs parallel to the line of the east curtain (now partially reconstructed to ground level) with a massive outer bank sloping away to the east.

During the course of the excavation, the edge of a feature cut vertically to a depth of c. 3 metres to the east of the ditch and sealed by the bank was revealed – Lynn argues that this should be interpreted as the inner edge of a supplementary quarry and that its partially back-filled bottom had been used for some industrial purpose.[72] The excavation also uncovered much slag and heat-reddened stones, as well as a small round-ended hammer head, a sheet of bronze with bifurcated rivets, the bottom half of

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[70] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down*, (1966), p. 213.
[71] C J Lynn, Excavation of Greencastle, http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=1971&County=Down&id=5456
[72] C J Lynn, Excavation of Greencastle, http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=1971&County=Down&id=5456

PLATE X

Greencastle with the modern approach visible to the right.

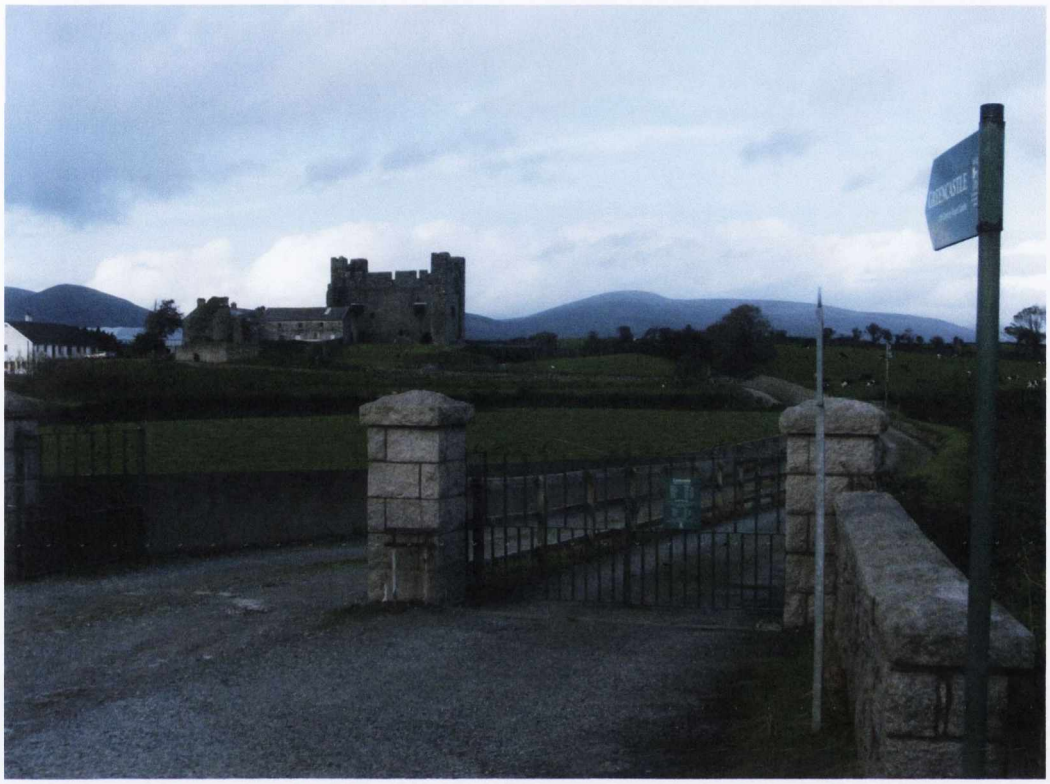

PLATE XI

Eastern section of rock cut ditch at Greencastle.

a glazed jug and part of a very small hand-made pot for cooking.[73] All this material could be associated with the constructional phase of the castle.[74]

The strength of King John's castle depended more on its use of a naturally defence location than on man-made defences, such as a fosse. As stated earlier the castle was built in a very strong position, making full use of its siting on a small cliff, which dominated a naturally sheltered harbour on its eastern side. On its western side it had the protection of the Slieve Foy mountain, while both the north and south approaches to the castle would also have been visible from projecting towers strategically placed within the north and south sections of the curtain walls.

Returning to the hall contained within both castles, at King John's the hall would have been accessible at the first-floor level, as at Greencastle. However, at King John's castle, the doorway would have been contained in the north end of the cross-wall.

While there are little archaeological remains of a great hall at Carlingford, Greencastle actually provides us with a wealth of information regarding its hall-keep. While the original structure was mainly constructed in the mid 13th century, it has been reconstructed twice, probably in the late 15th or early 16th century and again in the middle of the 16th century. The 15th century rebuilding was considerable and included an entrance at the basement level (replacing the first floor level entrance), the insertion of barrel vaulted chambers in the basement with a broad stair leading to the first floor, the blocking of original openings which were replaced with new windows and loops, raising the keep to the height of a third storey and the inclusion of

[73] C J Lynn, Excavation of Greencastle, http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=1971&County=Down&id=5456
[74] Ibid.

square turrets.[75] The hall-keep also contained mural passages, covered by flat vaults on wicker centering and lighted by loops, communicating with chambers in the north-east and south-east angles.[76]

Another difference between both castles is that Greencastle has the remains of other buildings of mid or late 13th century date within its ward. These include a rectangular building to the south west of the keep, which is 15.8 metres by 5.3 metres within, with walls over a 1 meter thick and is probably a 13th century construction – the original walling is over well over 3 metres high in certain places and contains within its south wall the original window openings.[77]

Some of the major similarities between King John's Castle and Greencastle

Having detailed the main archaeological features of King John's Castle and Greencastle, it is possible to state with some authority that while there were many differences between them, as outlined above, there were also many similarities. The first and most obvious point was that they were built by the same man, Hugh de Lacy II, who intended both castles to work in conjunction with each other, guarding the entrance to the Earldom of Ulster and protecting the ferry between both castles. The ferry was a vital link between the two castles. It was still in existence in 1408 when the Dowdall Deeds stated 'The indenture, made 31 December, 10 Henry IV between Janico Dartas, Esquire, the king's constable of the Green Castle and the Castle of Carlingford... that Janico and all the men of his house should be ferried without taking

[75] E M Jope, *An Archaeological Survey of County Down*, (1966), p. 215.
[76] Ibid, p. 217.
[77] Ibid, p. 217.

any ferrage from them.'[78] These the two castles were constructed as fortresses, intended to act hand in hand with the subinfeudation of the local population and to symbolize the strength of the Anglo-Normans.

The protection of this area of north Louth and south Down was vital in order to protect Ulster. As Waterman puts it 'the strategic importance of the inland waters of Carlingford Lough must have been recognised from the first by the Anglo-Norman invaders of Ulster, and a grass-grown mound ...close to Greencastle point...and a second motte castle at Narrow-water...demonstrate the determination of the invaders to secure unimpeded communication with the sea.'[79] The motte Waterman refers to was obviously a predecessor to the stone castle and stands about 360 metres behind it – it consists of a roughly circular mound, 45 metres in diameter at the base, 15 metres in diameter at the summit and 7 metres high. There is no evidence of either a bailey or a fosse in the vicinity of this motte. Finally, both castles are the product of several building campaigns, as described above and both are good examples of plain, strong, military architecture: both also incorporate features reminiscent of Ludlow Castle in Shropshire.

While both castles look very different, with King John's castle dominating a rocky outcrop and the keep at Greencastle set several meters back from the sea, the fact that the keep at Greencastle has been identified as a hall-keep, actually leads to some similarities between the two castles. Both contained standard features of that period, including a hall at first floor level, over a basement; both had an entrance at first floor level; both would have been in part constructed from wood. Also both castles would

[78] Charles Mc Neill, A J Otway-Ruthven (eds), *Dowdall Deeds,* (1960), p. 152.
[79] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down', in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1951), p. 87.

have relied heavily on towers as part of their defences. However, the design and plan of the towers within these two castles are strikingly different. King John's castle has a D-shaped curtain wall with a rectangular gate-building (incorporating at least one tower), up to four other projecting towers and is divided by a massive north-south internal cross-wall. Greencastle is enclosed in an irregular quadrilateral area, with a tower at each angle, while private chambers and latrines are incorporated into the curtain, and the hall-keep standing isolated within its ward.

Both castles were shaped by and took advantage of their natural surroundings: King John's castle is one great walled enclosure, roughly D-shaped, as dictated by the rocky outcrop on which it was constructed – its siting was naturally defensive, allowing its residents to view anyone approaching from any side of the castle; Greencastle is also situated on a rocky outcrop; but while King John's castle was built right on the harbour, Greencastle was actually constructed some 300 metres north of Carlingford Lough. However, as stated earlier in this chapter, Greencastle developed various man-made defences, including a large rock-cut ditch. The reason for this would most likely have been that unlike King John's castle, it was built on a low outcrop, thus necessitating extra defensive measures.

One obvious difference between both castles is that a town grew up around King John's at Carlingford. Samuel Lewis stated 'The town appears to have originated in the erection of a castle...',[80] while Greencastle remains isolated, with only a tiny settlement in its vicinity. Carlingford developed into a trading and market center and continued to prosper over the centuries, but Greencastle today is a lonely and bleak

[80] Samuel Lewis, *Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of Ireland,* (1837), p. 253.

hamlet, although there are a few houses built on the shore. It is hard to know exactly why one area developed while one stagnated: after all both castles acted as defensive pillars for the Anglo-Normans in the Carlingford area: furthermore, the fortress at Greencastle became the centre of a manor with a church.[81] Perhaps it is simply down to location, with Carlingford situated on a main route into Ulster, while Greencastle is in a far more isolated area.

A comparative study between Greencastle and Skenfrith Castle in Wales

McNeill, in his book 'Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in the Gaelic World' states the following when discussing Greencastle: '...the overall plan recalls that of Skenfrith in Gwent.'[82] In order to determine the accuracy of this statement, it is necessary to first undertake a study of Skenfrith castle.

The first point that must be noted regarding Skenfrith is that it is known as one of 'The Three Castles' – Grosmont, Skenfrith and White Castle, which guarded the routes of communication between Herefordshire and Wales.[83] In the previous chapter the de Lacy family's connection with Herefordshire and Wales was detailed[84] and as Skenfrith castle was located very close to their seat at Ewias Lacy (Appendix 27)[85], the family was probably very familiar with the design and layout at Skenfrith.

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[81] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1951), p. 87.
[82] Tom McNeill, *Castles in Ireland – Feudal Power in the Gaelic World,* (1997), p. 91.
[83] Jeremy K Knight, *The Three Castles, Grosmont Castle, Skenfrith Castle, White Castle,* (2000), p. 3.
[84] See pp. 172-174.
[85] See Appendices, p. xlvi.

Although we have no definitive date for the construction of the three castles, we know they were built by William Fitz Osbern, one of the principal supporters of William the Conqueror – we have already stated that the first Walter de Lacy arrived in England with Fitz Osbern. The defences of these castles would have originally been of earth and timber, which were levelled when the later stone castles were built – at Skenfrith evidence of the early earth and timber castle was found through archaeological excavation.[86] The earliest documentary reference to the three castles is from 1162-63, when the Sheriff of Hereford rendered accounts for building work at the sites, totally £19 17*s* 4*d*.[87]

Between 1177 and 1888 Ralph Grosmont, the king's engineer, was supervising the building work at the three castle for King Henry II – it was at this time that both the palisades and bailey around the castles were strengthened – it was also during this period that a stone hall or keep would have been added to the earlier defences, and in fact excavation has found a solidly built stone wall of 12th century construction.[88] However, all the remains of the castle still visible today can be attributed to the work of Hubert de Burgh, who was granted the castle by Henry II's son, King John, in the early thirteenth century.[89]

During this period of time, castles were incorporating more sophisticated military architecture, including a design which was geometrical in plan (i.e. rectangular,

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[86] Jeremy K Knight, *The Three Castles, Grosmont Castle, Skenfrith Castle, White Castle,* (2000), pp. 3-4.
[87] Ibid, p. 4.
[88] Jeremy K Knight, *The Three Castles, Grosmont Castle, Skenfrith Castle, White Castle,* (2000), p. 5.
[89] Hubert de Burgh (1165-1243) was the Earl of Kent, Justiciar of England and Ireland and chamberlain to King John: he was an extremely influential man during the reigns of both John and Henry III. His rise to power was made more impressive because of the fact that he came from minor gentry, about whom little is known – one interesting point is that he may have been the brother of William de Burgh, Governor of Limerick.

trapezoidal or polygonal), projecting circular towers and twin-towered gatehouses.[90] The castle at Skenfrith would incorporate a number of these features. It was under Hubert that an earlier stone hall or keep at Skenfrith was demolished and rebuilt (between 1219-32), using red sandstone, which could be quarried nearby.[91] One unusual feature at Skenfrith is that its towers were built over circular basements where large quantities of supplies could be stored – an efficient use of space which could be utilized during a prolonged siege.[92]

Hubert built an entirely new castle at Skenfrith which incorporated a small but compact quadrilateral enclosure with corner cylindrical towers, surrounding an isolated cylindrical tower (Appendix 28)[93] – the 13th century tower is about 10.7 metres in diameter and was three stories high, with an entrance to the first floor by timber staircase.[94] A drawing by the Buck Brothers[95] in 1732 gives us a good idea of how this castle would have looked in the medieval period. One feature lacking in this picture is any sign of a fortified or twin-towered gatehouse, probably because they were only coming into fashion when de Burgh was constructing his castles in the southern Marches.[96]

As already mentioned, the keep at Skenfrith was circular and the earth mound around its base was not, as was once presumed, the remains of an earlier motte castle but was actually heaped up around the tower as it was being built – this was probably for

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[90] Jeremy K Knight, *The Three Castles, Grosmont Castle, Skenfrith Castle, White Castle,* (2000), p. 7.
[91] Ibid, pp. 8-9.
[92] Ibid, p. 9.
[93] See Appendices xlvii.
[94] Plantagenet Somerset Fry, *Castles of Ireland and Britain,* (1996), p. 322.
[95] Samuel and Nathaniel Buck were both born in Richard, Yorkshire in the late 17th century – although details regarding Nathaniel, the younger brother, are not recorded, the Dictionary of National Biography informs us that Samuel was an engraver and topographical draughtsman, who drew and engraved 428 abbeys and castles throughout England and Wales.
[96] Jeremy K Knight, *The Three Castles, Grosmont Castle, Skenfrith Castle, White Castle,* (2000), p. 28.

defensive reasons as was the sloping batter base of the tower which measures 6.4 metres in diameter (Plate XII).[97] The keep had three floors and was crowned with a circular timber hoard, with arrow loop and traces of beam holes for this wooden galley survive.

Skenfrith has three surviving corner towers of similar design, each included a basement and two floors above, all with arrow loops covering the adjacent curtain walls – there are no fireplaces or latrines inside the towers which infers that their function was purely military and defensive (Plate XIII).[98] There entrances were located c. 2 metres above ground level and therefore must have been reached by a wooden stair.

Until the excavation of 1954, it was believed that the keep was the only building within the ward at Skenfrith to survive. This excavation revealed a range of buildings, consisting of 3 chambers which were constructed at the same time as the curtain and towers – these included domestic buildings and perhaps the castle's chapel.[99] The excavation also revealed the hall of the first castle, which had been buried in gravel from 1220 until the 1950s.[100]

Another interesting feature at Skenfrith was that a moat almost 7 metres deep once surrounded the castle. Recent archaeological work at Skenfrith showed the path of the stone-lined moat, which was found to curl around the edge of the castle, rather

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[97] Jeremy K Knight, *The Three Castles, Grosmont Castle, Skenfrith Castle, White Castle,* (2000), p. 29.
[98] Ibid,, p. 29.
[99] Ibid, p. 33.
[100] Skenfrith Castle,
http:castlewales.com/sknfrth.html

PLATE XII

Circular keep at Skenfrith

http://www.castlewales.com/skenfrith02.jpg

PLATE XIII

One of the circular towers and the part of the curtain wall at Skenfrith

http://farm1.static.flickr.com/83/270042832_c33c7c2710.jpg?v=0

than extend to the edge of the River Monnow.[101] This excavation also made a fascinating discovery just inside the river bank – a stone quay over 20 metres long, with steps at one end and a small channel for boats at the other and further down the bank a substantial wharf, over 3 metres tall, next to a stone building.[102] The excavators dated these structures, with the help of documentation, to *before* the 13th century works carried out by de Burgh.

Having detailed the main features at Skenfrith castle, we can now make a comparison with Greencastle. Both castles are of similar design i.e. quadrilateral enclosure with towers at its angles, surrounding an isolated tower within its ward. Certainly any comparison between the plan of Greencastle (Appendix 25)[103] and the plan of Skenfrith castle (Appendix 28)[104] shows plainly that the design of these castles is very alike. They curtain wall surrounding both fortresses is trapezoidal and they both have three-quarter round towers with a solid keep at its centre.

However, the major and obvious difference between these two castles is that Skenfrith's keep is circular, while Greencastle's hall-keep is rectangular. McNeill argues that there were two distinct reasons for building round great towers: 1) they were a response to the threat of undermining by attackers as the lack of corners made them stronger and 2) they were 'display castles' i.e. a social statement, celebrating the arrival of the new lord.[105] Somerset Fry argues that this theory could be applied to all

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[101] Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd, 'Recent work at Skenfrith Castle', http://www.britarch.ac.uk/cbawales/Newsletters/newsletter28/newsletter28.html Council for British Archaeology - Newsletter No. 28 Autumn 2004

[102] Ibid.

[103] See Appendices xliv.

[104] See Appendices xlvii.

[105] T E McNeill, 'Squaring circles: flooring round towers in Wales and Ireland, *in The Medieval Castle in Ireland and Wales – Essays in honour of Jeremy Knight*, (2002), p 96.

stone enclosures when he states 'The fortified stone enclosure was a fortress capable of offering resistance to attackers or intruders and of providing a satisfactory residence for a lord and his dependants on a variety of buildings assembled inside'.[106] As both southern Ulster and the southern marches in Wales were areas ripe for frequent attack by the native Irish and Welsh respectively, defence was obviously paramount in the construction of both castles. However, the round keep had become popular in Europe at the start of the 13th century, mainly because they were easier to defend as they had no awkward angles which could be destroyed by an enemy's siege weapon.[107] Why then was the hall-keep at Greencastle rectangular?: the clue is probably in its name – 'hall-keep'. When de Lacy built Greencastle, although he certainly intended it to act as a fortress, protecting his interests in the area, he also would have wanted it provide accommodation for him and his successors whenever they were in the area. Thus comfort may have been as important an element as security. For that reason, he constructed this large and spacious hall-keep – after all, the castle was already well protected by its angle-towers and thick curtain walls and he had the added security of being able to call for help from his garrison at King John's Castle.

Both Greencastle and Skenfrith also had four towers in the angles of their quadrilateral enclosures – in both cases these towers were three-quarters round in design, but while the towers at Greencastle contained private chambers and latrines and were therefore used for domestic purposes (as well as being elements of the castle's defence), at Skenfrith there are no fireplaces or latrines inside the towers which infers that their function was purely military and defensive.

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[106] Plantagenet Somerset Fry, *Castles of Ireland and Britain,* (1996), p. 32.
[107] T B Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (1999), p. 59.

Another similarity is that both castles had a moat: at Greencastle this involved a rock-cut ditch with a dam at the south-eastern angle, 4.5 meters at its deepest, while at Skenfrith the moat was stone-lined and almost 7 metres deep. While moats were considered part of a castle's defences, they also various practical purposes, including carrying waste and providing water for mills etc. As mentioned above, the moat at Skenfrith was obviously an important feature of this castle, as excavation has uncovered a stone quay and a landing channel for boats. Thus the castle could have been supplied directly from the River Monnow.

Finally, both castles lacked a fortified or twin-towered gate-house. Though both sites have been excavated, neither has produced any evidence of this type of structure and in fact the Buck Brothers drawing from the eighteenth century reveals the gate at Skenfrith to have been a large and simple round-headed arch, probably reached by a bridge or drawbridge across the moat. At Greencastle, excavations have found no trace of any gate-house – although there has been some argument that an enigmatical structure at the south-west angle represents a gate-tower, mainly because it is different in character from the angle towers elsewhere in the curtain.[108] However, there is no definite answer here and as such, it is entirely possible that the entrance to Greencastle was similar to the simple round-headed arch found at Skenfrith.

Conclusion

This chapter critically analysed the archaeological (and historical) similarities between King John's Castle at Carlingford and Greencastle. What is surprising, is

[108] D M Waterman, E P Collins, 'Excavations at Greencastle, Co Down' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* (1951), p. 97.

that these two castles which at first sight look so different, have many similarities, as detailed above. In fact, during my fieldwork, when I discussed these castles with local people in the area, found everyone believed the castles were from two vastly different time periods, built in completely contrasting styles.

As for Greencastle and Skenfrith, again and mainly because of the cylindrical tower of the latter, at first sight they look very different. But, through examining the plan of both castles and their archaeological features, this chapter argues that overall plan of Greencastle recalls that of Skenfrith.

Chapter 8

St Peter's Medieval Church, Drogheda
A comparative study with Llanthony Priory, Gwent

In the previous chapter we looked at Hugh de Lacy's impressive record of castle-building in Louth and Down, focusing on both King John's castle, Carlingford and Greencastle, Co Down and comparing them to Skenfrith Castle in Gwent. In this chapter we will again focus on Louth and Gwent, comparing St Peter's Church in Drogheda, which was founded by de Lacy towards the end of the twelfth century with the church at Llanthony Priory, Gwent, which was founded by his ancestor, Hugh de Lacy, c.1105. The point of this research is to prove it is possible to find similarities in the archaeology of medieval structures built in Louth and Down, by the main Anglo-Norman families, with similar structures built by these families, or their ancestors, in England and Wales. This study will attempt to find similarities between St Peter's Church, with its famous central tower, which is described in the church's register as being 'the highest in the world' and the church at Llanthony Priory, whose features also included a massive crossing tower. Although little remains of the medieval church of St Peter's, there are some archaeological elements and these, together with extracts from Isaac Butler's[1] journal and Robert Newcomen's[2] map of Drogheda from 1657, provides us with an idea of how this structure would have looked. At Llanthony, there are substantial ruins, which include both the round-headed

[1] Isaac Butler was a Botanist, Surgeon and an Astronomer. The journal of Isaac Butler comprises an account of his journey from Dublin, through Meath, Louth and other counties in 1744. He produced various choreographies (the mapping of a region or district) and wrote about the antiquities of each area he visited.

[2] Robert Newcomen's 1657 map of Drogheda was commissioned as part of the Down Survey and includes detailed illustrations of the town's gates, walls and towers as well as other monuments, including St Peter's Church.

Romanesque arch and the pointed Gothic arch, which allow us to conclude that Llanthony was part of the Transitional Style[3].

Medieval Drogheda

Drogheda[4] was referred to in ancient times as Tredagh, which Thomas points out also referred to the site of the ford.[5] The river to which this ford belongs to is the Boyne[6], which is c. 112 km long and rises at Carbury in County Kildare, making its way through Meath, reaching the Irish Sea at Drogheda. The river has been referred to since ancient times – in the 2nd century, the Greek geographer Ptolemy drew a map of Ireland featuring the Boyne, which he referred to as Bovinda.[7]

There was some form of settlement at Drogheda before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in the late 12th century. Corcoran argues that there is considerable evidence of human habitation around the Boyne from an early age, possibly in the first instance by the immigrant peoples who had settled at Newgrange.[8] The area around Newgrange was intermittently settled around seven thousand years ago by groups of hunter-gatherers, probably due to its access to both the river and local woods.[9]

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[3] As detailed in earlier chapters, Transitional Style refers to the period in medieval architecture before the Gothic style had been truly incorporated. Thus, the style remained Romanesque but included Gothic elements.

[4] Drogheda comes from the Gaelige words, Droichead which means bridge and Ath, which means a ford (a passable shallow place) in a river or a stream.

[5] Avril Thomas, *The walled towns of Ireland: volume 2,* (1992), p. 72.

[6] Rivers of old were held in holy reverence: the Boyne was named after the goddess Bóinn or Boann ('queen' or 'goddess').

[7] William Robert Wilde, *The beauties of the Boyne and its tributary, the Blackwater,* (1849), p. 23.

[8] Moira Corcoran, 'The Streets and Lanes of Drogheda' in *Journal of the Old Drogheda Society, No 2,* (1977), p. 22.

[9] Geraldine Stout, *Newgrange and the Bend of the Boyne,* (2002), p. 82.

While the Vikings are recorded as having been on the River Boyne, Bradley argued there is no evidence to suggest that they actually founded a permanent settlement at Drogheda.[10] What we can say with certainty is that the area only assumed major importance after the English invasion.

It consisted of two towns, one established on the northern side of the Boyne, towards Uriel, named Drogheda and one on the southern side, towards Meath, also named Drogheda[11]. It was not until the early 15th century that the two towns were united. Both these settlements were established by Anglo-Norman grantees, with the principal fortification, Millmount, located within the smaller town on the south side of the Boyne.[12] Thus the Boyne functioned as a boundary between the dioceses of Armagh and Meath. In 1172 Henry II made the grant of Meath to Hugh de Lacy, the 1st Lord of Meath.[13] De Lacy chose to establish the town of Drogheda to the south of where the Boyne reached its narrowest point and where protection was offered by the high escarpment of Millmount. D'Alton argues that Bertram de Verdon seized the northern portion of the town adjoining de Lacy's, under a similar grant of the maritime port of Louth - this assertion is added credence due to the fact that in 1210 King John allowed moieties annuities to be issued to de Lacy and de Verdon for the sites of their respective portions of the town.[14] The two towns of Drogheda would remain separate boroughs until Henry VI gave county status to the town of Drogheda in 1412.

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[10] J Bradley, 'The topography and layout of medieval Drogheda, in *Journal of the Louth Archaeological Society,* Volume 21, (1978), pp. 98-127.
[11] The Archaeological Journal, Volume LXXXVIII, p. 357.
[12] S J Connolly, (ed), *The Oxford Companion to Irish History,* (1998), p. 158.
[13] John D'Alton, *The History of Drogheda: with its Environs,* (1844), p. 44.
[14] Ibid, pp. 141-142.

Because it developed on both banks of the River Boyne, Drogheda was in essence two separate towns – however both towns were linked by some type of fortified bridge.[15] In his paper on the history of the port of Drogheda, Holohan states that the original Droichead or bridge was situated where St Mary's Bridge stands today and argues that it probably consisted of crude hurdles resting on pikes.[16] Around the turn of the 12th century, this basic structure would have been replaced by a stone bridge. In 1981 David Sweetman excavated the areas around Dyer Street[17] and Shop Street[18] in Drogheda and found evidence of a medieval quay. The structure involved an arrangement of planks with mortise holes and vertical timber posts which together formed a wharf, jetty and slipway – the latter, of which a 3.6m section was exposed, was found to be 2.45m wide and comprised a path secured by earth-fast timber planks with small posts on each side[19]. The wharf and jetty were connected to this slipway through a number of wooden posts and would have ended with a wooden walkway standing out over the water.[20] The dendrochronological analysis for the timbers excavated at the quayside provided dates of c.1204+/-9.[21]

In 1996 Murphy excavated the remains of several town houses at Dyer Street[22] and various excavations have uncovered the remains of town walls surrounding Drogheda. We know from excavations that the burgage plots at places like Dyer Street in Drogheda were defined by a series of wattle walls with a 3.4m wide metalled path and

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[15] Liam ÓBroin, *Drogheda,* (1993), p. 6.
[16] Michael Holohan, *History of the Port,* www.droghedaport.ie
[17] Obviously named because of the existence of some type of wool/cloth dying industry in this area.
[18] Formerly known as Bothe Street – Bothe is derived from the 'stalls' or 'booths' of a market.
[19] A Medieval Harbour and Quay at Dyer Street, Drogheda, www.acsltd.ie/cms/publish/article14shtml
[20] Ibid.
[21] P D Sweetman, 'Archaeological Excavations at Shop Street, Drogheda, Co Louth in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Vol 84C, No. 5, (1984), p. 173.
[22] Donald Murphy, (1996), Excavations at Shop Street/Dyer Street, Drogheda, (Excavations 1996, 76-7, 96E0160), http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=583

then lined by wattle fences.[23] In 1994 Kieran Campbell led an excavation consisting of 30 trenches within the area of the medieval walled town of Drogheda. At the Peace Bridge the town wall stands to a height of 2.8m above the present ground level – Campbell excavated a test pit on the outer or western face of the wall which revealed that it is faced to a depth of at least 3m and thus survives intact almost to its full height of over 5.5m.[24] All the above archaeological evidence points to the Anglo-Norman settlers being extremely ambitious from the very start, constructing and fortifying the new town of Drogheda, including walls over a mile and a half long (Appendix 29)[25].

