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THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF MEDIEVAL ECCLESIASTICAL SETTLEMENT IN THE BARONY OF LOWER DUNDALK, CO. LOUTH

By

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Ph.D thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

April 2010

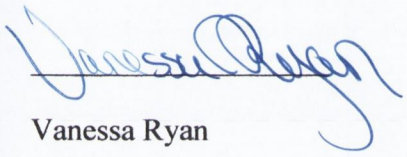
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SUMMARY

This thesis is a regional study of the archaeology of medieval ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk, Co. Louth, from *c.