Because both towns of Drogheda were constructed on sites of such strategic importance, the town received substantial murage grants – the earliest grant dates from 1234 and was granted to both towns.[26] In fact Drogheda received at least 13 grants between 1234 and 1424 – the town walls enclosed an area over 113 acres and the murage grants, which consisted of a licence to levy a toll on goods entering the town, were often used to repair these walls.[27]

The earliest charter that survives in relation to Drogheda is from 1194, when Walter de Lacy confirms to all his burgesses, living on the south of the bridge at Drogheda, the Law of Breteuil.[28] Many of the smaller towns of England, Wales and Ireland were

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[23] A Medieval Harbour and Quay at Dyer Street, Drogheda, www.acsltd.ie/cms/publish/article14shtml
[24] Kieran Campbell, 'Drogheda Town, Urban' in *Excavations 1994,* p. 63.
[25] See Appendices, p. xlviii.
[26] A Thomas, *The walled towns of Ireland,* Vol 2, (1992), p. 74.
[27] A Medieval Harbour and Quay at Dyer Street, Drogheda, www.acsltd.ie/cms/publish/article14shtml
[28] James Tait, 'Liber Burgus', in *Essays in Medieval History presented to Thomas Frederick Tout,* (1925), pp.79-98.

influenced by the customs of the obscure Norman bourg[29] of Breteuil. Ballard lists 18 boroughs in England and Ireland, including Drogheda (Meath) and Drogheda (Louth), whose customs, whether by direct grant or otherwise, were based on Breteuil.[30] A large number of privileges granted by the Norman lords in their borough charters in England, Wales and Ireland were of French origin and this was especially true of the area along the Welsh borders.[31] It is this fact which helps to explain why Walter de Lacy's grant to Drogheda was based on the Laws of Breteuil. It should be noted that this obscure set of customs were not a well-defined body of law but seemed to centre around one indubitable Bretolllian Custom, the limitation of amercement to 12*d* for all offences, with certain specified exemptions.[32]

The medieval street pattern of Drogheda has survived almost completely intact to the present day and involves a plan of 'chequered' form with four streets running parallel to the river, intersected by one main north-south route and a series of cross streets [33] (Appendix 30).[34]

The foundations of St Peter's Church, Drogheda

It is obvious from the map that St Peter's Church was constructed on the north side of Drogheda and we have argued the northern (Louth) part of town, was under the control of Bertram de Verdon. Yet we know that it was Hugh de Lacy who founded St Peter's church and gave it to the Augustinian canons of Llanthony Prima in

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[29] From the Latin 'burgus' meaning fortified place.
[30] Adolphus Ballard, 'The Laws of Breteuil', in *English Historical Review,* Vol 30, No 120, (1915), p. 640.
[31] Mary Bateson, 'Notes and Documents - The Laws of Breteuil, in *English Historical Review,* (1901), XVI, pp. 73-74.
[32] Adolphus Ballard, 'The Law of Breteuil, in *English Historical Review,* (1915), Vol 30, No. 120, pp. 646-658.
[33] John Bradley, *Drogheda, its topography and Medieval layout,* (1997), p. 16.
[34] See Appendices, p. xlix.

Monmouthshire in Wales. In order to understand how Hugh de Lacy founded a church on the northern side of the Boyne, we need to examine the chronicological order of events. Meath (and Westmeath) had been granted to Hugh de Lacy, the first Lord of Meath, in 1172 and he began to construct various motte and bailey castles throughout his new lordship. Although there is some controversy over when Bertram de Verdon received his first charter, with Orpen[35] arguing for 1185 and MacIomhair[36] claiming it must be dated to sometime between 1189-91, we know it covered much of Louth. Before his departure for Third Crusade c.1190, John had appointed Bertram Seneschal of Ireland and custodian of the castle of Drogheda. The castle referred to here is the motte at Millmount (constructed by de Lacy before his death in 1186), which was then passed to Nicholas de Verdon in 1203: 'to Nicholas de Verdun the custody of the castle of the bridge of Drogheda, as it was in the king's hand and as Nicholas's father held it'.[37] The argument here is that while, from at least 1189, the de Verdons played an important role in the new town of Drogheda, Hugh de Lacy had been in possession of Meath and the land around the Boyne for at least a decade before their arrival in Louth.

Although the first written reference to St Peter's Church was in 1206, when the Patent Roll 32 of Edward III records one 'Robert' who is named as the chaplain of Drogheda for that year,[38] the church founded by Hugh de Lacy must have been constructed some time after his grant of Meath in 1172 and before de Verdons involvement in Drogheda c.1189. Buckley and Sweetman agree, arguing that St Peter's was

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[35] H G Orpen, 'Motes and Norman Castles in County Louth' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland,* Vol 38, pp. 242.
[36] D MacIomhair, 'The Boundaries of Fir Rois', in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Vol 15, No 2, pp. 144-179.
[37] Sweetman, H, S, (ed), *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland,* (1875), Vol I, No. 185.
[38] Rev J B Leslie, *Armagh Clergy and Parishes,* (1911), p. 246.

established before 1186 by Hugh de Lacy,[39] while Casey and Rowan state it was built between 1172 and 1206.[40]

While the medieval church of St Peter's was demolished in 1748, the written accounts claim it was a monumental building. The church had at least six chapels and throughout the medieval period was a very important ecclesiastical centre due to it being used as a pro-Cathedral for the Armagh diocese over many centuries. This was because from the early 14th century Edward I decreed that no Irishman could be made Archbishop: '...it is agreed and established that no house of religion, which is situate among the English, be it exempt or not, henceforth receive any Irishmen (to their) profession, but receive Englishmen...'.[41] As a direct result of this, any Anglo-Normans appointed to the See of Armagh were unacceptable to the Gaelige dean and chapter of the Primatial city and thus resided in Anglo-Norman strongholds like Termonfeckin, Dromiskin or Drogheda.[42]

Leask describes it as the 'large parish church of St Peter's[43], while Isaac Butler[44] description gives us a sense of the size and grandeur of the original building.[45] Butler described the building as it stood in the mid-eighteenth century: 'St Peter's Church in Drogheda has been a most noble fabrick. Its cross isles, and three chancels in the large west isle divided into three isles by two ranges of pillars and ten great arches,

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[39] Victor Buckley and David P Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 249.
[40] Christine Casey & Alistair Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland, North Leinster,* (1993), p. 237.
[41] Henry Berry (ed), *Statutes, Ordinances of Ireland, John-Henry,* (1970), pp. 445-447.
[42] James Lennon, *St Peter's Drogheda, Feast of St Peter and Paul,* (1981).
[43] Harold Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings II, Gothic Architecture to AD 1400,* (1966), p. 117.
[44] Isaac Butler, Botanist, Surgeon, Astronomer, made a tour through North Dublin, Meath, Louth and other counties in 1744, detailing the natural history of these areas.
[45] J Deane, 'Extracts from Isaac Butler's Journal' in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Vol 5, No 2, (1922), pp. 93-109.

and the steeple, which was in the centre, are visible monuments of its ancient grandure…'[46]

From Butler's description we realise that the church had cross-aisles, three chancels and a west aisle divided by arches with a central steeple. In the 'Archaeological Survey of Louth', Sweetman and Buckley argue that that the church had transepts, two side chapels, with a tower at its crossing.[47] Thus we had a cruciform church with a long nave of bays, north and south aisle, a crossing tower and a chancel flanked by two large side chapels (Appendix 31)[48]. The orientation of the church would have been east-west, with the monk's choir at the east end.

As can be clearly seen above, the crossing tower would have been constructed where the transepts, chancel and nave intersected. By the 11th century, these towers were a standard feature of medieval church architecture.[49] Stalley argues that these towers not only improved the external look of the church, by 'providing a unifying focus, drawing the various parts of the building – nave, chancel and transepts – into a synthetic whole'[50], but also offered practical advantages by allowing the roof of each arm of the church to be built up against the crossing tower's walls.[51]

The main purpose of the crossing-tower was to hold a bell but in the later medieval period they also had another function. At Llanthony Priory in Monmouthshire, which

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[46] J Deane, 'Extracts from Isaac Butler's Journal' in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Vol 5, No 2, (1922), pp. 93-109.
[47] Victor Buckley and David P Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 249.
[48] See Appendices, p. l.
[49] Roger Stalley, *Early Medieval Architecture,* p. 122.
[50] Ibid, p. 123.
[51] Ibid, p. 123.

we will compare to St Peter's church in more detail below, excavation of the crossing-tower produced evidence that the tower had in fact held a clock.

As well as a crossing tower, Butler describes an 'aisle with ten great arches'.[52] This allows us to infer the nave at St Peter's contained ten bays. A nave could be defined as 'the western arm of a church, and more specifically the central axial section of that arm, used by the congregation and for sermons'.[53] A good example of a medieval cruciform church, with crossing tower, chancels and nave with bays is St Oswald's medieval parish church in Yorkshire (Plate I). This construction of this church began c. 1180 and (around the same time as St Peter's church) and has a wide crossing-tower which was added in the 13th century.[54]

The church also contains a nave with eight bays which have a number of columns, alternatively octagonal and round (Plate II). The graveyard at St Peter's is an old as the original medieval Catholic Church.[55] The bases of the walls in the graveyard allow us to interpret that the original church stood to the east of the arcading. There is a tomb in the middle of the graveyard belonging to the Earls of Drogheda and this may have been the site of the high altar of the original church (Plate III). On the north side of the present chapel there are nine pieces of cut stone and eight of these are decorated with a rosette and thus are from the late medieval period (Plates IVa, b, c).

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[52] J Deane, 'Extracts from Isaac Butler's Journal, in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Vol 5, No 2, pp. 93-109.
[53] A Glossary of the Medieval Church, http://medievalwriting.50megs.com/churchglossary/glossaryn.htm#n
[54] St Oswald's Parish Church, http://www.lealman.fsnet.co.uk/filey3a.html

[55] A Hughes, *A History of Drogheda,* (1893), p. 117.

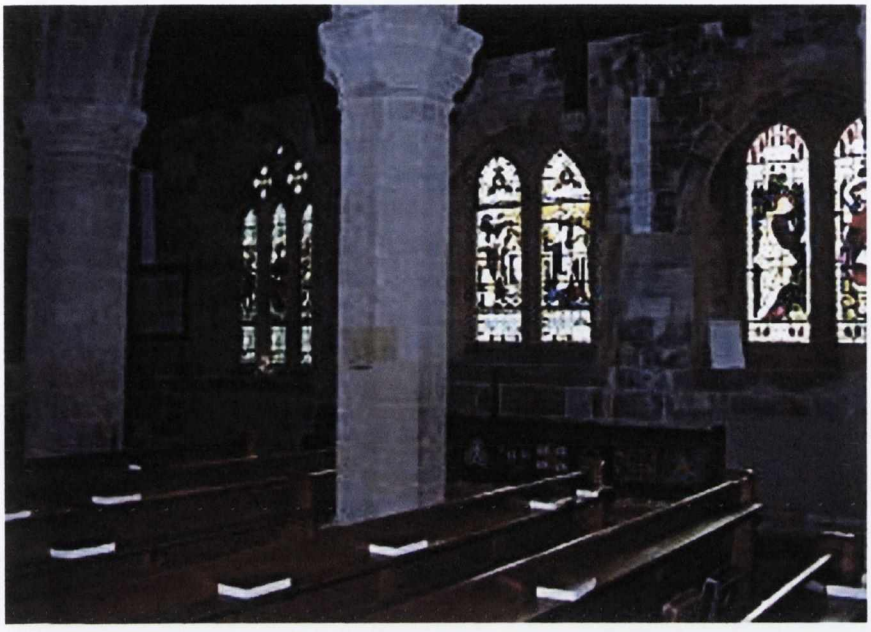
PLATE I

Crossing tower at St Oswald's Church in Yorkshire

http:/www.lealman.fsnet.co.uk/filey3a.html.

PLATE II

The bays off the nave at St Oswald's church with its alternate round and octagonal columns.



http:/www.lealman.fsnet.co.uk/filey3a.html.

PLATE III

The Tomb for the Earls of Drogheda at St Peter's church graveyard which may have been the site of the high altar of the original church.

PLATE IVa, b, c

Various pieces of cut stone at St Peter's church, most of which date to the late medieval period.

There are other fragments of cut stone in the porch of the church and one interesting piece is the broken half of the base of an octagonal column (Plate V). It measures around 15 cms high and the column would have been around 48 cms across.[56]

The stone is decorated in low relief with two four legged monsters with scaly backs, their necks are entwined and their tails end with fruits and vine leaves. The two broken sides show part of the same type of monster and on the triangular corner panels there is a lion looking back to his tail, which also has a vine-leaf. There are some parts of the design which are hard to make out and Davis in his article on old churches in County Louth also found it hard to interpret but suggest the design includes pointy fruit.[57] From the 12th century onwards, capitals were often carved with highly naturalistic foliage, including vine-leaf motifs – this was a move away from the fantastic figural ornament which had played a major role in stonework up till then.

Other stonework from the original medieval church of St Peter's includes a decorated sandstone corbel in the west wall on the north side of the nave, near the vestry door (Plate VI). It is decorated with foliage carved in low relief and Buckley and Sweetman claim it is almost certainly no later than the 13th century.[58]

One of the most impressive finds from the original church was a medallion, probably dating to the 12th or 13th century (Plate VII).[59] The medallion is made from copper, is

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[56] O Davies, 'Old Churches in County Louth', in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Vol XI, No. 1, (1945), p. 23.
[57] Ibid, pp. 21-29.
[58] Victor Buckley, David P Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 249.
[59] O Davies, 'Old Churches in County Louth', in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Vol XI, No. 1, (1945), pp. 21-29.

both enamelled and finished in gilt and it may have been part of the cover of a reliquary[60] or a book of the Gospel. There is some question over the figure on the front of the medallion. It could be a figure or Christ or one of the Apostles although the current Reverend of St Peter's Church, Michael Graham, suggests it may actually be St John, who, he argues, is often shown without a beard. The figure has one hand raised, as if in benediction, while the other hand is holding a book. It is exquisitely sketched and Leslie suggests that is probably a type of Limoges (enamelled) work.

The remains of some of the original floor tiles, as well as the handle of a kiln, have been recovered from St Peter's medieval church (Plates VIII a, b, c and Plate IX). The Normans introduced the practice of flooring churches and other important buildings with glazed ceramic tiles.[61] There were three main types of tiles produced: firstly, in the 13th century there are two-coloured tiles where the design is inlaid in white clay against a red tiled background; in the 14th and 15th century there were line-impressed tiles and finally in the late 15th and early 16th century tiles were designed by impressing a wooden stamp on wet unfired clay.[62]

The earliest known Irish medieval tiles are two-coloured tiles with a pattern, often a fleur-de-lis or animal motif, displayed on the surface of the tile – examples of this can be found at Kells Priory, County Kilkenny and Christ Church cathedral. [63] As Fanning points out large quantities of both two-coloured and line-impressed tiles from

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[60] A container for the preservation of ancient relics.
[61] Kieran Campbell, 'Some Medieval Floor Tiles from Drogheda,' in *Journal of the Old Drogheda Society, No. 5,* (1986), p. 14
[62] Thomas Fanning, 'The British Museum Catalogue of Medieval Tiles – a Review, incorporating the Irish evidence', in *North Munster Antiquarian Journal,* Vol XXIII, (1981), pp. 11-13.
[63] Ibid, p. 11.

PLATE V

The broken base of an octagonal column at St Peter's Church.

PLATE VI

Decorated sandstone corbel in the wall near the vestry door in St Peter's.

PLATE VII

The enamelled medallion, placed on a wooden display board, from St Peter's Church.

PLATE VIII a, b, c.

Line-impressed tiles uncovered at St Peter's Church.

PLATE IX

The handle of a kiln also found at St Peter's Church

Kells Priory prove that the Augustinian Canons were acquainted with this form of comfort in floor covering. [64]

A further impressive archaeological element found at St Peter's church is a medieval octagonal font (Plate X). Roe informs us that for many years this font lay neglected, lying in the sexton's yard and used as a feeding trough – the font now stands by the door of the west end of the church and Roe describes it as both 'uncommonly massive and splendidly ornamented'. [65]

The octagonal font was ripe with symbolism in the Christian church. Steffler argues that Baptismal fonts were often octagon in shape because the number eight was a spiral shape, forever in motion and thus a symbol of regeneration – the octagonal font also represented the seven days of creation and the eight day of regeneration. [66]

The font at St Peter's Church is very elaborately carved and very large. It measures .94 m across and .67 m in height, with a cylindrical base that measures .73 m across. It consists of two registers with eight vertical upper panels, wider than the lower panels but decreasing in width as they go down, ending in thick mouldings of rope which circle around the whole bowl. The upper register has six panels with carved images of the apostles and two panels showing the baptism of Jesus, as well as two angels holding a coat of arms (Plate XI). Each panel is framed by twisted vine-stem

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[64] Thomas Fanning, 'The British Museum Catalogue of Medieval Tiles – a Review, incorporating the Irish evidence', in *North Munster Antiquarian Journal,* Vol XXIII, (1981), p. 13.
[65] Helen M Roe, 'Two Decorated Fonts in Drogheda, Co Louth' in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Vol 7, 1976, p 256-257.
[66] A W Steffler, *Symbols of the Christian Faith,* p. 135.

mouldings and each is extremely detailed. For example there is St Andrew with a cross, St Paul with a sword etc.

The panels on the lower register are all formed as single niches containing angels with seven holding some form of scroll and one, which is carved directly below the baptismal of Christ, holding a long pleated robe over his arms[67] (Appendix 32).[68]

The final medieval element of St Peter's church was its many chapels or chantries. Murphy stated the following: 'The original meaning of Chantry was an endowment of one (or more) priests to sing mass for the soul of the endower, or for his intentions... over time, small chapels were added to larger churches and an income out of endowments was provided to support chaplains to serve these chapels: finally, detached buildings were erected for the same purpose'.[69] These 'side' chapels were usually constructed at the east end of the church, often within its transepts.[70] St Peter's church had at least seven chapels and they were dedicated to St Anne, St Catherine, St George, St John, St Martin, St Mary and St Patrick.[71] Unfortunately, we have very little information regarding the location of these chapels. However, there are a few written references to them: Archbishop Sweetman, when detailing a particular will, records 'he is to be buried in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary in St Peter's, Drogheda'.[72] The Register of the Mayors of Drogheda states the following for the year 1515: 'John Wyrall 2d time Mayor. He built the great window in our Ladyes

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[67] Helen M Roe, 'Two Decorated Fonts in Drogheda, Co Louth' in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Vol 7, 1930, p 257.
[68] See Appendices li.
[69] Rev L P Murray. 'The Ancient Chantries of Louth', in *Journal of the Louth Archaeological Society,* Vol IX, No 3, (1939), p. 181.
[70] John Steane, *The Archaeology of Medieval England and Wales,* (1985), pp. 68-70.
[71] Bradley points out that only four of these can be definitely assigned to the medieval date.
[72] Brendan Smith (ed), *The Register of Milo Sweetman, Archbishop of Armagh, 1361-1380,* (1996), p. 173.

PLATE X

The medieval font at St Peter's Church

PLATE XI

The upper register of the font at St Peter's with its carved panels depicting the apostles.

chappell in St Peters Church'.[73] We can interpret this as referring to a window for St Mary's chapel. Also the *Swayne Register* describes St Anne's chapel as being to the north of the chancel.

The founding of Llanthony Priory, Wales

We now briefly turn from the archaeology of St Peter's Church to study its connection to Llanthony Priory in Monmouthshire. Hugh de Lacy, who founded the church in Drogheda, gave it over to be administered by the Augustinian canons of Llanthony Prima in Monmouthshire in Wales. Between 1183 and 1186 Hugh brought Augustinian canons from England and Wales into Meath.[74] The canons had their parish rights confirmed by successive Archbishops of Armagh[75]. The order of regular Augustinian canons were granted official standing in 1059, when Pope Leo IX encouraged the formation of reformed communities of regular canons to help restore religious discipline on the Continent.[76] Many new foundations for this order were founded in Ireland after 1176, both by the Irish and the Anglo-Normans.[77]

Like many noblemen in the medieval period, Hugh de Lacy's endowment of the local church/priory was not purely for altruistic reasons. When he founded Llanthony Prima at the beginning of the 12th century he was in fact merely following the trend at this time for wealthy and influential leading Welsh families to establish their own foundations.[78] But endowments were not limited to Wales – as Davis and Moore put

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[73] Diarmuid MacIomhair, 'Two Old Drogheda Chronicles' in *Journal of the Louth Archaeological Society,* Vol XV, No. 1, (1961), p. 93.
[74] Neville Hadcock, 'The Origin of the Augustinian Order in Meath' in *Ríocht na Mídhe: Records of the Meath Archaeological and Historical Society,* Vol III, No I, (1963), p. 129.
[75] Eric St John Brooks, *The Irish Cartularies of Llanthony Prima and Secunda,* (1953), p. 151.
[76] Aubrey Gwynn, R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, Ireland,* (1988), p. 146.
[77] Ibid, p. 151.
[78] David Bates, Anne Curry, *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages,* (1994), p. 151.

it, '...one gets the impression that there was not a single lord in twelfth-century England who did not have a share in the endowment of a monastery'.[79] There were several reasons why a lord might endow a monastery: it could be to provide a position for a '2nd' son as Abbot of the monastery; it could be a form of repentance for some deed or crime; but the main reason would almost inevitably be for the saving of their soul. Although we cannot be absolutely certain of Hugh de Lacy's reasoning when founding Llanthony Prima, we do know that his affiliation and devotion to this priory was passed down through his family.

Hogan argues that one of the most significant acts of benefaction by Hugh's grand nephew (and namesake), on been granted the county of Meath in 1172, was to the monks of Llanthony Prima in Wales, when he assigned them various benefits and lands, giving them greater wealth and security.[80]

One further point regarding the addition of 'Prima' to Llanthony in Monmouthshire - owing to difficulties at Llanthony Prima its 2nd prior, Robert de Bethune, transferred the community to a site near Gloucester, donated by the Earl of Hereford in 1136, which became Llanthony Secunda.[81] Some of the canons chose to remain at the Monmouthshire foundation, which then became known as Llanthony Prima. But Llanthony Prima and Secunda had a single prior with authority over both until 1205.[82] It was their connection to Llanthony Prima that accounts for the de Lacy's family extensive grants in Meath, including the administration of St Peter's Church in Drogheda, to the Augustinian canons (Plate XII).

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[79] R H C Davis, R I Moore, Joanna Huntingdon, *A History of Medieval Europe,* (2006), p. 287.
[80] Arlene Hogan, 'The Lands of Llanthony Prima in the Lordship of Ireland, 1172-1540', (1999), p. 44.
[81] Eric St John Brooks, *The Irish Cartularies of Llanthony Prima and Secunda,* (1953), p. i.
[82] Dom David Knowles, *Heads of Religious Houses, England and Wales, 940-1216,* (1972), p. 172.

PLATE XII

The ruins at Llanthony Priory in Monmouthshire are very extensive.

Copyright © 1998 by Jeffrey L. Thomas.
www.castlewales.com/llantho.jpg

A comparative study of St Peter's Church, Drogheda and Llanthony Priory, Wales

Llanthony Priory is situated in the Vale of Ewias, up on the Black Mountains and is about eleven miles from Abergavenny – today it is accessible through a single narrow lane which runs from Llanvihangel Crucorney over Hay Bluff to Hay-on-Wye. It was one of the earliest Augustinian priories in England and Wales. The construction of the priory's church began c.1180 and like St Peter's Church, built around the same period, it was constructed in the standard cruciform plan, with a very large crossing-tower.

There are enough remains at the west end of the church (Plate XIII), even without its top story and great window, to allow us have some idea of how it would have looked originally. The simple but large arched openings on the ground floor provided the necessary weight to allow for round-headed arches, and tall lancets on the first floor.[83]

The church measures c. 76.8 m long and like St Peter's Church it had a nave with many bays.[84] The number of bays is very significant - an example of an abbey church of comparable size is that of Notre-Dame at Jumièges near Rouen in Normandy. It was constructed between 1040 and 1066 and its nave has a three storey, thin wall elevation.[85] The nave at Notre-Dame consists of 8 bays and a main arcade consisting of alternating columns and tall, compound piers, which give unto tall, groin vaulted aisle bays – the columns of the nave are only 3ft in diameter and the walls are 4ft, 8ins thick (Plate XIV).[86] By comparing the 8 bay nave of the abbey church of Notre-

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[83] Llanthony Priory, Craster Official Guide, http://castlewales.com/llantho.html

[84] At Llanthony the nave measures 172ft long, 48 ft high and 50 ft wide.

[85] Eric G Carlson, 'A note on four-storey elevations' in *Gesta,* Vol 25, No I, (1986), pp. 63-64.

[86] Eric Fernie, *The architecture of Norman England,* (2000), p. 94.

Dame and the eight bay nave at Llanthony (Plate XV), one can see the enormous size of these buildings. The nave at St Peter's consisted of 10 bays and thus must have been even larger than both these churches.

The remains also include the south and west sides of the central tower, which once measured c. 30.4 m high: there are detached portions of the transept, which measures 30.4 m x 9.4m, a choir and a presbytery, as well as slight remains of lateral chapels.[87] The transepts are in various states of decay, with the north transept more ruined than the south – opening off the transepts were the lateral or side chapels, which are now reduced to footings and which were altered sometime in the 14th century to allow for the large arch which was inserted into the south transept.[88]

The aisles within the nave were 172 ft by 48 ft high and 40ft wide.[89] The positions of the exterior walls of the church are visible on the south side of the church by extending the broken edge to the east and the drop in level to the north, while the roof-line can be clearly seen on the west wall of the crossing tower.[90]Above the arcade are the remains of a partly ruined triforium[91] – in its original form this would have consisted of paired lancet windows in round-heading openings – it would have been inside the church, above the clerestory[92] windows, allowing natural light to enter the building (Plate XVI).[93]

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[87] Kelly's Directory for Monmouthshire, 1901, CWMYOY, Llanthony, http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~familyalbum/kwmyoy.htm
[88] Llanthony Priory, Craster Official Guide, http://castlewales.com/llantho.html
[89] Ibid.
[90] Llanthony Priory, Craster Official Guide, http://castlewales.com/llantho.html
[91] A gallery of arches above the side-aisle vaulting in the nave of a church
[92] A range of windows at the top of the side walls.
[93] Llanthony Priory, Craster Official Guide, http://castlewales.com/llantho.html

PLATE XIII

West end of the church at Llanthony Priory. The great window is missing but the crossing-tower is visible in the back-ground, given a clear impression of the size of this very large church.

http:/imagecache.allposters.com

PLATE XIV

Nave at the abbey church of Notre-Dame at Jumiège, Normandy.

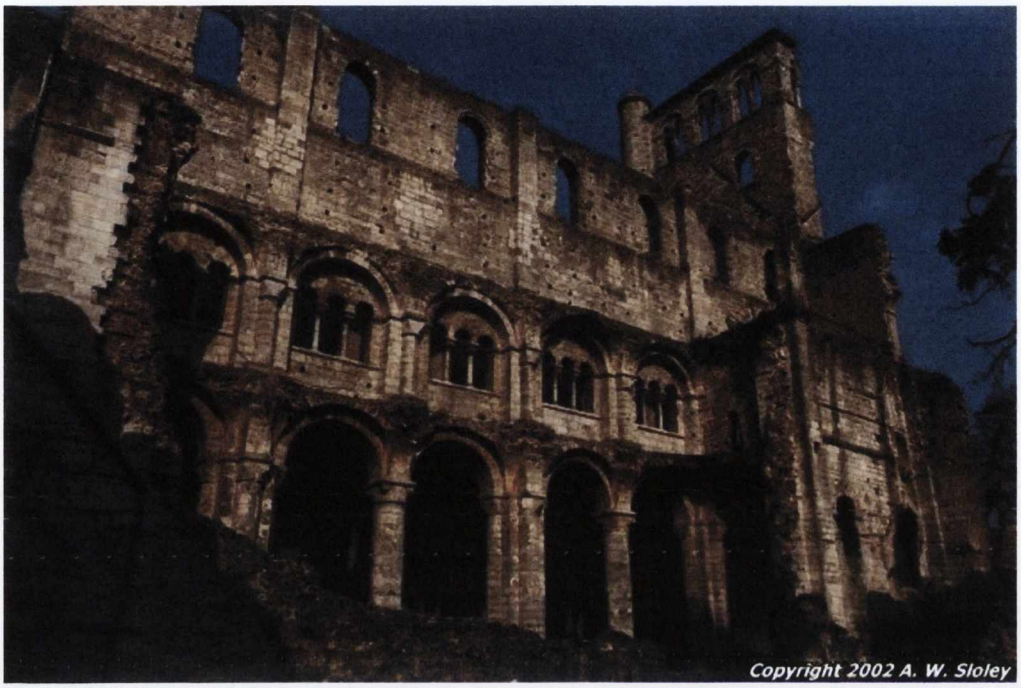
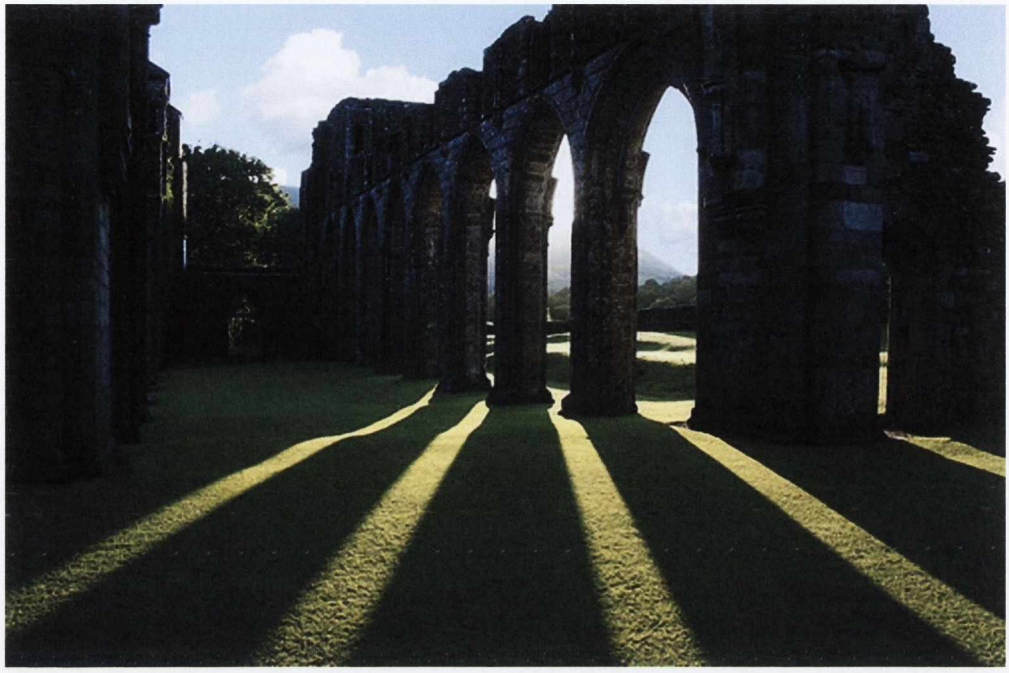


PLATE XV

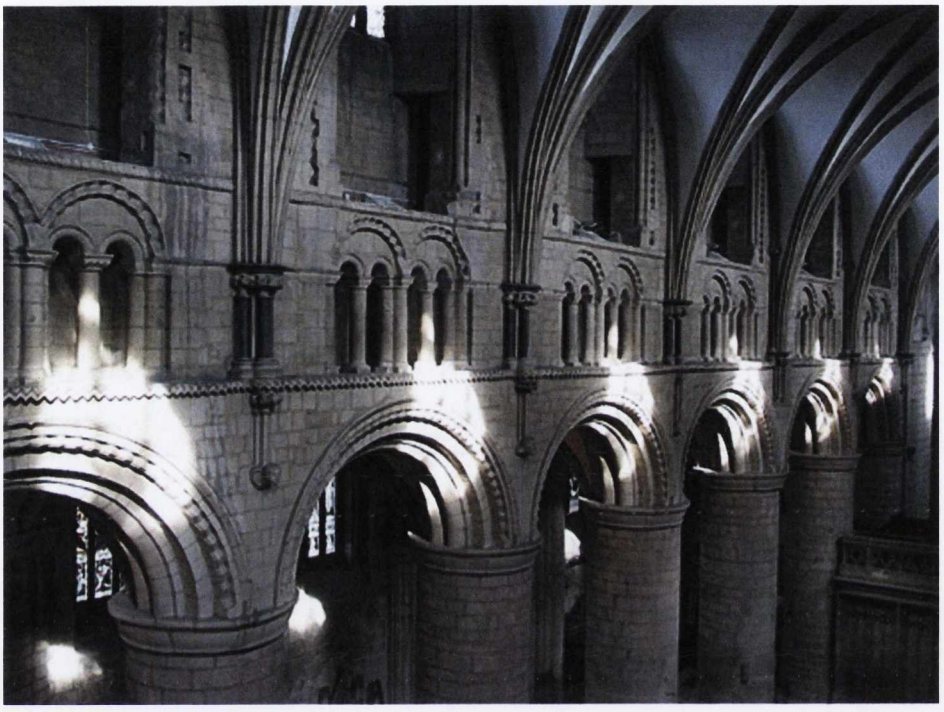
The north arcade of the nave at Llanthony Prima



http:/farm2.static.flickr.com

PLATE XVI

An example of a trioforium at Gloucester Cathedral, with paired windows in round headed openings.



It was as part of the mid-12th century 'Early Gothic' period in France and the experimentation in voiding walls and reducing the size of internal supports that led to the development of the triforium - the addition of this extra story increased the internal height of a church dramatically. [94] If the church at St Peter's was in fact part of the Transitional style of architecture it may have included early Gothic elements, such as a triforium.

The south and west sides of the crossing-tower survive and like St Peter's, would have had more than one level (Plate XVII). The windows are round-headed and would have lit a passage in the wall and there was a doorway on the west-side which would have lead into the roof-space of the nave.[95]

Although the crossing-tower at Llanthony could be compared to that of St Peter's Church at Drogheda, due to its size and position, one startling difference is that the crossing-tower at Llanthony actually held some sort of primitive clock – it would not have had dials, but would merely have struck the hour.[96]

The first clocks were made in England sometime in the later years of the 13th century. In the account books of Bealieu Cistercian Abbey in Hampshire, for the years 1269-70, there is mention of an itinerant horologiarius and there are records of a clock made by the Augustinian Canons at Dunstable Priory in 1283.[97] There are further accounts

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[94] Gothic Art and Architecture, http://encarta.msn.com/text_761562615__1/Gothic_Art_and_Architecture.html

[95] Llanthony Priory, Craster Official Guide, http://castlewales.com/llantho.html

[96] Ibid.

[97] York Archaeological Trust, New Discoveries, 'The seal of a horologiarius'

of clocks at other English churches in the following years including at Exeter Cathedral in 1284, Norwich Cathedral c.1290, and Ely Abbey, 1292.[98]

At Salisbury Cathedral in Wiltshire there is the oldest known working clock in Britain and perhaps the world (Plate XVIII). It dates from at least 1386 and was originally situated in a bell tower, which was demolished in the late 18th century and rebuilt in 1956.

As is clearly shown above, clocks in the medieval period usually worked by a falling weight attached to a cord around a drum. They were very often a status symbol and in the case of Llanthony Prima, the presence of the clock, together with the size and archaeological detail of the remains there, prove that de Lacys must have been very generous patrons.

Conclusion

This chapter has put together a picture of how St Peter's medieval church, founded by Hugh de Lacy in the late 12th century, would have looked. We know from Butler's description that it was a cruciform church with a long nave of bays, north and south aisle, a crossing tower and a chancel flanked by two large side chapels. We have looked at the various medieval remains including cut-stone work, a decorated corbel, a medallion, line-impressed tiles, and an octagon font. We know it also consisted of a number of chapels or chantries. We have then made a comparison with the abbey church of Llanthony Priory. It also consisted of a cruciform church, with a large

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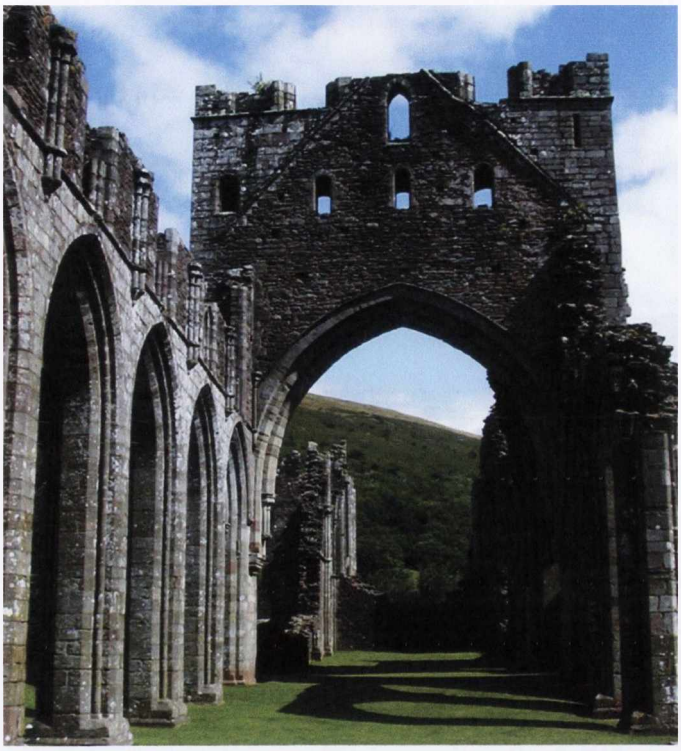
http://www.iadb.co.uk/about/news.htm
[98] Ibid.

PLATE XVII

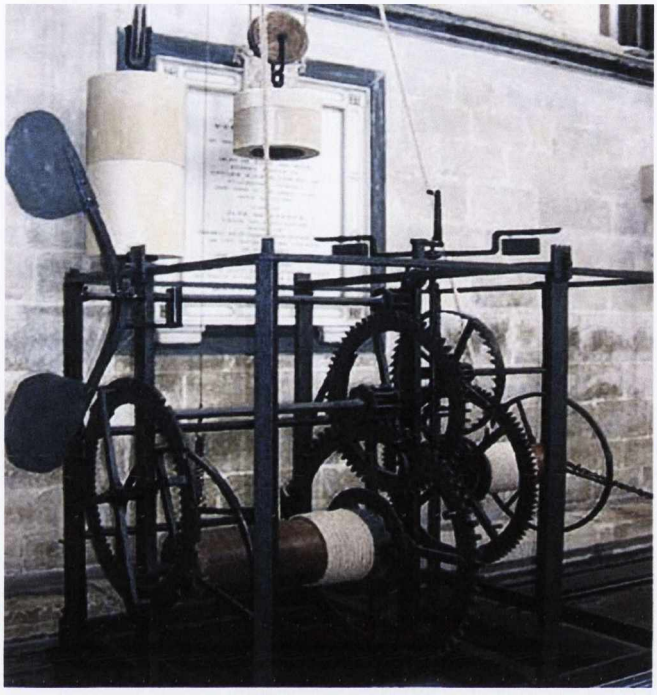
A view of the crossing-tower at Llanthony Priory.



www.pbase.com/mapguy/image/65985970

PLATE XVIII

The medieval clock from Salisbury Cathedral



14th-century clock

Copyright: Moira Allen, 'Salisbury: Designed to In-Spire'
www.timetravel-britain.com/.../salisbury.shtml

crossing-tower and a long nave of bays. Like St Peter's church, the church at Llanthony had a number of side chapels, but little remains of these chantries so it is impossible to discuss them in any detail. There are differences: the tower at Llanthony contained a clock. And while the original medieval church of St Peter's was totally demolished in 1748, we have a number of impressive archaeological artefacts listed above. Llanthony, although a very impressive ruin, has few medieval artefacts to boast of. Graham, in his short article on Llanthony, argues that the priory 'was stripped of its treasures after 1137, most of them being transferred to Gloucester'. Despite this fact, this chapter has attempted to show that there are more similarities than differences between these two churches built by the de Lacy family, certainly in relation to their major archaeological features. And thanks to the substantial ruins at Llanthony, it allows us to interpret that the medieval church of St Peter's must have been an extremely large and impressive edifice.

Chapter 9

The 'Red Earl' of Ulster and The Dominican Priory of Carlingford

There were many Anglo-Norman lords who left behind an impressive archaeological legacy in County Louth and County Down – in previous chapters we studied men like Hugh de Lacy and John de Courcy, both of whom oversaw the building of structures that remain on the landscape to the present day. Now we shall turn our attention to another Anglo-Norman lord who would dominate the Irish political scene in the late 13th and early 14th century, and whose contribution to Louth's medieval archaeology included the Dominican Priory at Carlingford. Richard de Burgh[1] III, Lord of Connaught and Earl of Ulster founded this priory in 1305 – this chapter will analyse the archaeological features of this monument, as well as attempting to understand why de Burgh built it in Carlingford and granted it to the Dominican Order. We will conclude by conducting a brief comparative study between the priory at Carlingford and that at Lorrha, Tipperary, founded by Richard's father, Walter de Burgh, in 1269. This will require an analysis of the following points: the de Burgh family, their English pedigree, their arrival and development in Ireland; a biography of Richard de Burgh III and his association with County Louth; the Dominicans – their beginnings and their architectural style; the archaeology of the Dominican Prior of Carlingford.

De Burgh family background

The name de Burgh is synonymous with the colonisation of the west and the north of Ireland, specifically the Lordship of Connaught and the Earldom of Ulster (Appendix

[1] The name De Burgh has many variants including de Burgo, Burke, Bourke, Burk, Bourk etc.

33).[2] As early as 1185, on his first visit to Ireland, Prince John became aware of the need to protect the vital march between the north of Waterford and the southern part of what is now Co Tipperary, in order to 'reduce Leinster's vulnerability of attack from Munster'.[3] Thus, in much the same way he bestowed extensive endowments to men like Bertram de Verdon and Gilbert Pipard in Louth, he granted vast estates in Southern County Tipperary to his trusted vassals, among them William de Burgh (d.1205).[4]

William de Burgh was a brother of Hubert de Burgh (d.1243), the first Earl of Kent, the Justiciar of England between 1215 and 1232 and practically the ruler of England during the minority of Henry III. Burke's 'Extinct Peerages from the British Empire' claims that the de Burghs descended from John de Burgh, Earl of Comyn and Baron of Tonsburgh and that his descendant, Robert de Burgh, Earl of Mortain (c1031-1090), was a half-brother to William the Conqueror, through his mother Arletta.[5]

This source also informs us that Robert de Burgh was succeeded by his son William, Earl of Cornwall, who had his Earldom transferred to Stephen de Blois as a result of his rebelling against Henry II.[6] But these facts add little to our knowledge of the Irish branch of the de Burgh family, who would go on to become one of the most influential families in Ireland throughout the 13th century. Regardless of such illustrious ancestors as William the Conqueror, by the time we reach the late 12th to early 13th century, little is known of the de Burgh family. What information we have

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[2] See Appendices, lii.
[3] Sean Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages'*, (1997), pp. 98-99.
[4] Ibid, pp. 98-99.
[5] Bernard Burke. *A Genealogical History of the Dormant, Abeyant, Forfeited, and Extinct Peerages of the British Empire*, (1883), pp. 88-90.
[6] Ibid, pp. 88-90.

about this family and their holdings in England, can be gained through our knowledge of Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent (1165-1243).

Johnson, in his article on *The Lands of Hubert de Burgh* argues that Hubert was probably of small landowner stock and that this is most likely the reason why he and his brother's pedigree is obscure as it was they themselves who brought the family to prominence in the thirteenth century.[7] Hubert would rise from comparative obscurity to become the highest official in the service of the crown but his main importance in Irish history 'lies in the fact that he assiduously promoted the interests of his nephew, Richard de Burgh I, Justiciar of Ireland, 1228-32, whose conquest of Ulster was launched during Hubert's rule'.[8]

It was Richard's father, William de Burgh, who first brought the family to prominence in Connacht. In 1192, William allied himself to Domnall Mór Ua Briain (Donal O'Brien), king of Thomond[9], by marrying his daughter, Anne, with whom he had a son, Richard de Burgh I in 1201 (see Appendix 34)[10].

Despite vigorous campaigning, William failed to secure his grant in Connacht and thus it was left to his son Richard (d.1243) to realise it. Richard was assisted in his conquest of Connacht by the fact that after the accession of Henry III in 1216, his

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[7] S H F Johnson, 'The Lands of Hubert de Burgh', in *The English Historical Review, Vol 50, no. 199,* (1935), pp. 418-432

[8] S J Connolly, *Oxford Companion to Irish History,* (1998), p. 63.

[9] The region of Ireland associated with the name Thomond includes County Limerick, north County Tipperary and east County Clare, effectively most of north Munster.

[10] See Appendices, p. liii.

uncle Hubert de Burgh was dominant at court and seized any opportunity to throw his weight behind his nephew's advances in Ireland.[11]

William's premature death in 1205 had left Richard a four year-old orphan and it may be presumed that his wealthy uncle, despite having sons of his own, subsequently raised his nephew at one of his many castles in England. We know Richard returned to Ireland sometime in his early teens, as by the age of fourteen he was already one of the principal barons there.[12] In May 1227, Richard obtained a fresh royal charter confirming his title to Connacht and this charter set the 'general pattern of political history of the west of Ireland for a century to come. Richard received the bulk of Connacht at a rent of 300 marks for the first five years and 500 marks thereafter.'[13]

Richard had three sons: Richard II, who died in 1248; Walter, who married Avelina the daughter of John Fitz Geoffrey and would go on to father Richard de Burgh III, the Red Earl of Ulster, and finally, William Óg (see Appendix 34).[14] Walter de Burgh would become the most important baron in Ireland in the mid-thirteenth century. He was already Lord of Connacht when he was granted the Earldom of Ulster in 1263.[15] Ulster was the only earldom in Ireland at this time and had remained vacant since 1242, on the death of Hugh de Lacy. De Lacy had left an only daughter and heir, Maud, who was married to Walter de Burgh and it was in her right that he was created Earl of Ulster[16] (Appendix 34).[17]

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[11] Robin Frame, *Colonial Ireland 1169-1369*, (1981), p. 40
[12] S J Connolly (ed), *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, (1998), p. 63
[13] Ibid, p. 40
[14] See Appendices, p. liii.
[15] Sean Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages*, (1997), p. 126.
[16] Ulster Journal of Archaeology, Volume I, (1833), p. 41.
[17] See Appendices, p. liii.

Walter de Burgh died in 1271 and was succeeded by his son, Richard de Burgh III, the 'Red Earl' of Ulster. It is Richard who is the main focus of this paper, as it was the 'Red Earl' who founded the Dominican Priory in Carlingford. However, before we turn our attention to the Dominicans, it is necessary to note some details regarding this remarkable figure.

On his death in 1325, the '*Annals of Connacht*' record the following: 'Richard Burke, the Red Earl of Ulster and Connacht, and the best of all the Galls of Ireland, died this year...'[18] This was a fitting obituary for the Anglo-Norman lord who would dominate the Irish political landscape for more than forty years and as Otway-Ruthven argued 'it is clear that considerable advances in Norman colonisation were made in his time'.[19] By the time de Burgh succeeded his father as Lord of Connacht and Earl of Ulster, there was a change in the dynamics regarding the continuing colonisation of Ireland. Rather than new invaders arriving from England, the conquest involved an internal migration by the descendants of the original conquerors and this was especially obvious in the west of Ireland where the role of 'provincial king' was taken up by Richard de Burgh in Connacht and Ulster.[20]

Richard did not actually come to Ireland until 1286, and immediately found himself embroiled in disturbances throughout Connacht as a result of the death of Maurice fitz Maurice, his principal tenant there. Fitz Maurice had died leaving only daughters to succeed him and it was obviously imperative for Richard to be involved in this succession. The annals inform us that in 1288 'the Red Earl – that is Richard, son of

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[18] Martin Freeman (ed), *The Annals of Connacht,* (1944), p. 261.
[19] A J Otway-Ruthven, *A History of Medieval Ireland,* (1986), p. 203.
[20] Katherine Simms, *From Kings to Warlords, The Changing Political Structure of Gaelic Ireland in the later Middle Ages,* p. 14.

Walter, Earl of Ulster, son of Richard Mor, son of William Congcur, marched into Connacht as far as Roscommon against Magnus... who was king of Connacht at that time.'[21] The Red Earl gradually subinfeudated Connacht and turned his attention towards the Tir Conaill and Tir Eoghain in the north of Ireland. The 'Annals of Ulster' records that in 1291 'A host was led by Richard de Burgh (namely) the Earl of Ulster (that is, the Red Earl) into Tir-nEogain, whereby he deposed Domnall, son of Brian Ua Néill and Niall Culanach Ua Néill was made king by him.'[22] The Red Earl was also very active on behalf of his king: his career of royal service began when he supported Edward I in Wales in 1284 and continued in Scotland during the period between 1295 and 1314, while he also assisted the king in Gascony in 1294 and Flanders in 1297.[23] However, de Burgh's position as Lord of Connacht and Earl of Ulster drew him continually back to Ireland. Cosgrove argues that 'the Red Earl was no absentee, merely drawing on his Irish resources... he was active in Ireland in many directions. Castle building in Inishowen, Sligo and Galway testifies to his continuous efforts to consolidate his authority in Gaelic Ireland.'[24]

In an earlier chapter, we examined John de Courcy's contribution to the religious life of County Down and argued that the Anglo-Normans who came to Ireland in the wake of the Conquest of Ireland, showed themselves to the generous patrons of monks and canons and the spread of religious houses in the areas they controlled was hardly less impressive than their progress through Ireland itself.[25] Richard de Burgh continued this tradition of supporting religious orders in Ireland when he founded a new Dominican Priory at Carlingford in County Louth in 1305.

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[21] Martin Freeman (ed), *The Annals of Connacht,* (1944), p. 181.
[22] B MacCarthy (ed), *The Annals of Ulster, Vol II, a.d., 1057-1131, 1155-1378,* (1893), p. 375.
[23] Art Cosgrove (ed), *A New History of Ireland II, Medieval Ireland,* (1987), pps. 333-334.
[24] Ibid, p. 334.
[25] John Watt, *The Church in Medieval Ireland,* (1972), p. 47.

In order to explain why de Burgh built this priory in Carlingford, it is necessary to understand his association with this area of Ireland. De Burgh became interested in the south of his Earldom just as the Pipards were pulling out of County Louth. Gilbert de Pipard had accompanied John to Ireland in 1185 and had received extensive endowments covering much of modern county Louth. Gilbert's brother Peter had also been granted land, and the charter (dated to the late 1180s) covering this grant refers to 'the Castle of Ardee' thus implying that Peter was already well settled in Louth.[26] On his death, Peter's land went to his brother Roger, who married Alice, Hugh and Walter de Lacy's sister; he was in turn succeeded by his son William: on his death his daughter, also named Alice, succeeded him and when she married Ralph Fitz Nicholas son, their child, Ralph Pipard, inherited all the family's lands in County Louth.[27] It was Ralph who exchanged these lands for property in England in 1301 and although junior branches of the Pipard family remained prominent in the history of County Louth throughout the Middle Ages, their days as major landowners were over.[28] It was in the aftermath of the Pipard's departure in 1305 that the 'Red Earl' obtained considerable grants in the Cooley Peninsula and north Louth and marked this by founding the Dominican Priory dedicated to Máel Máedoc (Saint Malachy) at Carlingford.[29]

As in previous chapters, one question which must be addressed is why de Burgh dedicated his priory to the Dominicans. In this case there are two possible answers, although neither can be argued with complete certainty. The first involves de Burgh's support of King Edward I's Scottish wars. The 'Annals of Ulster' records the

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[26] E Curtis (ed), *Calendar of Ormond Deeds, Volume I,* (1932), Dublin.
[27] S J Connolly, *Oxford Companion to Irish History,* (1998), pp. 442-443.
[28] Ibid, p. 443.
[29] Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland, The English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (1999), p. 141.

following entry for the year 1296: 'A great host was led by the King of the Saxons into Scotland so that he got command of all of Scotland and destroyed territories and despoiled shire-land and churches and particularly a monasteries of friars, so that he left not a stone of it in place. And he killed many ecclesiastics and woman. And there were nobles of men of Ireland on that expedition, namely, Richard de Burgh'.[30] According to the 'Annals of Loch Cé', for the same year, the monastery attacked was probably St Andrews, a Dominican Priory.[31]

We know from our study of John de Courcy that when he constructed Inch Abbey it was on the site of another abbey (Erenagh), which had been founded in 1126 by Magnell MacNeill, King of Ulster – this abbey was destroyed during de Courcy's conquest of Ulster and he built Inch Abbey to replace it. It could be surmised that de Courcy built Inch in recompense for his destruction of Erenagh. Perhaps it could also be suggested that de Burgh built a priory for the Dominicans in recompense for the destruction of St Andrew's in Scotland.

The second answer may lie with Richard's father, Walter de Burgh, who died in 1271. He had founded a Dominican Priory at Lorrha,[32] a small village at the most northerly part of County Tipperary. The priory was founded in 1269 and provides us with some archaeological evidence, which we will compare below with the Dominican Priory at Carlingford. This includes a nave and chancel of equal width, giving the appearance of a very long building, with good lancet windows in the north and south walls. Thus it may be in honour of his father that Richard de Burgh dedicated the priory at

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[30] B MacCarthy, (ed), *Annals of Ulster, Vol II, a.d. 1057-1131, 1155-1378,* (1893), p. 389.
[31] William M Hennessey, (ed), *The Annals of Loch Cé, A Chronicle of Irish Affairs from a.d. 1014 to a.d. 1590,* (1871), p. 517.
[32] Aubrey Gwynn, R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, Ireland,* (1988), p. 227.

Carlingford to the Dominicans.[33] This devotion to the Dominican Order was also shared by William de Burgh, the 'Brown Earl' and Richard III's grandson. He helped to enlarge the Dominican church and priory of Saint Peter and Saint Paul at Athenry in Galway before his death in 1324. We shall examine the priory at Athenry in more detail below.[34]

The Dominican Order and their arrival in Ireland

Before turning to the Dominican Priory at Carlingford, it is necessary to gain an insight into the Dominican Order in general, including examining whether their monasteries had any similarities in plan, as is the case with the Cistercian Order. St Dominic, the founder of the Order of the Preachers was born in Spain c.1170. He was from a town called Caleruega which was within the diocese of Osma.[35] By 1194 he had become prior of the Cathedral Chapter.[36] Between 1203 and 1205 Dominic journeyed to Denmark in the company of Bishop Diego d'Azévédo and it was while passing through southern France that he first encountered the Albigensian heresy. [37] St Dominic attempted to reject the Albigensian heretic's teachings through preaching. However, they believed that a person could not preach the gospel without truly living

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[33] It is important to note the argument put forward by Fr A Coleman that the settlement may have occurred during the incumbency of Walter or Roland Joyce, two Dominicans who succeeded each other in the see of Armagh between 1307-23. However, Gwynn and Hadcock confirm that the Earls of Ulster were patrons and Arthur Curran, in his seminal work on the Dominican Priory in the County Louth Archaeological Journal, argues that since Coleman does not suggest that either Walter or Roland was the founder of the priory, we are left with the weight of probability in favour of Richard de Burgh as the founder.

[34] Aubrey Gwynn, R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, Ireland,* (1988), p. 221.

[35] Simon Tugwell (ed), *Early Dominicans, Selected Writings,* (1982) p. 53.

[36] R F Bennet, *The Early Dominicans, Studies in thirteenth century Dominican History,* (1937), pp. 20-21.

[37] Albigensianism was a re-appearance of the old heresy (false belief) of Manichaeism. The heretics, all former Catholics, denied many elements of Christianity, especially the divinity of Christ. They rejected all seven sacraments and most of the Bible and claimed that the human body was evil. Marriage and having children were seen as sinful. Although they thought of themselves as Christian, the Albigensian teachings involved very little Christianity.

as an apostle i.e. by travelling only on foot, dressing poorly, having no possessions or money and by begging for food and they refused to listen to anyone preaching who did not live in this way – thus Dominic adopted this lifestyle.[38]

We cannot be certain exactly when Dominic decided on the foundation of a preaching Order. What we can state with certainty is that the Dominican Order was the first of the mendicant[39] orders to incorporate an active ministry as an integral part of the religious life.[40] Dominic created an Order of poor but free priests who stood outside the restrictions of bishoprics, answering only to the papacy. The most important requirement for a Dominican monk was study in order to allow him to become a good preacher. The history of the order shows the continuance of this devotion to study as a primary requirement for the business of preaching.[41] A further requirement was poverty – at a time of burgeoning wealth the Dominicans aspired to share the poverty of the poor. Their rule, although that of St Augustine, would follow more strict customs with regard to food and clothing.[42] Pope Honorius III approved the order of Preachers on December 22, 1216. The spread of the Dominican Order was rapid – by 1277 there were 414 foundations in Europe, by 1358 there were 635 and by 1720 there were actually 1076.[43]

Regarding architecture, in its initial stages the Order placed little importance in living arrangements, believing that the purpose of a convent was simply to allow the body a

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[38] Fr Tom McDermot, *St Dominic and the Order of the Preachers,* http://www.diafrica.org/nigeriaop/50book/stdom.htm

[39] The word mendicancy comes from the Latin term *mendicant*, which means "to beg" and refers to depending on alms for a living or begging. Mendicant Orders are religious organizations which have renounced all common and personal property.

[40] William Hinnebusch, 'How the Dominican Order Faced its Crises', *Review for Religious, Vol. 32,* (1973/76), pp. 1307-1321.

[41] R F Bennet, *The Early Dominicans, Studies in thirteenth century Dominican History,* (1937), p. 25.

[42] Simon Tugwell (ed), *Early Dominicans, Selected Writings,* (1982) p. 55.

[43] Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe – the Architecture of the Order,* (1990), p. 129.

place to rest and meditate.[44] They built their foundations on the outskirts of towns, where land was cheaper. However, although their land was often on the edge of town, it was still urban land and thus remained costly: this meant that their monasteries often had just a single communal building with no room for a cloister.[45] Braunfels refers to the term 'minimal Gothic' and argues that although this term is associated with the Mendicant Orders, it is confusing because it is wrong to assume that the 'structured complexity characteristic of the cathedrals' was simply reduced: in fact elements were imbued with fresh meaning, conveying a new form of spirituality.[46]

In the early stages of the Order the friars followed the lead of the monks when it came to the layout of their priories. Where the order could afford a cloister, the positions of the buildings around it remained the same: the chapter house, the dorter and the refectory: because the friars did not have an abbot,[47] with only a prior running the community, there was no requirement for any stately abbatial building; also, because the Dominicans did not farm, they judged a domestic court to be superfluous and the cellarium was either done away with completely or placed out of sight.[48] As time went on, due to requirement that each friar have his own cell, the common dormitory was replaced by individual cells. We know from the earliest extant legislation of the Dominican's constitution that the rule concerning priories was that they must be

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[44] R F Bennet, *The Early Dominicans, Studies in thirteenth century Dominican History,* (1937), p. 25.
[45] Daniel Faure and Véronique Rouchon Mouilleron, *Cloisters of Europe, Gardens of Prayer,* p. 26.
[46] Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe – the Architecture of the Order,* (1990), p. 130.
[47] When Dominic first founded his Order he selected a friar named Matthew to be the first abbot – Matthew would also be the last abbot of the Dominican Order as the brethren decided that the man in charge of the whole order should hold the title 'Master of the Order', as opposed to abbot, and those below him would be known as priors and sub-priors.
[48] Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe – the Architecture of the Order,* (1990), pp. 132-133.

modest and humble, the walls of a single storied building not more than 4 metres high, with the walls of the church not more than 10 metres in height.[49]

As the Dominicans developed it soon became apparent that they provided a complete contrast to the Cistercians and their churches, which were designed exclusively for the monks and conversi: the churches of the Dominicans were created especially for the laity, with the brethren retiring to a small choir behind the altar for their Offices.[50]

Dominican architecture also contrasted with their fellow mendicant friars – the Franciscans. The Dominicans were theologians, foes of heresy, who preached about what men should believe; whereas the Franciscans preached what men should do.[51] The Franciscans required anecdotal art in comparison with the Dominicans, who made their ideas the subject of decoration in their churches.[52]

A point worth bearing in mind, mainly because of its relevance in relation to the argument over the foundation of the Dominican Priory in Carlingford (see below), is that it was mainly laymen from the urban aristocracy who bore the costs of these foundations in Europe – their generosity was not purely altruistic as it meant they not only acquired a burial-place in the chapel they had financed but also acquired the rights to specific places in the church itself.[53]

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[49] W.A. Hinnebusch, 'The Early English Friars Preachers', coll. Institutum historicum FF. Praedicatorum, Rome, (1951), pp. 279-419

[50] Wolfgang Braunfels, *Monasteries of Western Europe – the Architecture of the Order,* (1990), p. 138.

[51] Ernest H Short, *History of Religious Architecture,* (1951), p. 247.

[52] Ibid, p. 247.

[53] For example, these rich laymen often financed the building of chapter-houses, often because it then give them the right to be buried there.

The Dominicans arrived in Ireland very soon after the order was founded, c. 1224. Within thirty years there would 16 Dominican priories throughout Ireland: eventually they would number 47 and they would have a profound affect on Irish monastic architecture. This despite the fact that rule of poverty meant that their churches would at first be very simple. In fact it was this very simplicity which appealed to the native Irish, who had been accustomed to austere religious structures before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans and they took to the new mendicant orders and their friars, both because of their rejection of superfluous architectural requirements and their devotion to poverty.[54] Over time, however, the insistence of simplicity was relaxed and by the early 14th century, the Dominicans were building churches of considerable size.[55]

One (almost standard) feature of Dominican priories in Ireland was a tower. None of the 13th century friaries had towers built when the priory was originally constructed, and when they came to be built they were almost always inserted about midway down the length of the long and narrow churches favoured by the Order.[56] This central division was a striking feature of friary architecture in Ireland.[57] It usually consisted of two parallel walls, close together, but not bonded to the existing walls of the church and these walls would form a structural barrier between the nave and were pierced by arch openings.[58]

A good example of a Dominican tower can be found in Drogheda, where it is the sole structure still remaining above ground (Plate I). The Priory of St Mary Magdalene

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[54] Brendan Bradshaw, *The Dissolution of Religious Orders in Ireland under Henry VIII,* (1974), p. 401.
[55] R A Stalley, *Architecture and Sculpture in Ireland, 1150-1350,* (1971), p. 133.
[56] Harold Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings II,* (1966), p. 132.
[57] R A Stalley, *Architecture and Sculpture in Ireland, 1150-1350,* (1971), p. 133.
[58] Ibid, p. 132.

was founded by Luke Netterville, the Archbishop of Armagh in 1224.[59] The tower is a fourteenth century construction built near the now demolished St Sunday's Gate and was located just inside the northern walls of the town. The supports are relatively heavy and quite broad, with narrow but high arches and spanned by pointed arches of sandstone in several chamfered orders.[60]

The walls of the tower are perforated by eight windows, two in each side with cut stone facings. This slender tower would have been half the width of the church – there is little or no documentary evidence to date this tower, but Leask argues that the window design is appropriate to the early 14th century, which is also the foundation date for the Dominican Priory in Carlingford.[61]

Another Dominican Priory with a central tower can be found at Athenry in County Galway (Appendix 35)[62], founded by Milo de Bermingham in 1241.[63] Today, all that survives is the priory church, which originally consisted of a long, rectangular building of which the south wall of the nave and choir, parts of west wall of the nave and the north wall of the choir remain, lit by narrow lancet windows.[64] Little remains of the central tower but it was as wide as the church, although fairly shallow – the lowest levels of the supporting piers are still visible on the south side and would have largely blocked the transept from the remainder of the church.[65]

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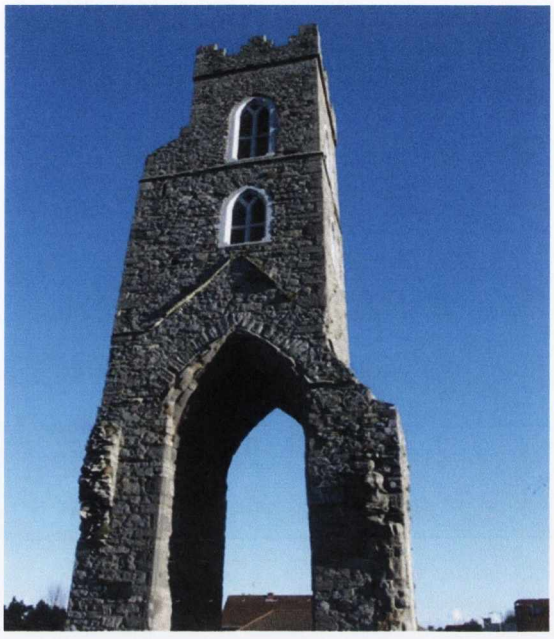
[59] Aubrey Gwynn, R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, Ireland,* (1988), p. 224.
[60] Harold Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings II,* (1966), p. 132.
[61] Ibid, p. 133.
[62] See Appendices, p. liv.
[63] Aubrey Gwynn, R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, Ireland,* (1988), p. 221.
[64] Andy Halpin and Conor Newman, *Ireland, An Oxford Archaeological Guide,* (2006), p. 195.
[65] Ibid, p. 197.

PLATE I
The Magdalene Tower, Drogheda.



www.drogheda.ie/cms/uploads/placestovisit/magdalentower.jpg

As mentioned above, the de Burgh family's affiliation to the Dominicans was again in evidence in relation to Athenry Priory, as William de Burgh helped to enlarge the church and priory in the early fourteenth century (Plate II).

Another element of Dominican priories in Ireland was the presence of so called 'Irish' stepped battlements or parapets – Leask argues that because these appear so often in Irish medieval structures that the title 'Irish' is justified but that this feature did not originated in Ireland and was only introduced here in the 14th century.[66] In Europe, this feature is most frequently found in the Pyrenees, especially in Rousillon and Catalonia, where there are examples similar to Irish work[67] – the idea that this feature was imported into medieval Ireland from this distant part of Europe is actually not that far-fetched as the southern Pyrenees formed part of the route for pilgrims on the way to the famous shrine of St James in Santiago de Compostela.[68]

We know from the earliest extant legislation of the Dominican's constitution that the rule concerning priories was that they must be modest and humble, the walls of a single storied building not more than 4 metres high, with the walls of the church not more than 10 metres in height.[69]

The map (Appendix 36)[70] details the pilgrimage route to St James shrine in Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain – the Pyrenees are situated along the French-Spanish

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[66] Harold Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings II,* (1966), p. 135.
[67] Ibid, p. 135.
[68] The pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in northwest Spain began with the discovery of the tomb of Peter the Apostle, in what is now Galicia, sometime early in the 9th century. It achieved its greatest popularity in the 12th century, when it came to rival Rome and Jerusalem as goals of Christian pilgrimage.
[69] W.A. Hinnebusch, 'The Early English Friars Preachers', coll. Institutum historicum FF. Praedicatorum, Rome, (1951), pp. 279-419
[70] See Appendices, p. lv.

border, where pilgrims from Ireland would have come across many examples of stepped battlements.

Dominican Friary, Carlingford

Having looked at some of the general features of Dominican architecture in Ireland it is now necessary to turn to the Dominican Friary in Carlingford, Co Louth. When the Dominican order arrived in Ireland, they settled first in Drogheda and Dublin and then spread out to other parts of the country. It would be over three-quarters of a century later that a branch of the Order arrived in Carlingford, the most extreme north-east outpost of the pale.

Arthur Curran, writing in the 'Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society', stated that 'Despite the fact that no definite evidence has been adduced in support yet almost all authorities agree in accepting the traditional foundation date as 1305 and Richard de Burgo, Earl of Ulster, as the founder.[71] Murphy argued that 'the past 700 years render exactitude uncertain to the precise date of their foundation.'[72] What can be agreed is that due to the size of the church, the remains of a water-mill, cloister-garth and other claustral buildings, the priory at Carlingford benefited from the support of a wealthy patron, almost certainly, Richard de Burgh, the 'Red Earl' of Ulster.

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[71] Arthur Curran, 'The Dominican Order in Carlingford and Louth', in *The Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Vol XVI, No. 3, (1967), p. 143.
[72] T Murphy, *Dundalgan: its churches, shrines and religious orders,* (1909), p. 12.

PLATE II

Athenry town wall and ditch, with the Medieval Dominican Priory, St. Mary's Church and castle in the background.

@ Copyright: George Lambrick

When Samuel Lewis wrote his 'Topographical Dictionary of Ireland' in 1873 he noted that the remains of the priory at Carlingford consisted mainly of 'the walls of the conventual church, with a square tower on lofty pointed arches, separating the nave from the chancel; at the west end of the nave are two turrets, connected by a battlement, and on the south is a small detached ruin, probably a chapel. These ruins, situated at the extremity of the town farthest from the castle, being overgrown with ivy...'[73] This description of the ruined abbey could actually be applied to the modern ruins, except for the overgrown ivy. The church of the priory was long and narrow, as is often the case in Dominican priories. It measures 41.6 metres x 7.3 metres and is built of greywacke and roughly coursed limestone and was divided between the short chancel and longer nave by a bell-tower (Plates III and IV). As was the standard plan for monasteries in the medieval period, the nave and chancel were aligned east to west.[74]

At the east end of the chancel there were the remains of several large windows, with three windows in the north wall and one in the south – this east window has almost been completely destroyed, although it has a two centred pointed arch of moulded and chamfered sandstone on the outside and is constructed with small limestone slabs and a keystone on the inside (Plates V).[75] This window would probably originally have contained a group of lancets, although there is no evidence of tracery or any way of knowing the number of lancets. This window is almost 5 metres wide.

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[73] Samuel Lewis, *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland,* S Lewis & Co, (London, 1837), pp. 253-255.
[74] Victory Buckley, *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* (1986), pp. 75-76.
[75] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), pp. 234-235.

The windows in the north and south walls of the nave and the chancel are now wholly or partially blocked – none of these windows have the remains of carved or moulded stone, although the jambs of the embrasures are made of cut sandstone blocks.[76] The chancel has three windows in the north wall and only one window in the south wall. This window is at the easternmost end of the chancel and has a flat arch (Plate VI).

The first noticeable feature of the west end of the church is the machicolated turret which is centrally positioned above the main entrance (Plate VII a and b). This gives the church a fortified appearance which is supported by two square towers at the south west and north west angles. The west wall was also crenellated in the 'Irish' fashion, as discussed above.

Defensive precautions were required because the priory was constructed outside of the town walls, as was often the case with Dominican foundations. This would also have been the reason for the battlements and thick walls of the priory.[77]

The remains of the original two-centred round-arch of the west window are visible on the inner face of the western wall and appear on the outside in tufa stone. In Plate VIIa it is possible to just make out the original arch of this window, situated between the entrance and the machicolated tower. An external string course can be seen in the south wall of the nave mark the line of the cloister roof (VIII).[78]

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[76] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 235.
[77] Brigid Redmon, *The Story of Louth,* p. 26.
[78] Christine Casey, Alistair Rowan, *The counties of Longford, Meath and Westmeath,* (1993), p. 177.

PLATE III

Dominican Priory at Carlingford, with a bell-tower which divides the nave to the west and the chancel to the east.

PLATE IV

A view of the bell-tower from inside the Dominican Priory.

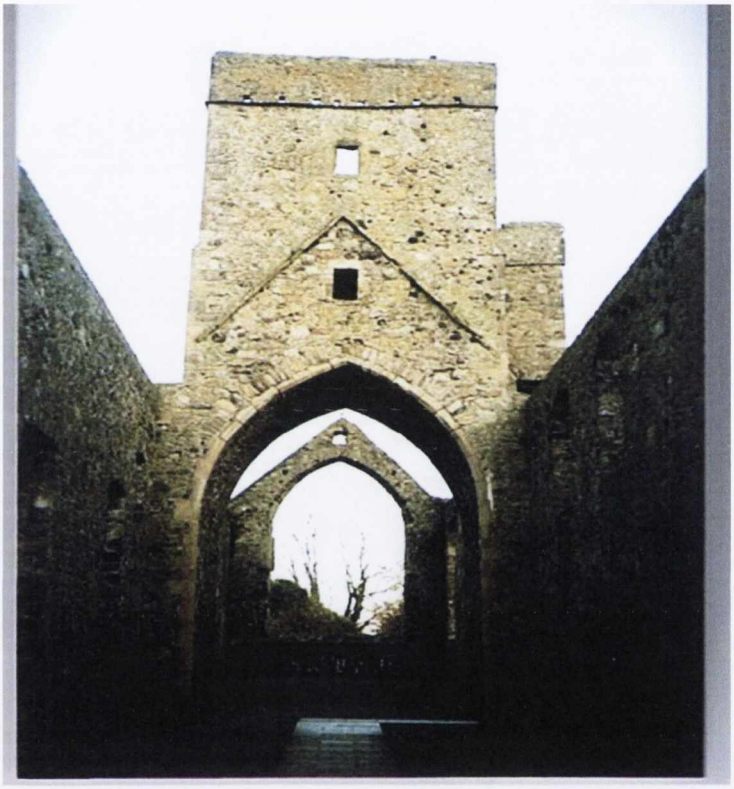

PLATE V

The eastern window in the chancel.

PLATE VI

The window in the east end of the chancel – notice the flat arch of this window.

PLATE VII a, b

Two views of the machicolated turret in the west wall of the priory.

PLATE VIII

The square holes with a string course immediately above them, almost certainly the roof of the cloister-walk.

The bell-tower of the Dominican Priory at Carlingford is of oblong plan, raised on solid side walls which are carried by pointed chamfered arches with a rough vault between – access was from a staircase in the southeast wall of the chancel (Plate IX).[79] It had long been thought that the tower had been built at the time of the original construction[80] but documentary evidence has proven this was an integrated tower of a later date: in 1423, the friars at Carlingford petitioned Pope Martin V for an indulgence to repair the church, and the tower dates from that time.[81]

The tower extends out as far as the inner faces of the nave and chancel walls but at the south east angle it projects to the outer face of the chancel, obviously to allow for the stairs. It is of two stories: on the first floor there are rectangular openings in both the east and west sides and on the second storey there is an opening on the west side. The bell loft of the upper level was originally mounted by a parapet.[82]

The claustral buildings were constructed in a rectangular pattern south of the church, although as we have already stated it is possible to determine the position of the cloister from the position of square holes and a string course in the south wall of the church. Approximately 20 metres south east of the church are the remains of a rectangular building which Buckley and Sweetman state are from two periods, with the east side being of a later date as it is butted against the western structure.[83]

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[79] Harold Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings II,* (1966), p. 146.
[80] Ibid, p. 146.
[81] Arthur Curran, 'Further notes on the Dominicans at Carlingford' in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Vol XVI, no. 4, 1968, Dundalgan Press Ltd, (Dundalk, 1968).
[82] Christine Casey, Alistair Rowan, *The counties of Longford, Meath and Westmeath,* (1993), p. 177.
[83] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), pp. 236.

The western structure is in a particularly ruined condition and was probably built at the time of the original foundation, most likely as part of the domestic range. It would have at one time extended northwards and connected to the nave – this argument is supported by the evidence of tie stones and also the pitch of the gable end at the top of the south nave wall was given extra height to allow for it.[84] The structure on the eastern side was obviously of a later date and is similar to a tower house, containing both slit and rectangular windows (Plates X and Xa).

At the dissolution of religious orders in Ireland under Henry VIII in 1540, the extents of the possessions of the Dominican Priory in Carlingford stated the following: 'The house is a strong mansion needing no expenditure on repairs, but on every side strongly fortified, and it will be a very sure defence for the town in case of attack through rebellions of those living close. There are no superfluous buildings. The site, circuit and precinct cont. 1½ acr., and are nothing above repairs.'[85]

At this stage the aim of this thesis is to produce a comparative study between the Dominican Priory at Carlingford and a similar structure on de Burgh's homelands in England. Unfortunately, there are a limited number of Dominican priories in England with substantial remains and difficulties in identifying de Burgh's homelands in England make it is impossible to pinpoint any priories that he may have been familiar with. Instead, this thesis will study the Dominican Priory in Lorrha, County Tipperary which was constructed by William de Burgh 1269. A comparative study between the Dominican Priory at Carlingford and that at Lorrha produces some interesting results.

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[84] Victor Buckley, David Sweetman, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* (1991), p. 236.
[85] Newport B White (ed), *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions 1540-1541,* (1943), p. 245.

PLATE IX
A view of the pointed chamfered arches of the bell-tower, with the rough vault between.

PLATES X, Xa

The structure on the eastern side: though small, it contains some similarities to a tower house. Note the rectangular and slit windows.

The structure on the western side – most likely part of the domestic range of the original foundation.

The first noticeable feature (or lack of feature) is that Lorrha did not have a central bell-tower. While the chancel and nave at Carlingford was divided by a tower, the chancel is undistinguished from the nave at Lorrha except for six pairs of lancet windows in the south wall.

However, in the east wall at Lorrha there is the base of a five-light window, which could be compared to the window in the east wall at Carlingford which probably originally contained a group of lancets .

The nave of Lorrha was lit by a series of lancet windows in the north wall, of which there are two surviving.[86] It is impossible to make a comparison with Carlingford because the windows in the north and south walls of the nave here are now wholly or partially blocked – none of these windows have the remains of carved or moulded stone, although the jambs of the embrasures are made of cut sandstone blocks.

Like Carlingford, the cloister and conventual buildings at Lorrha were probably constructed on the south side of the church. However, there is one feature at Lorrha that may support the contention that the later eastern construction on the building situated 20 metres south of the Carlingford priory was in fact a tower house. At Lorrha, on the north-eastern side of the church, there are the remains of what was commonly described as a mill but which may in fact have been a residential tower house, perhaps home to the prior.[87]

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[86] Andy Halpin, Conor Newman, *An Oxford Archaeological Guide,* (2006), p. 407.
[87] Ibid, p. 407.

Conclusion

The de Burgh family have often been associated more strongly with Connacht than Ulster and are therefore not the first family to spring to mind when thinking of County Louth or County Down, unlike John de Courcy, Walter or Hugh de Lacy or Bertram de Verdon. However, this paper has attempted to examine the de Burgh family, from their arrival c. 1185 in Ireland to the Red Earl's founding of the Dominican Priory at Carlingford in 1305. As discussed above, the priory was founded after Richard de Burgh received lands in the Cooley Peninsula. This paper has put forward a number of explanations for Richard's devotion to the Dominicans. Three generations of the de Burghs supported the Dominicans in one form or another. Walter de Burgh and his son Richard de Burgh III both founded Dominican priories, at Lorrha in Tipperary in 1269 and Carlingford in Louth in 1305, respectively, while William de Burgh, Richard's grandson, helped to repair and rebuilt the Dominican priory at Athenry in Galway, sometime before his death in 1324.

Turning to the archaeological features of the Dominican Priory at Carlingford, we have noted the standard features of Irish Dominican priories, including the addition of a bell-tower at a date later than that of the original foundation; the tower was inserted about midway between the nave and the choir, which were both long and narrow edifices, again the norm for these foundations in Ireland; the west wall of the church at Carlingford was crenellated in the 'Irish' fashion and we argued that this feature originated in the mountains of the Pyrenees between southern France and northern Spain and offered the practice of pilgrimage from Ireland to this area to explain how these features arrived in here.

What could not be accomplished within this chapter was a detailed comparison with similar structures on de Burgh's homeland, which he may have been familiar with. The reasons for this were two-fold: firstly, by the time de Burgh succeeded his father as Lord of Connacht and Earl of Ulster, there was a change in the dynamics regarding the continuing colonisation of Ireland. Rather than new invaders arriving from England, the conquest involved an internal migration by the descendants of the original conquerors. Secondly, few friaries in England survived the reformation. Furthermore, the difficulties encountered earlier in this chapter when detailing de Burgh's background, make it difficult to identify similar buildings in areas he was connected with. Instead this thesis compared the Dominican priory at Carlingford with the Lorrha Dominican priory, constructed by Richard de Burgh's father in 1269. The first noticeable feature (or lack of feature) is that Lorrha did not have a central bell-tower. While the chancel and nave at Carlingford was divided by a tower, the chancel is undistinguished from the nave at Lorrha except for six pairs of lancet windows in the south wall.

The Red Earl may be more famous for his years as Lord of Connacht and Earl of Ulster but the Dominican Priory at Carlingford remains a small archaeological gem in the County Louth landscape.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

This thesis aimed to test the hypothesis that in the aftermath of the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169, the buildings constructed by the first wave of settlers reflected the architectural influences of contemporary buildings which they were familiar with in their homelands in England and Wales, by comparing the archaeology of specific castles and religious foundations built by these Anglo-Norman settlers in Counties Down and Louth with buildings in England and Wales.

Testing this hypothesis involved a multi-disciplinary approach to the topic, necessitating both historical and archaeological research. Whilst various historians had detailed the main Anglo-Norman families that settled in Down and Louth in the aftermath of the Anglo-Norman Invasion of 1169 and many archaeologists had analysed the archaeology of the medieval monuments constructed by them, this thesis intended to produce a more in-depth study involving both disciplines, focusing on particular Anglo-Normans together with specific monuments they had constructed in both counties.

In the course of this thesis the previous literature written about topic was studied. A history was produced for each family, tracing their roots to particular areas in England and Wales. Specific monuments were then selected within these areas that had some form of connection to the individual or his family or which had been constructed in areas they were familiar with. Each monument was then compared to particular buildings they constructed in Louth and Down. The next stage involved analysing the archaeology of each monument, its form and design, examined in the context of 12th and 13th century architecture. The construction

sequence of each monument was studied and specific architectural features and styles were identified.

The motte and bailey castle was the first type of construction studied within this thesis. Certain facts were stated at the outset. The motte castle was a novel type of construction in late 12th century Ireland, introduced by the invading Anglo-Normans. There is no archaeological or historical evidence that supports the idea of motte building in Ireland prior to 1169. Only around 30% of mottes in Ireland had a bailey and these were concentrated on along the Ulster border.

It was argued John de Courcy, whose family had settled in Cumbria, England, constructed a number of motte castles in County Down which included features he would have been familiar with in his homelands. He also constructed a castle at Dundrum, which possibly originated as a ringwork castle, before being quickly turned into a masonry castle or it may actually have been a masonry castle from the start. A comparative archaeological study demonstrated a number of similarities between Dundrum Castle and Dromore and Clough motte castles in County Down and Egremont Castle in Cumbria, constructed by de Courcy's grandfather, William Meschin. All four structures occupied frontier positions and controlled important communication routes. While this would have been standard practice in England, the motte was a new construction in Ireland and de Courcy knowledge of this structure would have been based on mottes he was familiar with in Cumbria. De Courcy would have understood that Egremont motte castle had been constructed to secure the area in which it was built from attack and to suppress the local population. He would have been aware that the siting of the castle was important. Egremont motte utilised a high mound overlooking the River Ehen, near the Scottish border. Clough, Dundrum and Dromore were also sited to take

advantage of their natural surroundings, and were constructed high above the surrounding area. Another point was that all both Down mottes had adjoining baileys, a relatively rare feature in Ireland. Egremont castle had also contained both a motte and bailey.

Clough and Dromore motte castles originally consisted of earth and timber defences but there is doubt whether Dundrum or Egremont actually had a timber phase. It was established that by 1135, the fortifications at Egremont were made from stone. The first masonry building erected there was a circular keep. At Dundrum, the defensive works also included a circular keep. This thesis contends that it is possible that de Courcy, who would have certainly been familiar with Egremont and its masonry defences, was responsible for the construction of the keep at Dundrum. This site requires further excavation in order to produce additional evidence.

Having looked at the archaeology of specific mottes, the focus of this research turned to the stone castles built by the Anglo-Normans in Counties Louth and Down. It was argued that Roche Castle, built in the mid thirteenth century, may have been based on Beeston Castle in Cheshire, because it was one of the first castles in England to rely on curtain walls, towers, siting and gatehouse for strength. While acknowledging that Chepstow Castle in Wales was the first castle to include a twin-towered gate-house in England, it was decided that Beeston would be more suitable castle for a comparative study with Roche. This was due to the fact that there were several other similarities between these castles apart from their gate-houses, especially their siting. Roche was constructed by Rohesia de Verdon, whose chief residency was at Alton in Staffordshire an area that borders Cheshire, where Beeston Castle was built. The research showed that Roche and Beeston are early examples of 'crusading castles' in that they are forms of military architecture. Beeston Castle contains one of the earliest gate-

houses in England to be equipped with half-round, flanking towers, comparable to those at Roche. Both castles incorporated their surroundings to take complete advantage of their natural defensive siting: the west and north sides of Beeston overlook a very steep precipice and the relatively accessible east and south sides are isolated by a rock cut ditch. At Roche, three sides of the castle are protected by a very sheer drop, while the east side is protected by a rock-cut ditch. Another feature common to both castles is the use of curtain walls and both castles also incorporate flanking towers: however, Beeston has three additional towers built into the curtain wall of the inner ward and Roche has only one flanking tower in its north-east angle.

This thesis went on to argue that if Roche Castle is comparable to Beeston Castle, then it can be compared to the crusader castle of Sahyoun in Syria, particularly with regards to its rock-cut defences. The Crusades had allowed western castle designers to revolutionise the art of castle building. In the Middle East castles were constructed to make the best use of the surrounding topographical features to strengthen a military site. Many of the solid fortresses constructed in countries like Syria contained a second line of defences, built within the main curtain wall and flanked by projecting towers i.e. concentric defences. Another innovation was the gate-house, which would have incorporated towers, drawbridges etc.

While it was impossible to prove that Ranulf de Blundeville, who was responsible for the construction of Beeston Castle, actually saw Sahyoun first hand, we know that he went on crusade in 1218. We also know that Beeston incorporated many of the features at Sahyoun including curtain walls, towers and gate-house. Another very specific similarity was that both castles were constructed on a rocky outcrop and both are protected are two sides by almost vertical inclines.

Another stone castle which was analysed within this research was King John's Castle in Carlingford, County Louth. Hugh de Lacy, Earl of Ulster, commissioned the building of this 'keepless' castle in the late 12th century. Around forty years later he ordered the construction of Greencastle, just across Carlingford Louth, in County Down. Together these castles secured the seaward route into the Earldom of Ulster. An archaeological comparison between both castles was detailed, which produced a number of similarities included a heavy reliance on towers for defence. However, there were a number of differences in the construction of both monuments: while King John's castle was built on a rock outcrop, Greencastle was constructed 300 m back from the sea; King John's castle contains a D shaped curtain wall and is divided by a massive north-south internal cross-wall while Greencastle central feature is a massive hall-keep standing isolated in its ward. Features at King John's castle were also identified with being similar to Trim Castle in Meath, also constructed by Hugh de Lacy in the late 12th century. Both include towers with rectangular ground floors, which become octagonal or five sided at first floor level.

The aim of this research was to try and find similar buildings in England/Wales to compare to the monuments the Anglo-Normans constructed in Louth and Down. Thus this thesis produced a comparative study between Greencastle and Skenfrith Castle in Wales. The de Lacy's family connection with Herefordshire and Wales (Skenfrith was one of the 'Three Castles' that guarded routes of communication between these two districts) was detailed and it was stated that Skenfrith castle is located very close to the de Lacy's seat at Ewias Lacy. Both castles consist of quadrilateral enclosures with towers at their angles, surrounding an isolated tower within its word. The curtain wall surrounding both castles is trapezoidal and both have three quarter round towers with a solid keep at their centres. There was, however, one major difference between both structures: Skenfrith's keep is circular, while the keep at

Greencastle is rectangle. This thesis argued that de Lacy built Greencastle not only to protect his interests but to provide accommodation for him and his successors and thus he created a large and spacious hall-keep.

The history and archaeology of a number of religious foundations in Down and Louth were analysed as part of this research. These included the Cistercian monasteries of Grey and Inch Abbey, constructed by de Courcy in County Down c.1180 and c.1193 respectively. It was shown that de Courcy had connections with both Holmcultram and Furness Abbey, the motherhouses of Grey and Inch respectively. A detailed study of the Cistercians and their artistic asceticism was produced and it was argued that their rejection of sculpture and superfluous decoration forced them to concentrate on the structural elements, resulting in the design of their buildings becoming remarkably pure. Cistercian abbeys were constructed from the same, smooth-hewn stones including floors, doors, vaults and window-frames. This in turn allowed the Cistercians to embrace the new Gothic style of architecture which involved a belief in simplicity, free from adornment and from the first, the Cistercians used the pointed art in their churches for the main arches of construction.

The archaeology of Inch Abbey includes a number of architectural features specific to Gothic style emanating from northern England in the late 12th century, such as the pointed arch which was the main arches of construction, stone carvings in the arches and tall lancet windows. Both Inch and Furness have pointed heads on windows and arches, visual affects intended to force the eye to follow the lines of the building upwards. They both contained a central tower and an aisled nave, together were vaulted chapels on each side of the transept. At Inch they chapels are separated by pillars and response of the early clustered type, the

pointed section alternating with half round shafts, a feature that was peculiar to the north of England.

Grey Abbey was built by English stonemasons and its architectural style, which includes a crossing tower and pointed lancet windows, is a good example of north English Gothic. Other features include pointed arches, flying buttresses and a crossing tower and these, together with the use of stone throughout, creates a purity of form with regards to space and elevation, central themes of the Gothic style. All the above facts allowed for the conclusion that it was John de Courcy who imported the first examples of Gothic architecture into Ireland, through his familiarity with this style on his homelands in northern England.

Whilst there was a wealth of historical and archaeological information available regarding Inch and Grey Abbey, researching St Leonard's hospital and priory in Seatown, Dundalk in County Louth proved more of a challenge. It was shown that the family of Bertram de Verdon, who founded the priory at Seatown (sometime between 1188 and 1216), were based in Leicestershire and thus it was argued that he may have been familiar with St Leonard's hospital and church at Leicester. However, it was impossible to carry out an archaeological comparison between both monuments as there are no remains at Leicester. An outline was produced of the Fratres Cruciferi, who ran the hospital and friary and it was shown that little remains of the original priories of this order throughout Ireland. Identifying any uniformity in the archaeology of these sixteen priories and hospitals would require a systematic excavation of any archaeological remains of each of these monuments. It is only then that a comparison could be made with religious foundations run by the Fratres Cruciferi in England. One point that was noted in the course of this research was the paucity of archaeological data available regarding canonical cloisters and that this is especially true of the Cruciferi. This thesis was

limited when it came to researching this aspect of the priories and hospitals constructed by the Fratres Cruciferi, by virtue of the possible scope, methodological restrictions, and practical realities. It is recommended that this may be an interesting topic for further research, producing questions that could be addressed in the future. For example, canons like the Cruciferi had permission to leave the cloister in order to offer hospital and charity in local society, as opposed to the monastic orders, for whom the cloister was built to completely separate them from the outside world. Did this result in differences in the architectural features of their cloisters? This topic requires further research of ecclesiastical architecture.

The Franciscan Grey Friary was also constructed by the de Verdons in Seatown, Dundalk (it was in existence by 1246). Again, the family's connection to Leicester meant that John de Verdon may have been familiar with Grey Friar's priory at Leicester. However, there are difficulties in producing an archaeological comparison between the monument in Seatown and similar structures in England, due to a lack of archaeological evidence. In fact, out of 270 Franciscan friaries in England, only 15 friaries have any substantial remains above ground. Furthermore there is a substantial lack of any written records belonging to the order.

It was possible to argue that the Grey Friary contained a number of general elements similar to other Franciscan friaries: it was constructed on the outskirts of town, on marshy ground, where friaries were often settled; the friary church was constructed beside the approach road, to facilitate the Franciscan's main aim of preaching to as many people as possible. In an attempt to gain an insight into how the Grey Friary may have originally appeared, the archaeology of Castledermot Franciscan Friary was detailed and it was argued that the first church at the Grey Friary was probably a long rectangular building, which was the standard for 13th friary churches. Grose's late 18th century drawing of the tower at the Grey Friar

reveals a wall visible to the left of the tower and the remains of two large opes: these features may have part of the western wall of a building abutting the tower and might have been a transept of a separate chapel. But confirmation of this requires archaeological excavation.

St Peter's medieval church in Drogheda which was constructed by Hugh de Lacy between 1172 and 1206. Because little remains of the original church, which was rebuilt by the Church of Ireland in the mid-18th century, this thesis relied on various documentary sources including Isaac Butler's description from 1744, just before the ruins of the original building were demolished. A number of archaeological elements were also examined and together these allowed us to form an outline of the main features of this structure. It was a cruciform church with a long nave of bays, north and south aisles, a very large crossing tower and two large chapels. As well as a crossing tower, Butler describes 'an aisle with ten great arches'. Various stonework from the original medieval church was detailed in this study and included a sandstone corbel decorated with foliage dated to no later than the 13th century. St Peter's church was then compared to the church at Llanthony Priory in Monmouthshire. It was founded c.1108 and its chief patron was Hugh de Lacy, brother to the Earl of Ulster's great grandmother. The remains at Llanthony are substantial and allowed us to form an image of how St Peter's may have looked in the medieval period. The nave at Llanthony consists of eight bays and photographs of the nave reveal how impressive this structure remains today. The nave at St Peter's was even larger, consisting of ten bays. At Llanthony there are the remains of a partly ruined trioforium, which allowed natural light to enter the building. This feature developed out of the 'Early Gothic' period in France and the experimentation in voiding walls and reducing the size of internal supports. The addition of this extra story increased the internal height of the church and if the church of St Peter's was in part of the Transitional Style of architecture it may have included early Gothic elements such as a

trioforium. The position and size of the crossing-tower at Llanthony can be compared to that of St Peter's except for one difference – at Llanthony the tower contained some type of primitive clock.

The final monument analysed in this study was the Dominican priory at Carlingford, constructed by Richard de Burgh in 1305. Research of primary and secondary documents proved that little was known of de Burgh's family and their landholdings in England. It was shown de Burgh decision to build a priory for the Dominicans may have been to honour his father, Walter de Burgh, who founded a Dominican priory at Lorrha in Tipperary. It was argued that the initial simplicity of Dominican architecture appealed to the native Irish who had been accustomed to mainly austere religious structures pre-1169. The standard features of Irish Dominican priories were detailed including a tower which was usually inserted about midway down the length of the church – this central division was a striking feature of friary architecture in Ireland. Another feature detailed was 'Irish' stepped battlements and it was argued that they may have been imported into medieval Ireland from Catalonia and Rousillon as a result of pilgramages to Santiago de Compostela.

Difficulties were encounterd in producing an archaeological comparison between the Domincan priory in Carlingford and a similar structure in de Burgh's homeland in England. The reasons for this were twofold. Firstly, by the time de Burgh succeeded his father as Lord of Connacht and Earl of Ulster, there was a change in the dynamics regarding the continuing colonisation of Ireland. Rather than new invaders arriving from England, the conquest involved an internal migration by the descendants of the original conquerors. Secondly, few Dominican friaries survived the Reformation and dissolution of religious foundations in the England in the 16th century and any that did survive could not be pinpointed as having been

connected to Richard de Burgh. Instead this thesis produced a comparative study with the Dominican Priory at Lorrha in County Tipperary, constructed by Richard's father, William in 1269.

After producing an archaeological study of specific monuments constructed by the major Anglo-Norman dynasties in Louth and Down and comparing them with buildings these families were familiar with on their homelands in England, the major findings included the following. The castles constructed by John de Courcy in Down incorporated various features of Egremont motte castle in Cumbria. Roche Castle in County Louth, built by Rohesia de Verdon is similar to Beeston Castle in Cheshire, which in turn can be compared to Sahyoun Castle in Syria. There are a number of similarities between King John's Castle in Louth and Greencastle in Down, both constructed by Hugh de Lacy. Greencastle can also be compared to Skenfrith Castle in Wales.

Inch and Grey Abbey, both built by John de Courcy, can be compared to similar structures in northern England, the homelands of de Courcy family. St Leonard's priory in Seatown may have been similar to the priory of the same name in medieval Leicester. Further archaeological excavation is required in order to make a definitive comparison. The Grey Friary in Seatown may also have included various architectural features of the Grey Friary in Leicester but again, our knowledge is limited due to a lack of documentary and archaeological data. St Peter's church in Drogheda, constructed by Hugh de Lacy, Earl of Ulster, in the late 11th century, can be compared to Llanthony priory in Wales, which was granted by Hugh's ancestor of the same name. Finally, the Dominican priory at Carlingford, constructed by Richard de Burgh in 1305, which could not be compared to a similar structure

in England, contains a number of archaeological features similar to those at to Lorrha Dominican Priory in Tipperary constructed by Richard's father.

The above findings signify that the built landscape, generated by the initial Anglo-Normans who settled in Counties Louth and Down, was essentially colonial in character. There is little evidence of a specifically Irish architectural contribution to these early stone castles and ecclesiastical buildings. The castles and monasteries the Anglo-Normans constructed were heavily modelled on buildings they were familiar with. In terms of architectural style, these structures were essentially a version of similar buildings in England and Wales.

'The monument means a world of memories, a world of deeds, a world of tears, and a world of glories. By the subtle chemistry that no man knows, all the blood that was shed by our brethren, all the lives that were devoted, all the grief that was felt, at last crystallized itself into granite, rendering immortal the great truth for which they died, and it stands there to-day.'

James Abram Garfield

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7/11/07 http://www.iadb.co.uk/about/news.htm
York Archaeological Trust, New Discoveries, 'The seal of a horologiarius'

23/02/08 http://www.diafrica.org/nigeriaop/50book/stdom.htm
Fr Tom McDermot, *St Dominic and the Order of the Preachers.*

040/4/08 www.le.ac.uk/archaeology/modules/ar2026/abbeydeskstudy.pdf.
Richard Buckley, 'Abbey Park, Leicester: An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment and Survey,' University of Leicester Archaeological Services, 1997.

18/06/08 http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk/buckinghamshire2.html
The Domesday Book on-line

07/07/08 http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/publications/archforest/new.html
The Heritage Council – Identifying and Protecting Archaeological Sites

08/08/08 http://findarticles.com
Tom McNeill, 'Obituary, Prof Martyn Jope' in The Independent, London, Nov, 23rd, 1996

10/08/08 http://www.1hi.org.uk/projects_directory/projects_By_region/northwest/Cumbria/phase_two_egremont_castle_interpretation_geophysical_survey/index.html
Local Heritage Initiative: Phase Two, Egremont Castle,

Interpretation and Geophysical Survey, 'What the Archaeologists Say'

21/08/08 http://www.courcy.com/sirjohndecourcy.html
'Courcy and Kinsale'
In-depth biography of John de Courcy

17/05/2008 http://homepage.mac.com/philipdavis/English%20sites/651.html
Pennington Castle

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

De Courcy genealogy table

Genealogy Table for the de Courcy family

Baldric Teutonicus = Aubree, niece of Count of Brionne
Lord of Bacqueville-en-Caux

Robert de Courcy d.1026

Richard de Courcy d. 1098 (Oxfordshire)

William de Courcy I = Emma de Falaise (Stoke, Somerset)

William de Courcy II = Avice

William de Courcy III

Jordon

John de Courcy = Affreca
d.1219

Serlo de Burci

Geva = William de Falaise (Stoke, Somerset)

William Meschin = Cecily de Rumilly (Cumbria)

Alice = William Fitz Duncan
Son of Duncan II
King of Scotland

Godred, King of Man = Findguala, daughter of MacLoclainn
King of Cenel Eoghan

Appendix 2

Map showing main native Irish family dynasties and the areas they controlled.

Map Index 1100 1300

Maps: BC . 100 . 150 . 200 . 300 . 400 . 500 . 600 . 700 . 800 . 900 . 1000 . 1100 . 1200 . 1300 . 1400 . 1500 . 1600 . 1700 . 1800 . 1845

http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~irlkik/ihm/ire1200.htm

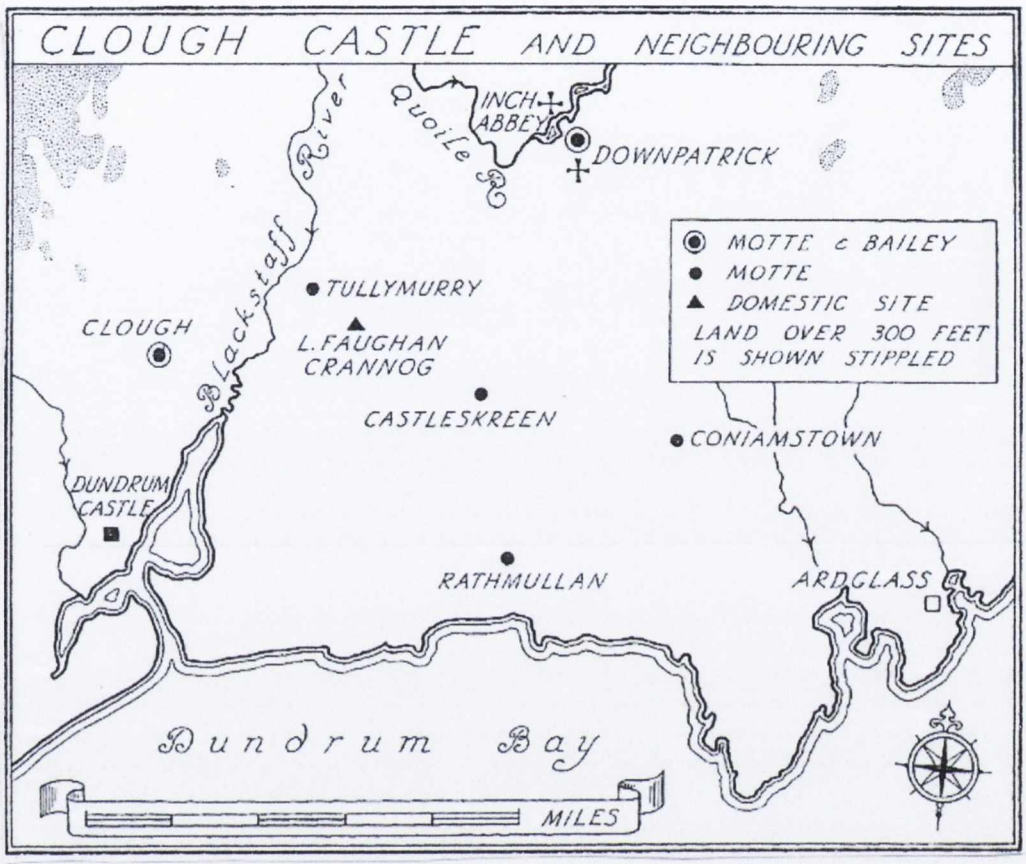
Appendix 3

An image from the Bayeux Tapestry showing a motte castle in the background.

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/domesday/images/bayeux-049.jpg

Appendix 4

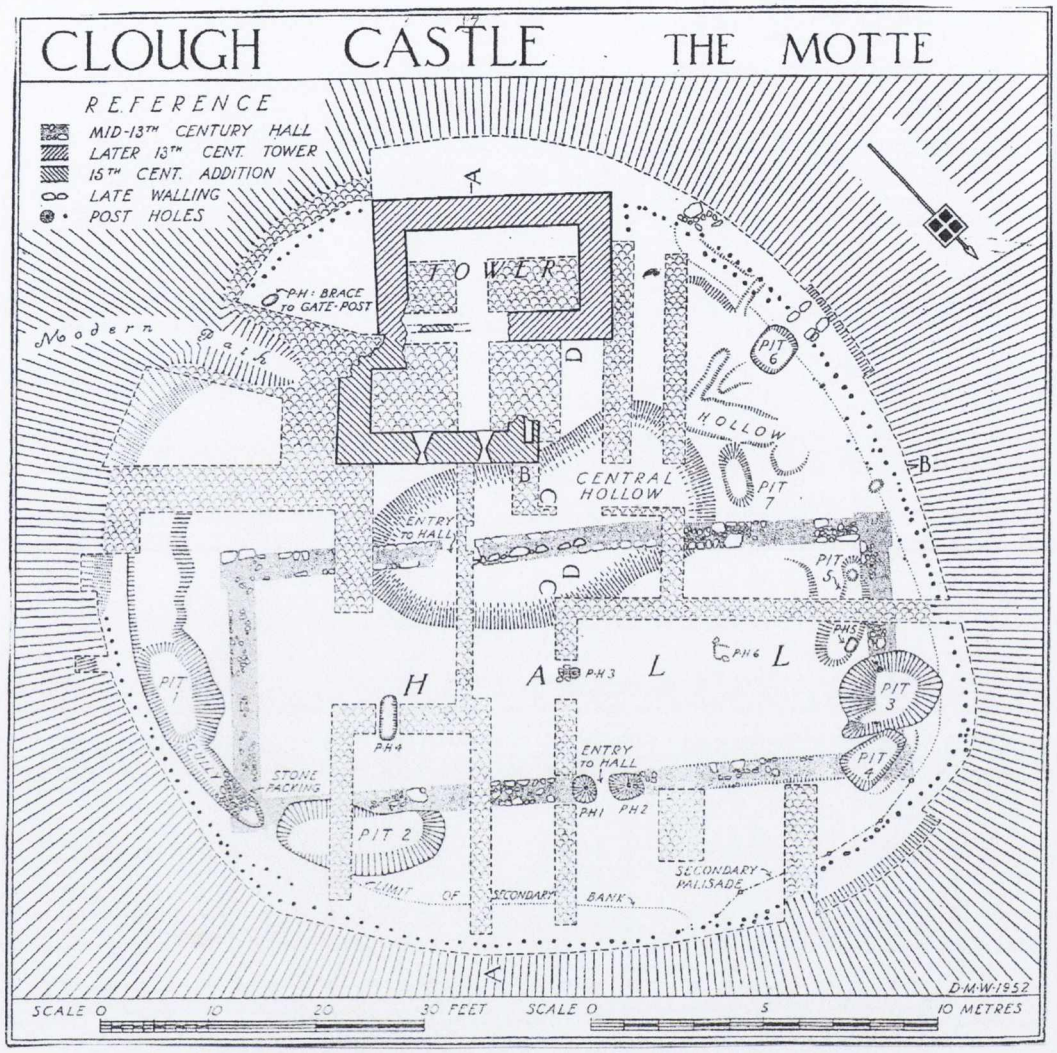
Map including Dundrum and Clough



Map courtesy of D M Waterman (1951).

Appendix 5

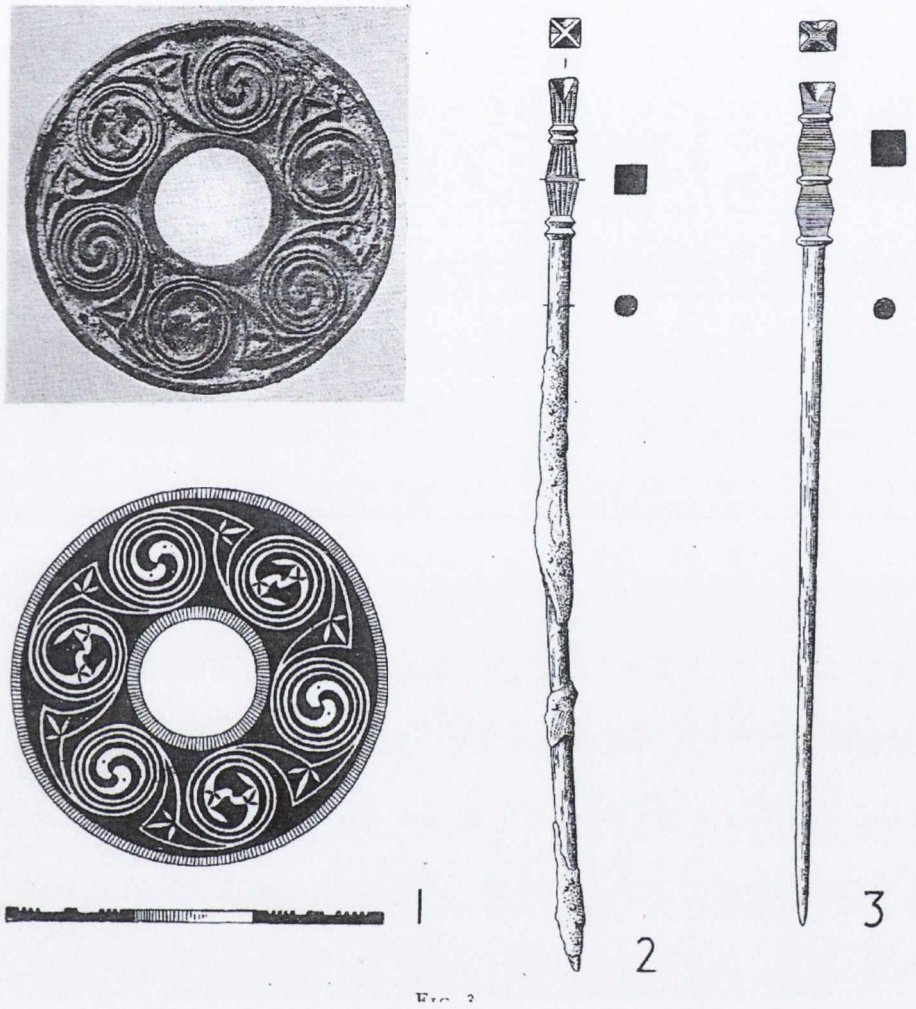
Plan of Clough Castle Motte



Plan courtesy of D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Clough Castle' (1951).

Appendix 6

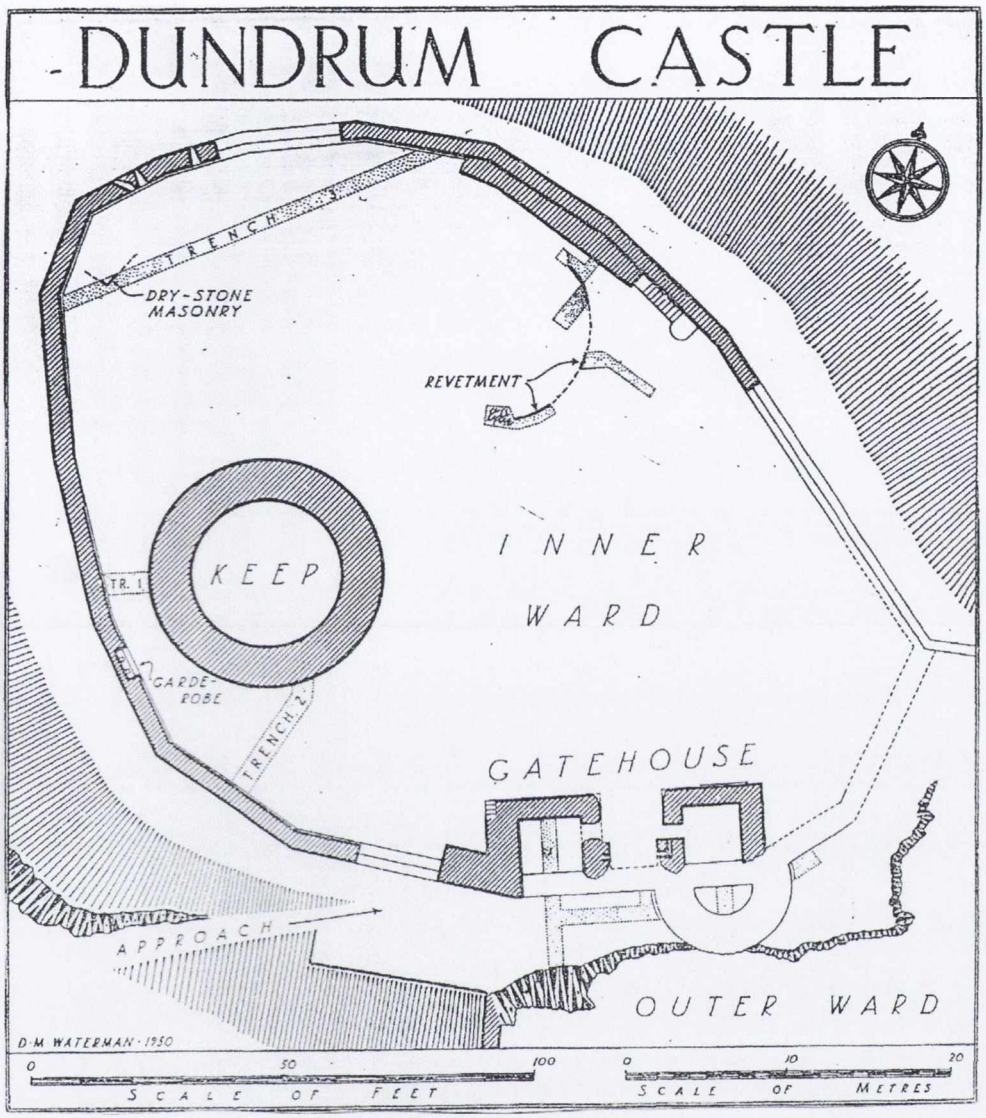
Bronze objects from 1950 excavations at Dundrum Castle



Courtesy of D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dundrum Castle' (1950).

Appendix 7

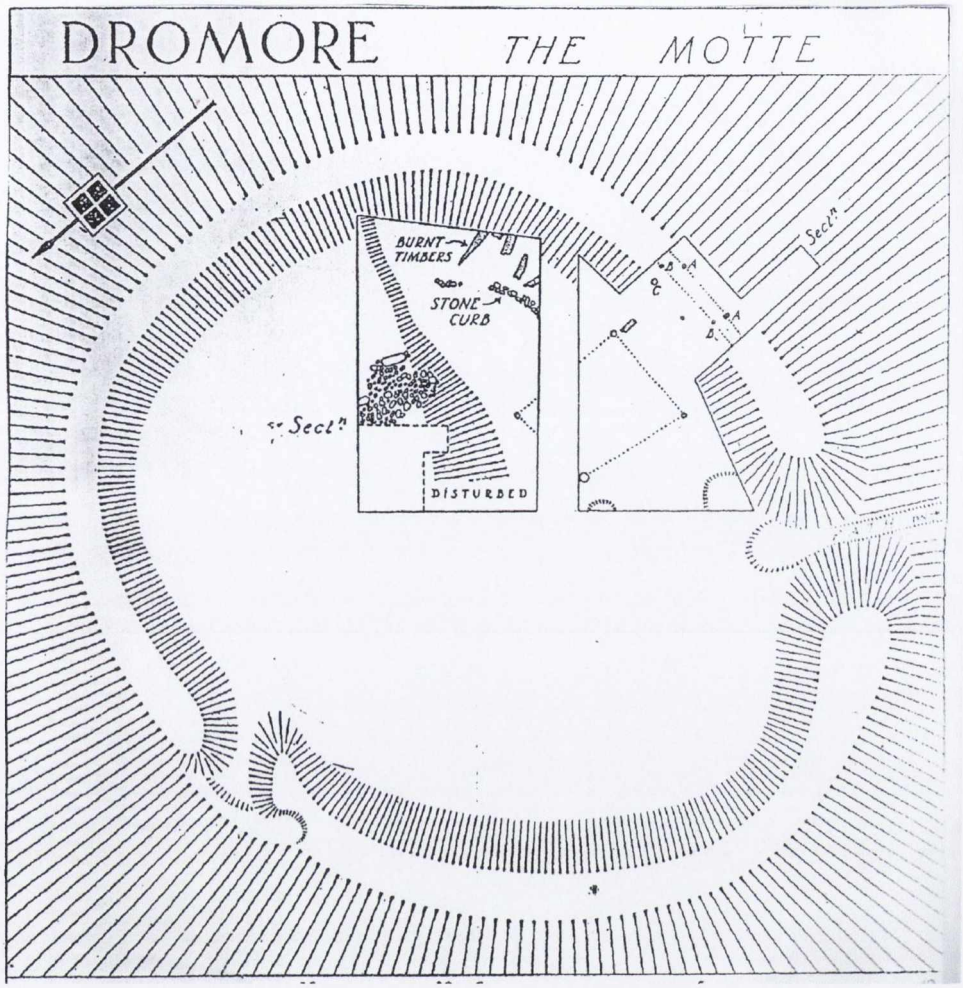
Plan of Dundrum Castle



Plan courtesy of D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dundrum Castle', (1950).

Appendix 8

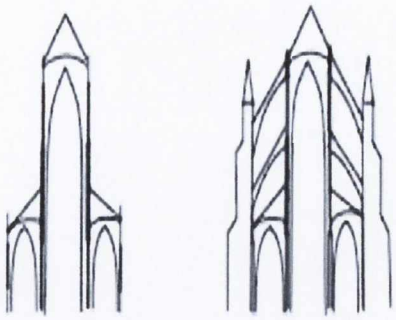
Plan of Dromore Castle



Plan courtesy of D M Waterman, 'Excavations at Dromore Motte', (1954).

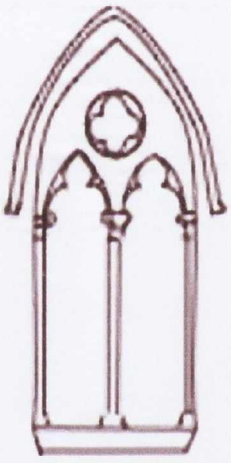
Appendix 9 a, b, c.

(a)



Early English church elevations. Note the flying buttresses on the right

(b)



Window showing twin lancets with plate tracery

(c)

Early English Gothic foliage carving

(All the above designs are extracted from the website
http://www.britainexpress.com/architecture/early-english.htm)

Appendix 10

CISTERCIAN ABBEYS IN BRITAIN

ABBEY	COUNTY
Aberconwy	Conwy
Balmerino	Fife
Basingwerk	Flintshire
Beaulieu	Hampshire
Biddlesden	Buckinghamshire
Bindon	Dorset
Bordesley	Worcestershire
Boxley	Kent
Bruern	Oxfordshire
Buckfast	Devon
Buckland	Devon
Buildwas	Shropshire
Byland	North Yorkshire
Calder	Cumbria
Cleeve	Somerset
Coggeshall	Essex
Combe	Warwickshire
Combermere	Cheshire
Coupar Angus	Perth & Kinross
Croxden	Staffordshire
Culross	Fife
Cwmhir	Powys
Cymer	Gwynedd
Deer	Aberdeenshire
Dieulacres	Staffordshire
Dore	Herefordshire
Dundrennan	Dumfries & Galloway
Dunkeswell	Devon
Flaxley	Gloucestershire
Forde	Dorset
Fountains	North Yorkshire

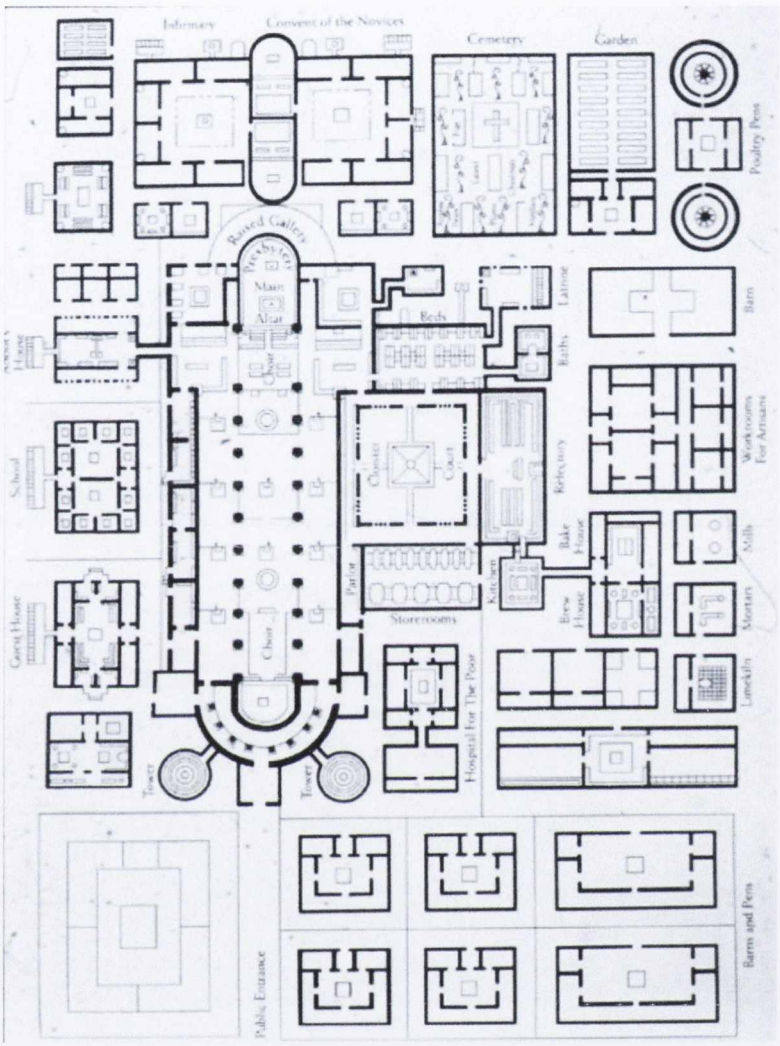
Furness	Cumbria
Garendon	Leicestershire
Glenluce	Dumfries & Galloway
Grace Dieu	Monmouthshire
Hailes	Gloucestershire
Holmcultram	Cumbria
Hulton	Staffordshire
Jervaulx	North Yorkshire
Kingswood	Gloucestershire
Kinloss	Moray
Kirkstall	West Yorkshire
Kirkstead	Lincolnshire
Llantarnam	Torfaen
London St Mary Graces	Greater London
Louth Park	Lincolnshire
Margam	Neath Port Talbot
Meaux	Humberside
Medmenham	Buckinghamshire
Melrose	Scottish Borders
Merevale	Warwickshire
Neath	Neath Port Talbot
Netley	Hampshire
Newbattle	Midlothian
Newenham	Devon
Newminster	Northumberland
Pipewell	Northamptonshire
Quarr	Hampshire
Revesby	Lincolnshire
Rewley	Oxfordshire
Rievaulx	North Yorkshire
Robertsbridge	East Sussex
Roche	South Yorkshire
Rufford	Nottinghamshire
Saddell	Argyll & Bute
Sawley	Lancashire
Sawtry	Cambridgeshire
Sibton	Suffolk

Stanley	Wiltshire
Stoneleigh	Warwickshire
Strata Florida	Ceredigion
Strata Marcella	Powys
Stratford Langthorne	Greater London
Sweetheart	Dumfries & Galloway
Swineshead	Lincolnshire
Thame	Oxfordshire
Tilty	Essex
Tintern	Monmouthshire
Vale Royal	Cheshire
Valle Crucis	Denbighshire
Vaudey	Lincolnshire
Warden	Bedfordshire
Waverley	Surrey
Whalley	Lancashire
Whitland	Carmarthenshire
Woburn	Bedfordshire

http://www.thecyberfarm.com/cistercians/cistercianabbeys.htm

Appendix 11

An extract from the Plan of St Galls.

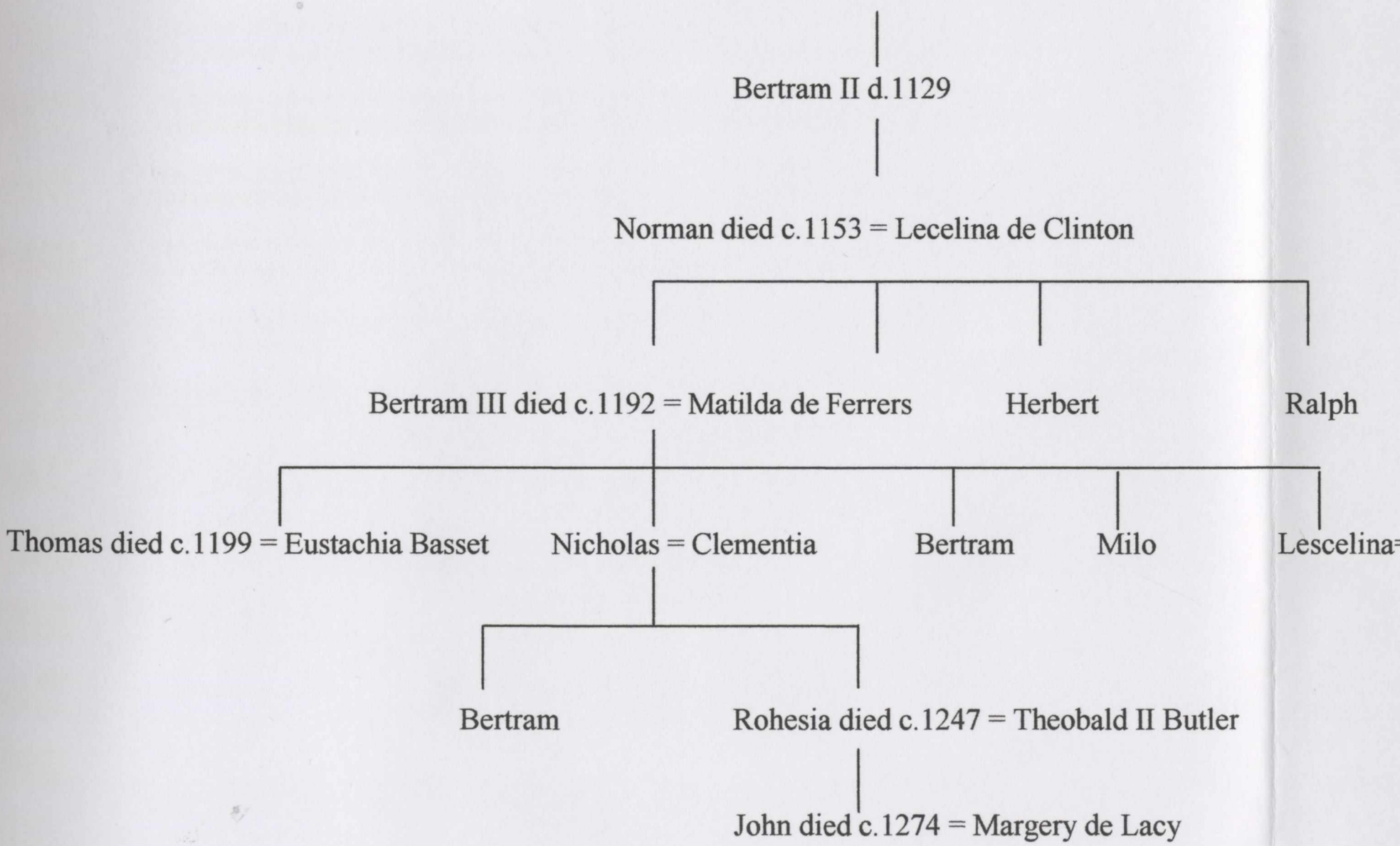


www.stgallplan.org

Appendix 12

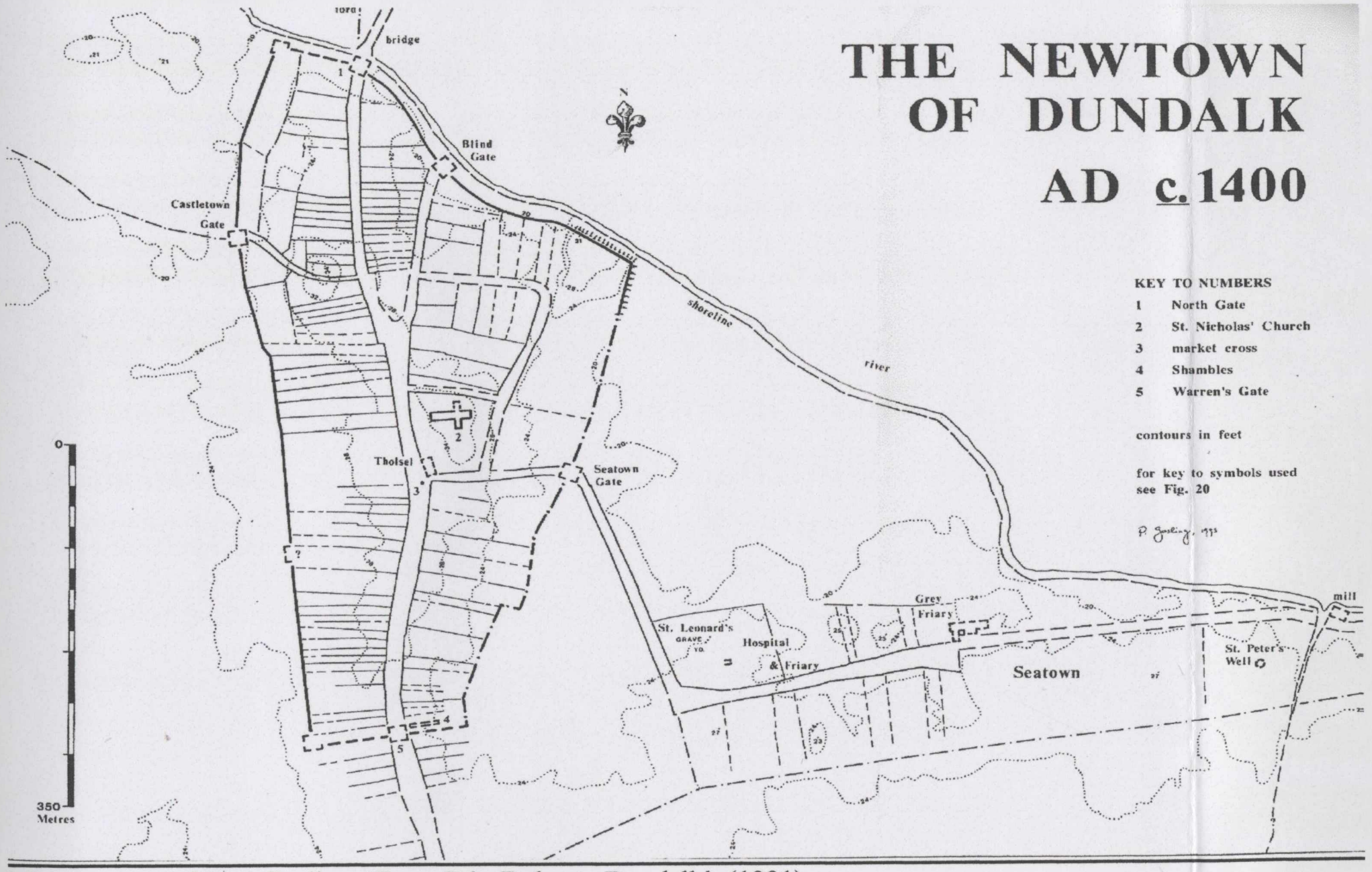
Genealogy Table for de Verdons

Genealogy Table for the De Verdon Family



Appendix 13

Plan of new town of Dundalk and its suburb of Seatown circa 1400AD based on Richard's map of 1680.



Map courtesy of Paul Gosling, 'From Dún Delca to Dundalk', (1991).
Appendix IV

Appendix 14

The Fratres Cruciferi in Ireland – some background

The monastic orders of the medieval period are almost as well known as its most famous figures. Any individual who studies this era will be as familiar with the Cluniacs, Cistercians and Franciscans as they are with William the Conqueror, Henry II, Roger of Sicily and Llywelyn ap Iorwerth. These orders were the lifeblood of the Middle Ages, its moral conscience so to speak and played a vital role, not just in administering to the souls of the wealthy, but providing the poor with alms, charity and caring for the infirm. However, while some of these orders are well known, others remain obscure. It can prove difficult to define or detail a particular order because little is known regarding its development or because it differed from one geographical region to the next. One such group is the Fratres Cruciferi: this order was established before other, better known friars, such as the Dominicans and Franciscans and stayed in existence long after 1274, when groups like the Friars of the Sack and the Pied Friars were dissolved.[1]

This chapter will try and disentangle the mystery surrounding this group by providing a detailed study of its development. This will require an analysis of the following themes: identifying the four main groups within the Fratres Cruciferi; detailing the reasons for the assertion that the Irish branch of this order was part of the Italian Congregation; examining the order's role within Irish medieval society. This knowledge should in turn provide us with more information regarding the Priory and Hospital of St Leonards in Dundalk.

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[1] G Keevill, Michael Aston, Teresa Anne Hall, *Monastic Archaeology,* (2001), pps. 19-21.

By the thirteenth century, there were at least four families of Cruciferi, all following the rule of St Augustine, but otherwise unconnected with each other.[2] The Augustinian Rule had originated during the 11th century, when a group of canons[3] became dissatisfied with the Aachen Rule[4]. They turned to a document call the Rule of St Augustine, which had been devised by Augustine of Hippo, a doctor of the church – his rule was compiled of a series of texts, circulated in an abridged form.[5] In the 11th century, reforming canons began following this rule which called for obedience, communal mass, abstinence, simplicity in dress and the renunciation of personal property.[6] By the 12th century, the Fratres Cruciferi were all regular canons[7] under the rule of St Augustine[8]. This involved a quasi-monastic community life, without the rigours of strict monastic discipline.[9]

We know that in the medieval period there were a number of different orders, congregations or branches all calling themselves Cruciferi (other names included Crucigeri, Crosiers, Crutched Friars or Cross-bearers).[10] How the word 'friar' became attached to the word Cruciferi or Crutched is not known, and in fact, during the 13th century, members of the order, both in England and on the continent, most often

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[2] Dom David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England,* (1948), p. 203.
[3] Canons developed from the middle of the 11th century – clergy began living near their church or cathedral, in a community, governed by a Rule. The major difference between canons and monks was that a canon took no vow of poverty and could receive an income from fees for saying mass etc in the form of a stipend known as a prebend. Life was also less ascetic for the canon; he could eat meat and offer hospitality and charity to local society.
[4] The Aachen Rule came about in 816 when it was decided during this synod at Aachen that all monasteries should follow the Benedictine Rule.
[5] Daniel Faure, Deke Dusinberre,Veronique Rouchon-Mouilleron, *Cloisters of Europe,* (2001) p. 23.
[6] Ibid, p. 23.
[7] Canons Regular accepted the Lateran Council Decision of 1059 regarding renouncing personal property and adopting truly communal lifestyle.
[8] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961), p. 44.
[9] George Zarnecki, *The Monastic Achievement,* (1972), p. 90.
[10] Ibid, p. 44.

referred to themselves as 'Fratres Sanctae Crucis' – the Brethren of the Holy Cross.[11] Although they were not mendicants, (like the Dominicans and Franciscans friars), in that they accepted the need for owning *corporate* property, they were like the friars in following the Vita Apostolica[12] as a form of religious life, devoted to serving the world around them.[13]

All friars, including the Franciscans, Dominicans and the Fratres Cruciferi, developed as a protest against the whole idea of a totally monastic life, which attempted to seclude men and women from society – a monastery was actually a self-contained community with no interest or responsibility towards the world outside its walls.[14] On the other hand, friars lived entirely among their fellow-men, while the Fratres Cruciferi lived in priories that included hospitals for the poor and infirm within society.

Priories played a very important role in the life of a medieval town, with their churches and precincts becoming major landmarks, while the Cruciferi themselves fulfilled many of the roles now performed by modern social services by looking after the poor, sick and homeless.[15]

As stated above, there were four distinct groups of Fratres Cruciferi. The Italian Congregation, who were also known as the Brethren of the Holy Cross or Crosiers,

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[11] J Michael Hayden, 'Religious Reform and Religious Orders in England, 1490-1540: The Case of the Crutched Friars', in *The Catholic Historical Review,* 86.3, (2000), pps. 420-438.
[12] In the early twelfth century, Rupert, Abbot of Deutz composed a treatise on monastic life entitled *De vita vere apostolica* (On the Truly Apostolic Life). Rupert argued that monastic life, the *vita monastica,* was the true pattern of life for the church
[13] C H Lawrence, *The Friars, The Impact of the Early Mendicant Movement on Western Society,* (1994), p. 91.
[14] J R H Moorman, *Church Life in England in the 13th Century,* (1945), p. 366.
[15] Simon Denison (ed), 'Buried with the Friars' in *British Archaeology,* Issue No. 23 (2000).

were first established in the Holy Land.[16] They may have been founded by the Crusader, Cletus of Bologna. The first reference to this order in Italy was in 1159, when Pope Alexander III found refuge in several of their houses during the persecution of Emperor Frederick Barborossa.[17] When peace was restored in 1169, Pope Alexander granted the order both a rule and a constitution.[18] As Canons Regular under the order of St Augustine their rule was strict and their monasteries often incorporated a hospital for the poor. [19] This Italian congregation of the Fratres Cruciferi established their first hospital within the city of Acre, Palestine.[20]

Because this order was often referred to as Augustinian Hospitallers they were sometimes confused with the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem – Hadcock informs us that 'according to the Chronicle of Herman Schedel, Pope Innocent IV, at Lyons (1245), gave additional rules and ordained that the brethren should always carry a cross in hand.'[21] In 1459, at the Council of Mantua, it was decreed that the order's habit, which until had been grey, should now be changed to blue and the iron cross that the brethren carried, should now be changed to silver.[22] Over time the order founded c. 208 monasteries in Italy and at the height of its powers the congregation had extended into five provinces (including Rome, Naples, Milan, Venice and Bologna).[23]

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[16] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961), p. 45.
[17] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 208.
[18] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961), p. 45.
[19] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 208.
[20] David Knowles and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales,* (1971), p. 208.
[21] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961), p. 45.
[22] Ibid, p. 45.
[23] G Keevill, Michael Aston, Teresa Anne Hall, *Monastic Archaeology,* (2001), pps. 19-21.

The Flemish Branch of this order was known as The Order of the Holy Cross or the Crosier Fathers. They were founded by Theodore, son of the Baron de Celles, around 1211.[24] The first monastery of the order was established at Clair lieu, near Huy and rapidly spread through Belgium, France, Germany and England.[25] They also followed the rule of St Augustine and in 1216 their order was approved by Innocent III.[26] The habit of the Flemish Branch consisted of a white tunic with a black or brown scapular, embellished with a cross: in the early days of the order, they also carried a staff topped off with a cross. [27]

It was this order which came to England in the thirteenth century and soon became known as the Crutched Friars.[28] In 1244 they attended a diocesan synod in Rochester, bearing papal credentials and requesting leave to establish the order in England. In the same year they founded the first house in England at Whaplode in Lincolnshire.[29] In or around 1249, the order was granted the hospital of St John the Baptist at Warenford in Northumberland.[30] The order established small hospitals at Welnetham in Suffolk c. 1274 and Barham in Cambridgeshire c. 1291: however they based their main priory in London, where they permanently settled from c. 1269 onwards.[31] But while the Crutched Friars in England were assigned to the Flemish Branch of the Fratres Cruciferi, there may also have branches of the Italian Congregation active in England during the medieval period. Certainly, the hospital of Ospringe in Kent was in

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[24] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961), p. 46.
[25] G Keevill, Michael Aston, Teresa Anne Hall, *Monastic Archaeology,* (2001), pps. 19-21.
[26] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 208.
[27] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961), p. 46.
[28] Ibid, p. 46.

[30] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961), p. 46.
[31] Ibid, p. 47-48.

existence in 1234, ten years before the Flemish branch arrived in England.[32] So although this hospital was founded by the Fratres Cruciferi, it could not have been established by the Flemish Branch.

The Bethlehemites, another branch of the Fratres Cruciferi, were founded c. 1109.[33] They were under the jurisdiction of the Bishops of Bethlehem and belonged to a military order of Hospitallers.[34] The habit of this order was unusual; it was embellished with a star of five red rays with a blue centre.[35] A similar order of Hospitallers founded the hospital of St Thomas of Acron in 1191 with dependent houses in Carrick-on-Suir and Kilkenny in Ireland.[36] There are a number of English Hospitals classed as Cruciferi in 15th century papal registers and Hadcock argues that 'it is possible that various Hospitaller orders were grouped together under the term 'Cruciferi' for the short lived union of a number of them, under the Knights of St Mary of Bethlehem.'[37] An interesting point is that this group spread into Bohemia: this is worth nothing because there was actually a Bohemian Congregation of Hospitallers, which were granted a constitution under the rule of St Augustine by Pope Gregory IX in 1238.[38] This group was known as the Knights of the Red Cross and were both a fighting order and Hospitallers – as Crusaders they wore the red cross with the addition a red star of six rays.[39]

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[32] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961, p. 46.
[33] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 208.
[34] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961), p. 45.
[35] This star was in commemoration of the star of Bethlehem.
[36] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 208.
[37] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961), p. 46.
[38] Ibid, p. 48.
[39] Ibid, p. 46.

Having detailed the four main branches of the Fratres Cruciferi, the next question concerns which branch came to Ireland in the medieval period. We can say with certainty that they were not the Crutched Friars of England, which were affiliated with the Flemish Order. This is because the monasteries in Ireland were founded much earlier, with all except one founded between the last quarter of the twelfth century and the first quarter of the thirteenth century. Another point is that the foundations in Ireland were both more important and more numerous than those of the Crutched Friars in England - the majority of Irish houses are recorded as priories and hospitals.[40] Although an order of Hospitallers founded two houses in Ireland, at Kilkenny and Carrick-on-Suir sometime after 1191, at least two of the houses of the Irish Fratres Cruciferi were founded before that date.[41]

At the dissolution there were 16 houses in Ireland of the Fratres Cruciferi.[42] The first and most important of these houses was the Hospital of St John the Baptist in Dublin. It was founded by Ailred the Palmer and was confirmed by Clement III in November 1188 – it was known as 'Palmer's Hospital'.[43] While Ware argues that this house was originally founded as a house of Regular Canons of St Augustine, Hadcock points out that the Cruciferi were Regular Canons of the order of St Augustine and are frequently referred to as such.[44]

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[40] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961, p. 49.
[41] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 208.
[42] Arthur Curran, 'The Priory of St Leonard, Dundalk', in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* (1971), Volume XVII, No. 3, p. 131.
[43] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 212.
[44] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961), p. 50.

The foundation date of this hospital points to the Italian Branch of the Fratres Cruciferi. As stated earlier, the Italian congregation were first referred to in contemporary sources in 1159. Hadcock argues that 'the character of the Irish houses seems to prove that they were modelled from the monastery-hospitals of the Italian congregation'.[45]

It is almost certain that the other houses of this order throughout Ireland sprang from this foundation.[46] Below is a list of all the priories/hospitals founded by the Fratres Cruciferi in Ireland, including their location, their foundation date and their date of dissolution.

FRATRES CRUCIFERI PRIORIES/HOSPITALS IN IRELAND

Name	**Town**	**Foundation**	**Dissolution**
St John the Baptist Priory	Ardee	1207	1539
The Priory of St Thomas The Martyr and the Hospital of St John	Athy	1199-1253?	1540
Priory and Hospital of St John	Castledermot	1216	1540
The Priory of St John the Baptist	Downpatrick	1200	1541
The Priory of St Mary de Urso	Drogheda	1206	1540
The Hospital Priory of St Laurence the Martyr	Drogheda	1202-1203	1540

[45] R Neville Hadcock, 'The Order of the Holy Cross in Ireland' in *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn,* J A Watt, J B Morrall, F X Martin (eds), (1961, p. 49.
[46] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 212.

The Priory/Hospital of St John the Baptist	Drogheda	1216	1539
The Priory and Hospital of St John the Baptist	Dublin	1188	1539
The Priory and Hospital of St Leonard	Dundalk	1189	1539
The Priory and Hospital of St John the Baptist	Kells	1199	1539
The Priory or Hospital St John the Baptist	Kilkenny	1200	1541
The Priory and Hospital of St Mary	Limerick	1216	1537
Tyrone Priory and Hospital	Nenagh	1200	1541-1551
A Priory of Cruciferi	New Ross	1195	1295
The Priory of Hospital of St John the Baptist	Trim	1206	1539
The Priory of St John the Baptist	Rindoon	1216	1569
Temple House	Sligo	1312	1569

Before we turn out attention to St Leonard's Priory in Dundalk, we will take a closer look at two other foundations of this order, Athy in County Kildare and Rindown in County Roscommon.

The Priory of St John[47] in Athy was built by Richard de St Michael, Lord of Rhebane, in 1199.[48] The upkeep and maintenance of the priory would have been largely

[47] This monastery was unusual in that it was dedicated to both St John and St Thomas. An explanation for this dual dedication may be that an existing foundation was re-founded at some later date.
[48] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 212.

financed by the large amount of land held by it in the neighbouring area.[49] The 'Urban Archaeological Survey for County Kildare' described the surviving features of the priory: 'The north wall of the graveyard preserves a portion of the wall, 12 meters long, which may be part of the original priory or hospital. The masonry consists of uncoursed limestone and it stands to a height of 1.8 meters above ground internally and 3.8 meters above the level of St John's house externally. It is 90 cm thick and the splays of a blocked window, lacking in jambs, which is 1.9 meters wide internally. Some dressed limestone and granite stones are set into the west wall of the graveyard.'[50]

The above archaeological information is obviously sparse and prevents us from gaining a good insight into the main features of this priory. Additionally, the limited number of excavations and written documentation regarding this order prevents us from asserting uniform architectural features throughout these priories in Ireland.

However, the excavation of the Priory of St John the Baptist of Rindown, allows us to gain a clearer picture of how one of these foundations would have appeared. Rindown is sited on the peninsula of St John's point, nine miles north of Athlone, on the shore of Lough Ree. It was founded for the Cruciferi by King John in and around 1216. One of its main benefactors was Philip de Angulo.[51] De Angulo had an annuity from the cantred of Roscommon in 1215.[52] Although there are very few references to

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[49] Athy Heritage Centre, The cemetery of St John.
http://www.kildare.ie/athyheritage/stJohnsCemetery.htm
[50] J Bradley, A Halpin and H King, *The Urban Archaeological Survey for County Kildare*, 1987.
[51] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 212.
[52] H S Sweetman (ed), Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland, (1875).

it prior to 1596, in that year it was described as being roofed with shingles and that included a cloister and three decaying buildings.[53]

Its present remains have been detailed by the Heritage Council in publication regarding the archaeology of Rindoon.[54] Only the church survives (See Appendix I) and this is a rectangular structure with an unusual buttressed addition at its north end: in the 18th century a number of alterations were made, specifically to the windows, although some of the original jambs survive.[55] The masonry of this structure consist of poorly courses limestone rubble – the entranceway is situated in the north and consists of a lightly splayed doorway, while the main window was in the south wall, with two surviving windows in the west wall.[56]

There are undulations in the surface of the graveyard to the east of the church which might indicate the outline of some type of structure but no recognizable pattern has been determined– also within this graveyard are eight architectural fragments, the finest of which is a multi-moulded base for a cloister column.[57] There is another Catholic graveyard beside it and here a further number of fragments were discovered, including a cloister column, fragments of tracery, the head of a single-light ogee-headed window and the head of a two light window, all of which were constructed of limestone.[58]

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[53] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland,* (1988), p. 216.
[54] Historical and Archaeological description of Rindoon by the Heritage Council http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/publications/rindoon/plan22.htm
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.

Rindown provides us with some information regarding the layout of this priory of the Fratres Cruciferi. One very interesting find was the remnants of cloister columns. Specialists in ecclesiastical architecture lament the paucity of information available on canonical cloisters.[59] This is especially true of the Cruciferi. However, it is fair to assume that if the foundation in Rindoon included a cloister, this may be the case for all of the foundations established in Ireland. A cloister is an architectural term which refers to an enclosed court-yard formed by the walls of a church and its residential buildings, ringed by a covered colonnade which overlooks the central quadrangle – this architectural feature was a very important element of monastic life.[60] However there was an essential difference between the cloister of the monastic orders like the Cistercians and that of the canons, including the Cruciferi: because of their devotion to offering hospitality and charity in local society, canons had permission to leave the cloister, unlike the monks.

We will now turn our attention to the Priory and Hospital of St Leonard in Dundalk. The point of this chapter was to investigate the development of the Fratres Cruciferi – but the reason for our interest in this order's development. The Priory and Hospital of St Leonard was founded by Bertram de Verdon in c. 1189. Although there is a lack of information regarding the Cruciferi in Dundalk, we can now state with some degree of certainty that the Fratres Cruciferi who founded St Leonard's were part of the Italian Branch of this order, for the reasons listed above. As Canons Regular under the order of St Augustine their rule was strict. Although the archaeology of St Leonard's was analysed in chapter IV, we shall briefly detail some important points regarding this priory.

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[59] Daniel Faure, Deke Dusinberre, Veronique Rouchon-Mouilleron, *Cloisters of Europe*, (2001) p. 23.
[60] Ibid, p. 8.

In 1654, Sir James Ware argued that St Leonard's was founded during the reign of King John (1199-1216).[61] Dolan suggest an earlier date of 1160[62], which is too early for a priory of Cruciferi but Gwynn and Hadcock argue that it possible that a hospital of St Leonard had already being founded here and was granted to the Cruciferi by Bertram de Verdon c.1189.[63]

It is not only an exact date for the founding of St Leonard's which has proved problematic – it is also impossible to state the exact location or extent of the buildings included in St Leonard's priory. Two minor excavations have done little to add to knowledge regarding the archaeology of the priory.

Although St Leonard's was occupied until its suppression in 1539, we have no information regarding its original layout, its scale or architecture. Patrick Galtrym, the last prior of St Leonard's priory, listed the buildings of the priory at its dissolution in 1539 as a church, a chapter house, a dormitory, a hall and other buildings.[64]

The priory is situated a short walk from the harbour of Dundalk, and Gosling argues that St Leonard's was deliberately chosen by the de Verdons to secure the Castletown River estuary.[65] This is similar to the Cruciferi priory of Athy, which was situated close to the River Barrow, assuring a plentiful supply of fish.[66]

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[61] Sir James Ware, *De Hibernia and Antiquitatibus ejus Disquisitions*, (1654). p. 273.
[62] J T Dolan, 'Notes on Ardee, County Louth', in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Volume 38, (1908), pps. 205-214.
[63] Aubrey Gwynn and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland*, (1988), p. 212.
[64] M Archdall, *Monasticon Hibernicum - A History of the Abbies, Priories and Other Religious Houses in Ireland*, (1786), p. 463.
[65] Paul Gosling, 'From Dún Delca to Dundalk: the topography and archaeology of a medieval frontier town, A.D. *c.*1187-1700,' in *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal*, Volume XXII, Number 3 (1991), pps. 221-353.
[66] Athy Heritage Centre, The cemetery of St John.
http://kildare.ie/athyheritate/StJohnsCemetery.htm

One problem when trying to determine the layout of St Leonard's concerns the fact, as stated earlier in this chapter, that the remains of the 15 other Cross-Bearer foundations within Ireland are not sufficient enough to allow us to determine whether there was any recurrent layout of the houses of this order.

In conclusion, this chapter has attempted to provide some background regarding the Fratres Cruciferi in Ireland. As mentioned at the beginning, it can be very difficult to identify and detail a particular order. This is due to different factors: sometimes little is known regarding the order's development or it may differ from one geographical region to another. The Cruciferi is such an order and detailing its development is further confused due to a lack of archaeological information, together with a scarcity of documentation. What we can state with certainty is that there were at least four different branches of this order, although this actually only adds to the confusion because many of these branches had similar names and they were all Augustinian Canons.

In this essay has asserted that the Fratres Cruciferi in Ireland were part of the Italian Congregation. Unfortunately, because little remains of the original priories of this order throughout Ireland, together with a lack of excavations, we cannot determine if there was uniformity in the features of the 16 priories/hospitals founded here. However, Rindoon provides us with some interesting insights, including the presence of a cloister. Sadly, because very little survives of St Leonard's Priory and Hospital in Dundalk we can only guess at how it would have originally appeared.

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Athy Heritage Centre, The Cemetery of St John's

www.excavations.ie
Excavation of St Leonard's Gardens, Seatown, Dundalk

http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/publications/rindoon/plan22.htm
Historical and Archaeological description of Rindoon by the Heritage Council

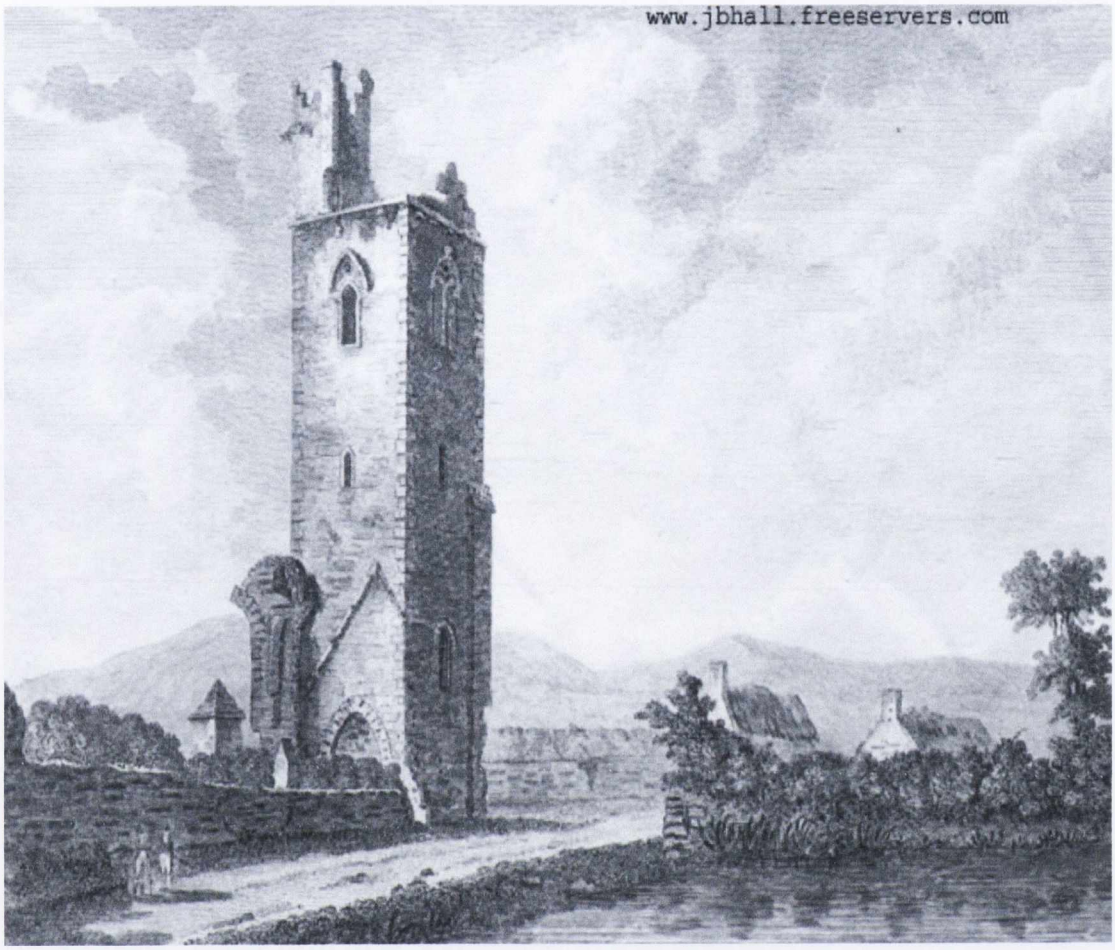
Appendix 15

Leicester Map – the large area enclosed in marks the boundary of the Old Roman City – the smaller shape is the putative boundary of Leicester friary.

Map courtesy of Chris Waddle, City Archaeologist, Leicester City Council.

Appendix 16

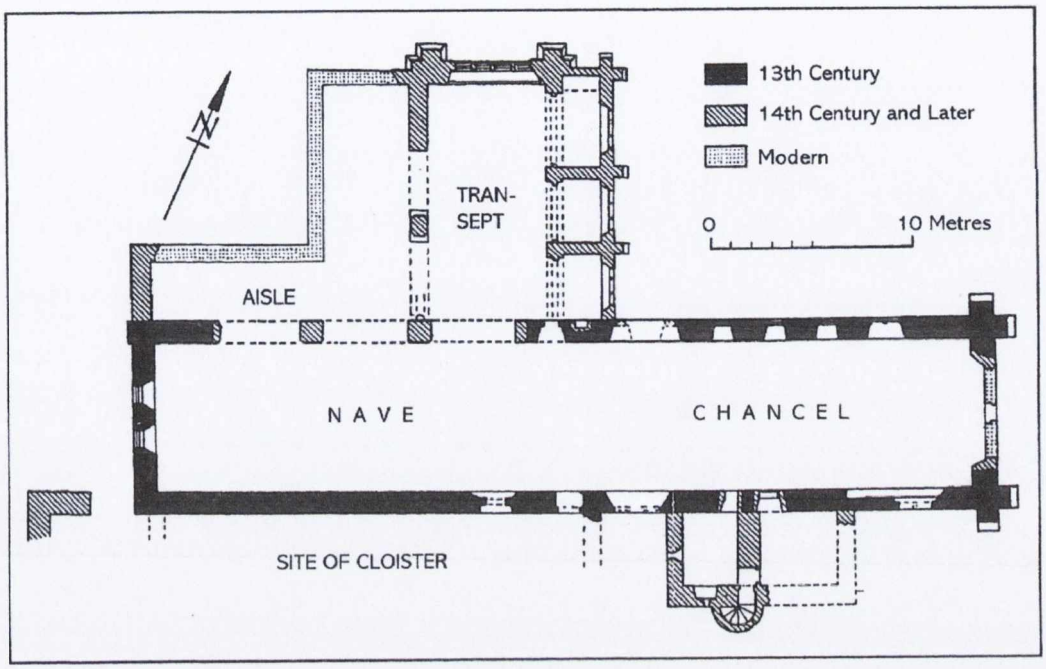
The Grey Friar from a 1791 engraving by Francis Grose



http://www.jbhall.freeservers.com/images/Seatown%20Castle%203.jpg

Appendix 17

Plan of Castledermot Franciscan Friary



Plan courtesy of Andy Halpin and Conor Newman, 'Ireland, An Oxford Archaeological Guide' (2006).

Appendix 18

Earls of Chester post 1066

Gerbod the Fleming
(Earldom bestowed by William I)(1070-1071)

Hugh D'Avranches (1071-1101)

Richard (son of Hugh) (1101-1120)

Ranulf I of Meschin (cousin of Richard) (1120-1129)

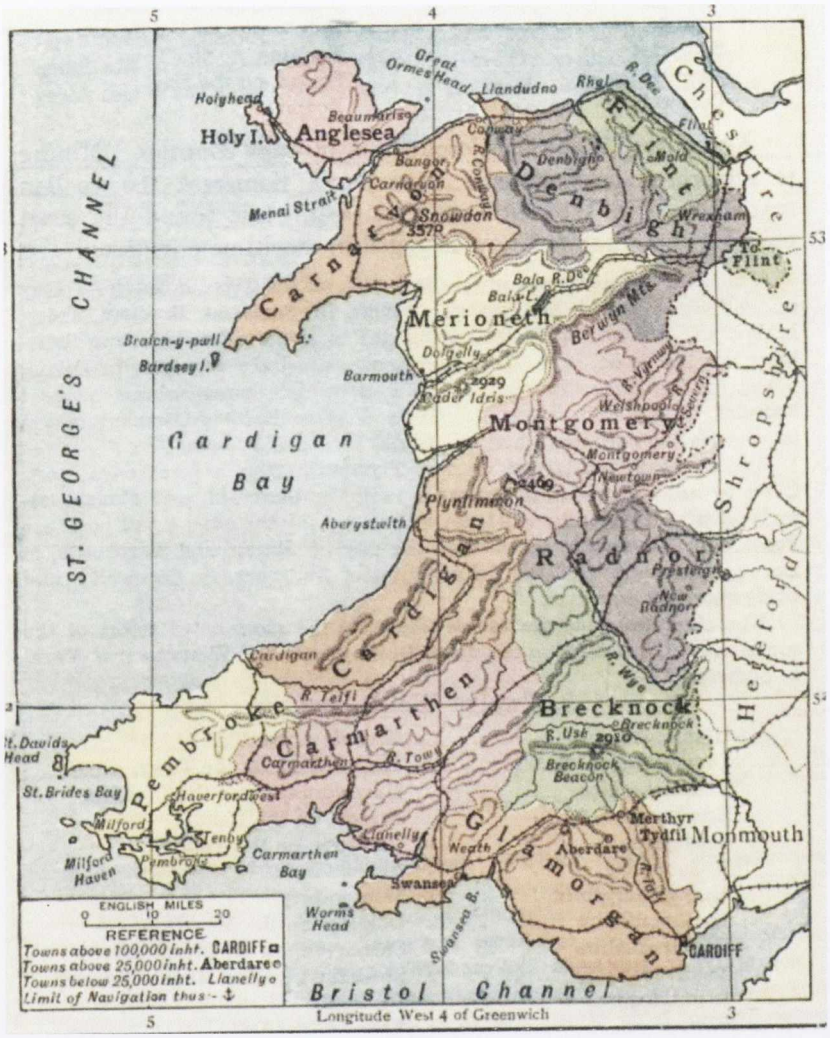
Ranulf II of Gernons (son of Ranulf I) (1129-1153)

Hugh II of Gyffylliog (grandson of Ranulf I) (1153-1181)

Ranulf III of Blundeville (son of Hugh II) (1181-1232)

Appendix 19

Map showing Welsh Marches to the rights, with the Earldoms of Chester, Shropshire and Hereford bordering the Welsh borders.



www.mdx.ac.uk/WWW/STUDY/mapwales.jpg

Appendix 20
Genealogy Table for De Lacy Family

Appendix 21
Weobley Castle (631) on the 1838 Tithe Map

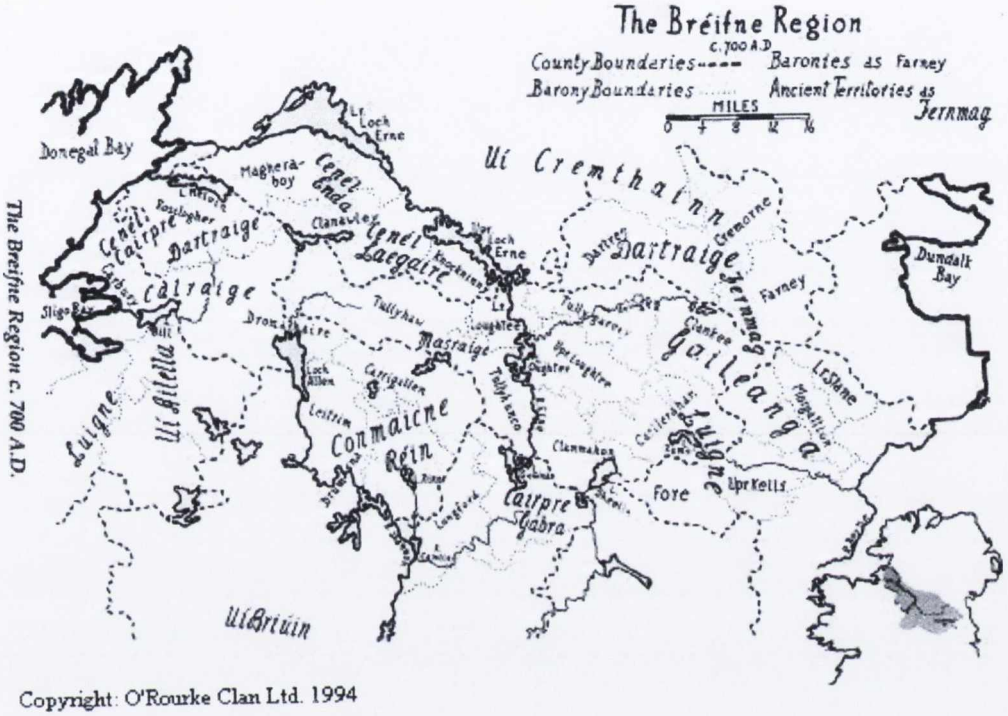
http://www.archenfield.com/Weobley%20Castle.htm

Appendix 22

http//www.iharchive.org.uk

Appendix 23

Map of Ireland from 700 ad, clearly showing the Bréifne Region.

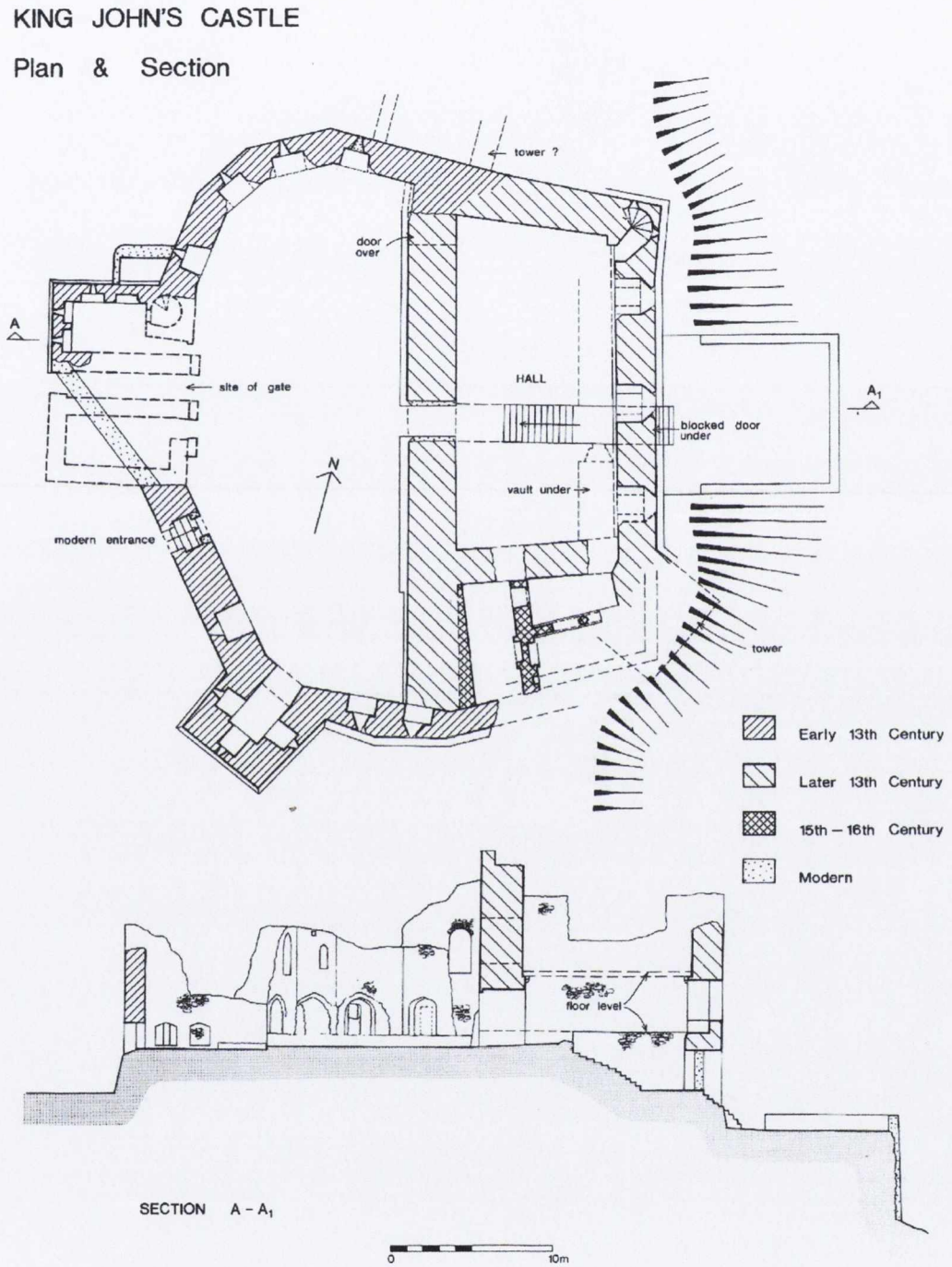


The Breifne Region c. 700 A.D.

Copyright: O'Rourke Clan Ltd. 1994

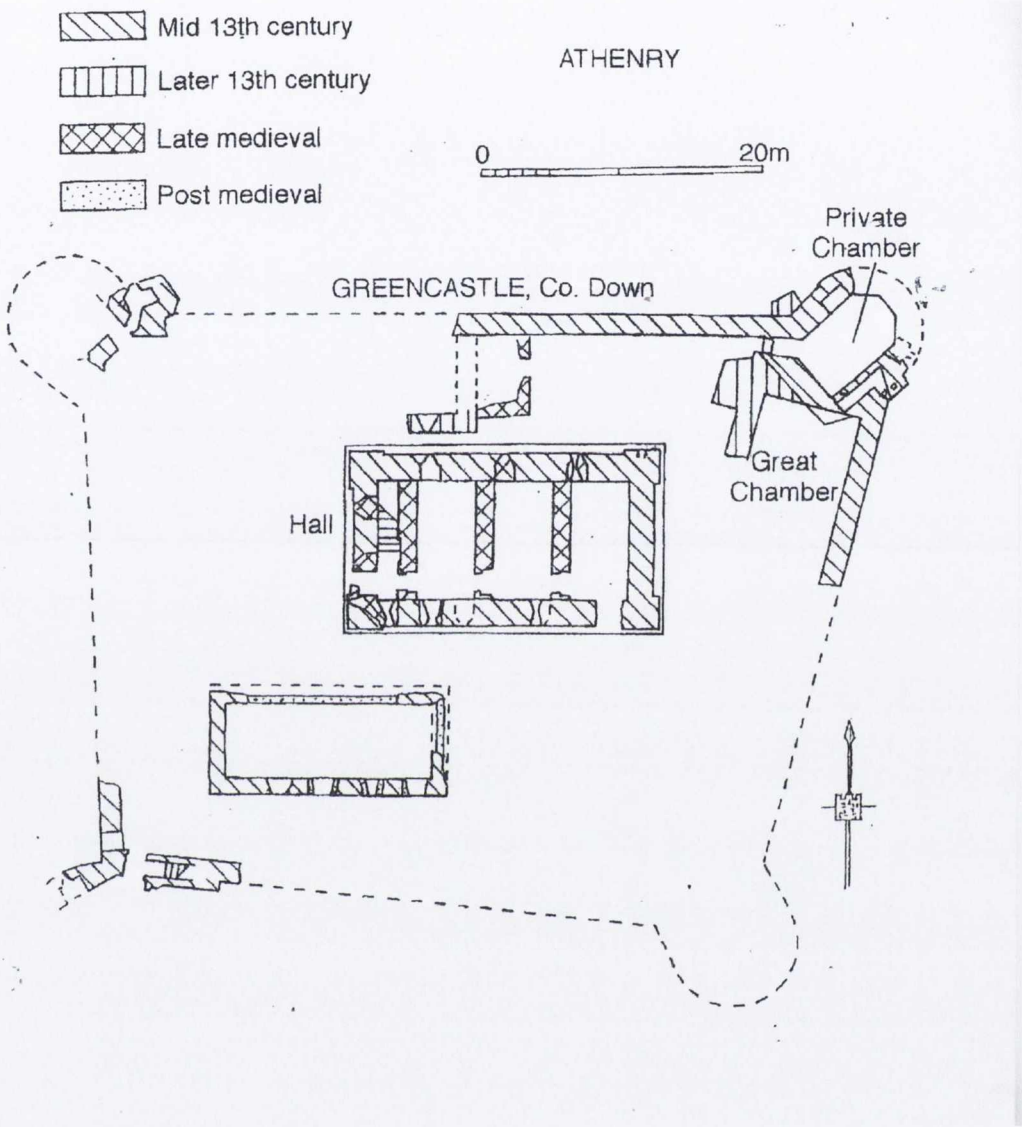
Appendix 24

Plan of King John's Castle



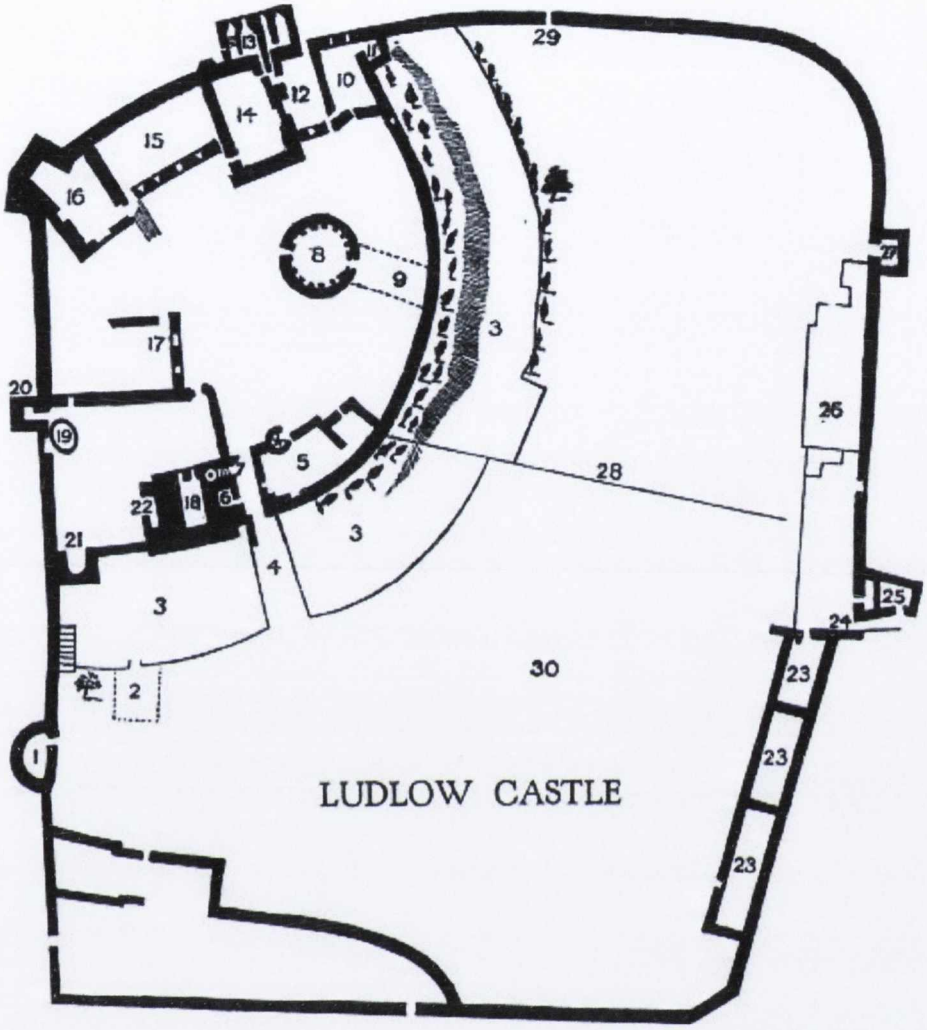
Plan courtesy of Victor Buckley and David Sweetman, 'Archaeological Survey of Louth' (1991).

Appendix 25
Plan of Greencastle



Courtesy of E M Jope, 'An Archaeological Survey of County Down' (1966).

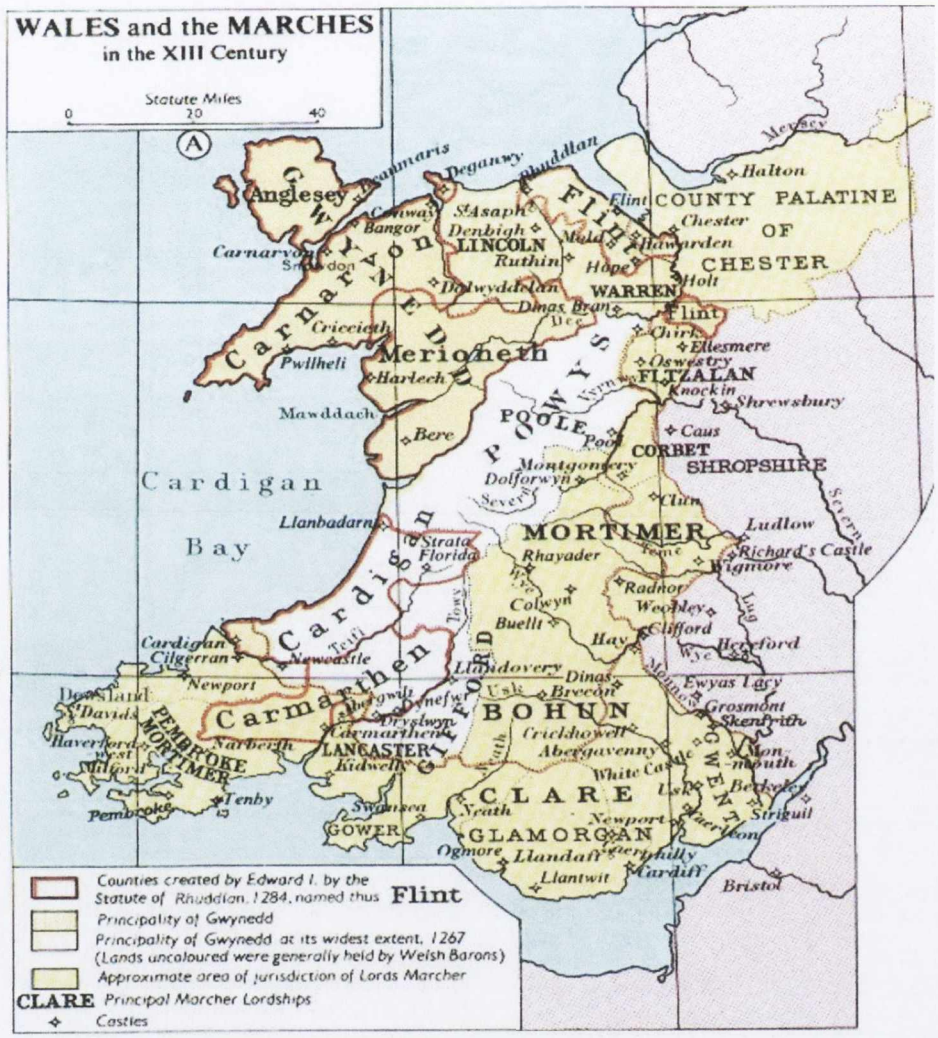
Appendix 26
Plan of Ludlow Castle



http://www.fromoldbooks.org/OmanCastles/pages/135-Plan-of-Ludlow-Castle/

Appendix 27

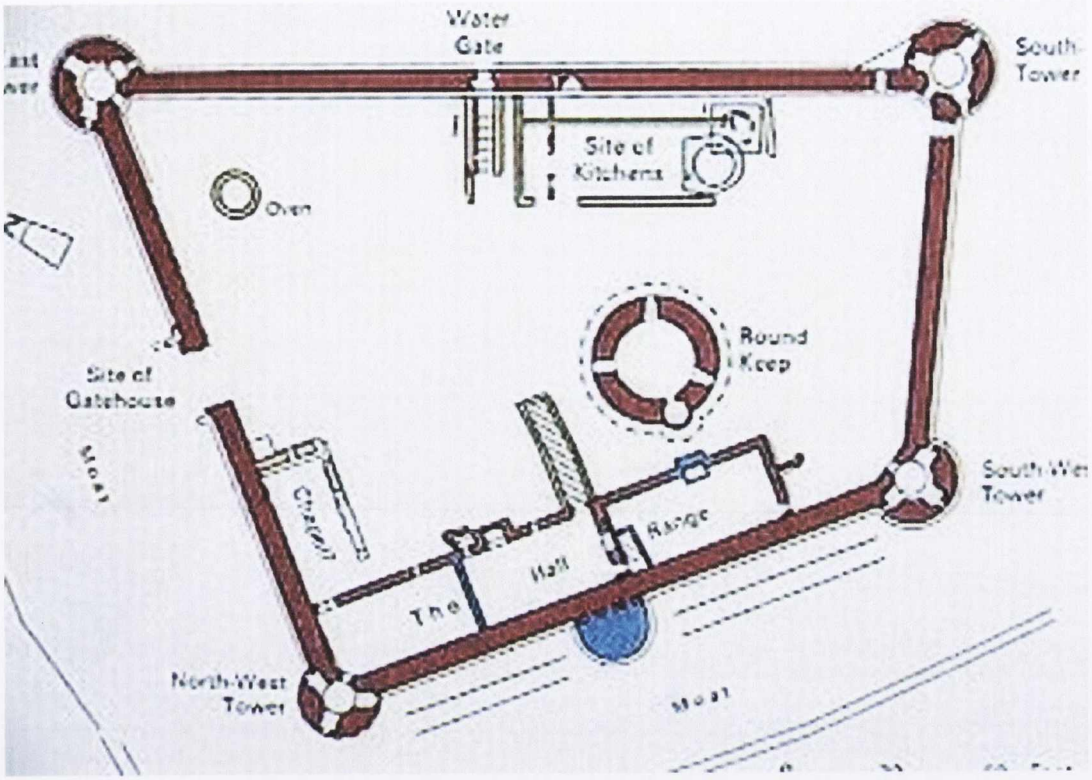
Map of Wales showing proximity of Skenfrith to Ewias Lacy.



http://www.designsofwonder.com/?content=MapRoom

Appendix 28

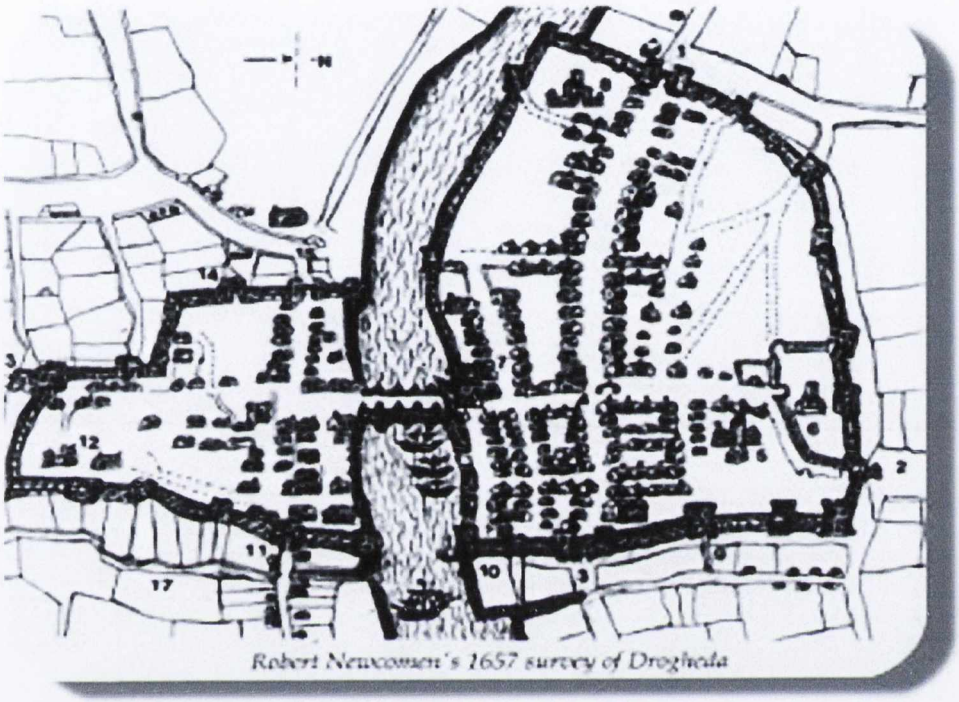
Plan of Skenfrith with round keep and corner cylindrical towers.



Photograph copyright ©1996 by Jeffrey L. Thomas

Appendix 29

Newcomen's Survey of Drogheda from the 17th century. The town walls are clearly visible and St Peter's is the roughly steepled shaped tower in the bottom right corner.

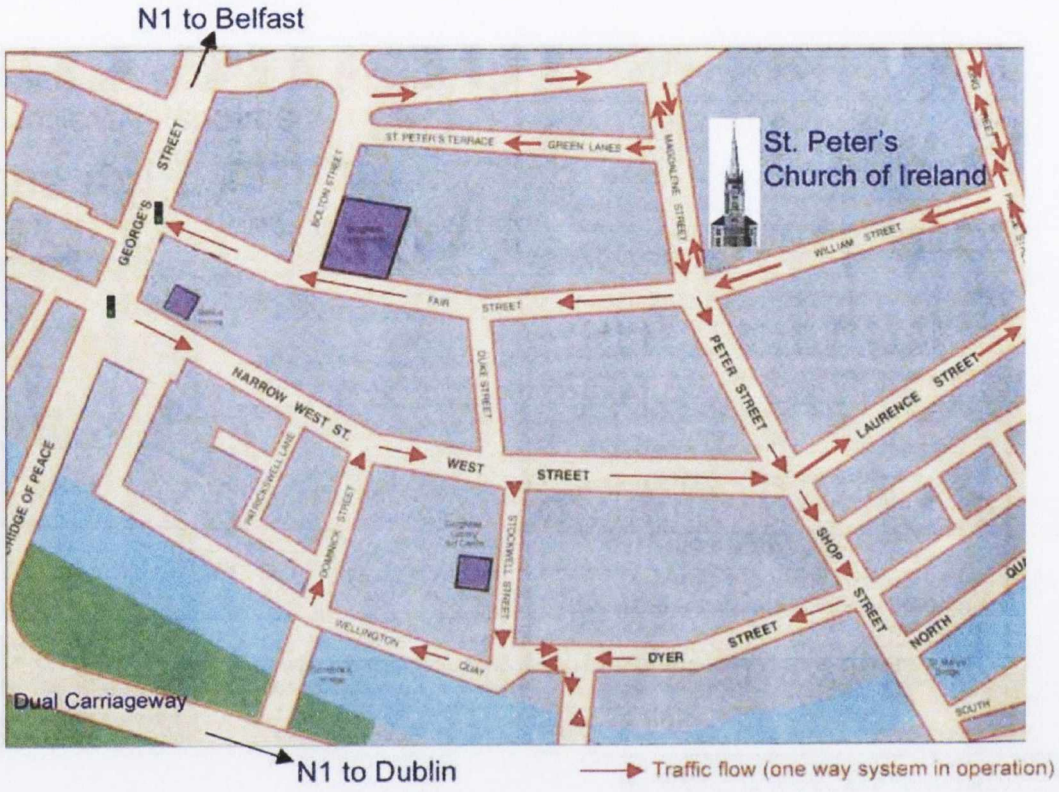


Robert Newcomen's 1657 survey of Drogheda

http://www.acsltd.ie/cms/publish/historical.shtml

Appendix 30

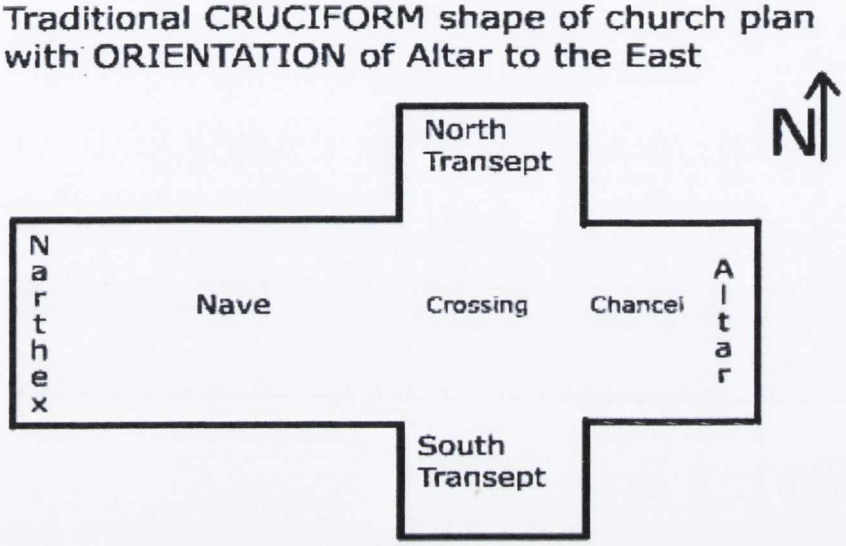
Map of Drogheda shown 'chequered effect' of streets as this criss-cross leading down to the Boyne River, with St Peter's church on right of map.



Copyright St Peter's Church of Ireland, Drogheda
http://drogheda.armagh.anglican.org/where

Appendix 31

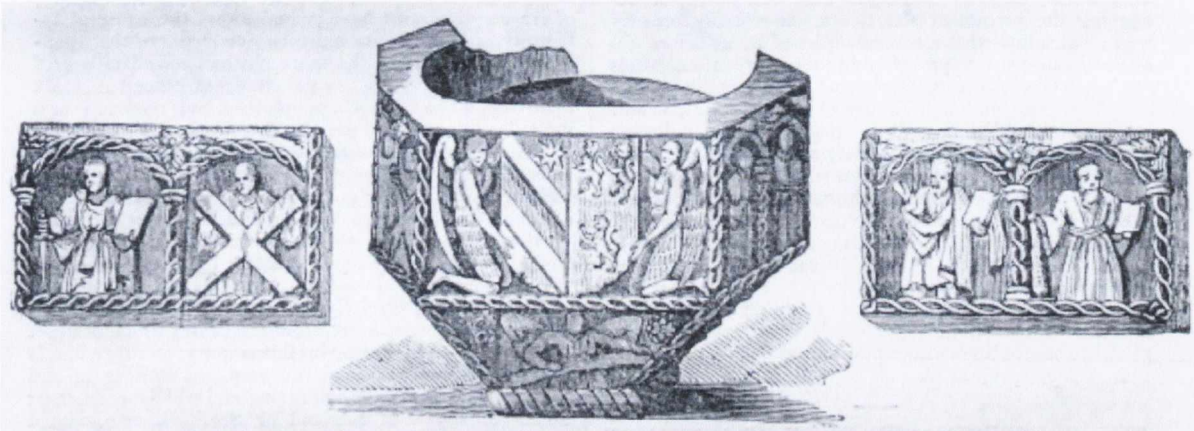
Plan of a simple cruciform church.



Copyright: www.norwichchurches.co.uk/.../churh-plan.gif

Appendix 32

An illustration of the St Peter's font taken from the first volume of the 'Dublin Penny Journal' in 1833.

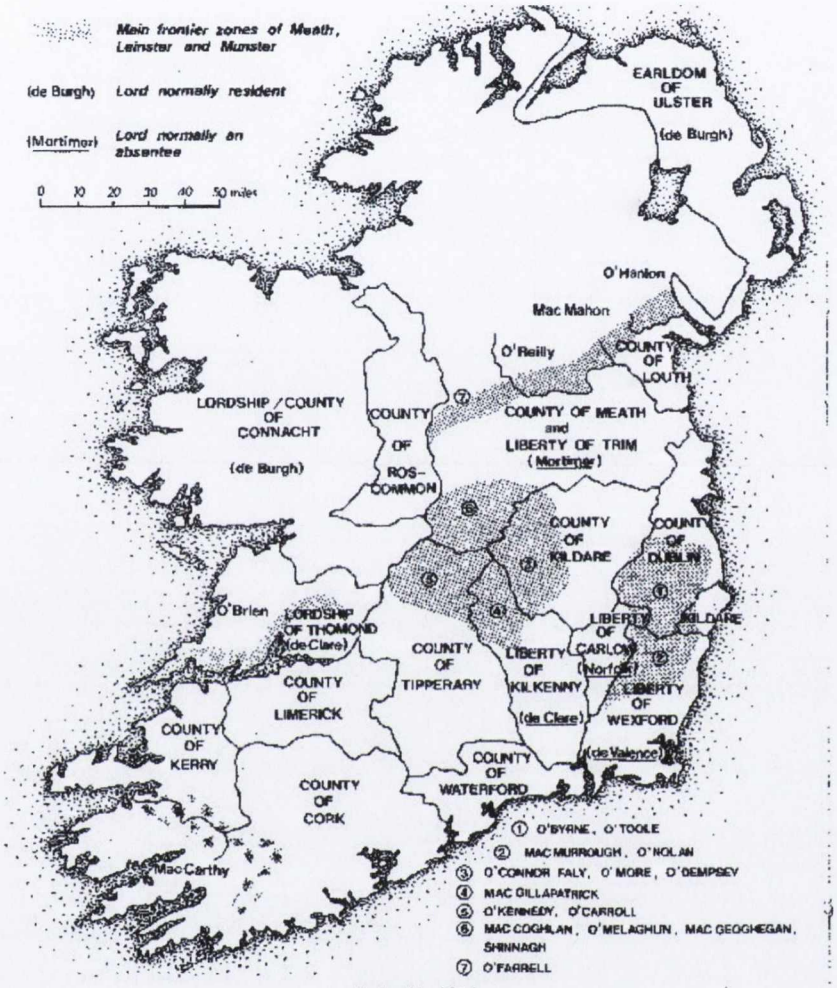


ANCIENT BAPTISMAL FONT, ST. PETER'S, DROGHEDA.

@copyright: http://www.libraryireland.com/articles/BaptismalFontDPJ1-45/index.php

Appendix 33

This map of Ireland in 1314 clearly shows the areas in Connacht and Ulster held by the de burgh family.



Ireland in 1314

Appendix 34

Genealogy table for de Burgh family

Genealogy Table for de Burgh's in Ireland

William de Burgh d.1205 = Anne, daughter of Donal O'Brian, King of Thomond

Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent d.1243
(brother of William)

Richard de Burgh = Egidia de Lacy
Conqueror of Connacht
d.1243

Richard II
d.1248

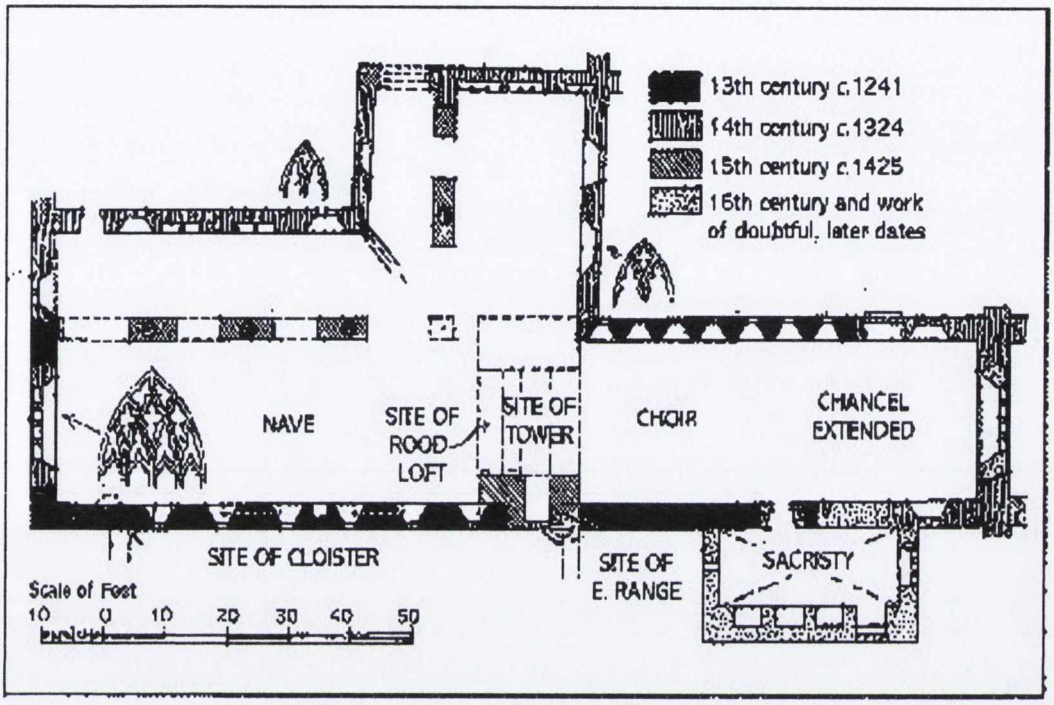
Walter = (1) Avelina (daughter of John fitz Geoffrey) (2) Maud, daughter of Hugh de Lacy
Lord of Connacht
Earl of Ulster
d.1271

William Óg
Ancestor to Mac William Burke
Lords of Mayo
d.1270

Richard III
Red Earl of Ulster
d.13

Appendix 35

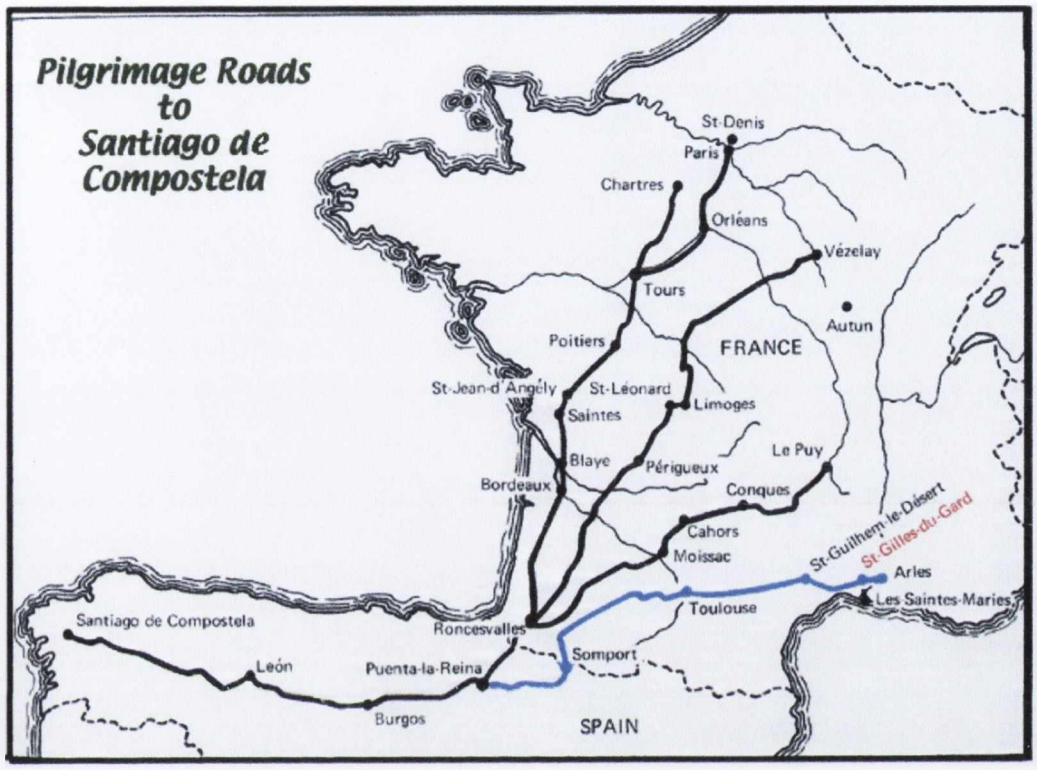
Plan of Athenry Dominican Priory



Plan courtesy of Andrew Halpin and Conor Newman.

Appendix 36

A Map showing the various pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela – the Pyrenees are situated between southern France and northern Spain.



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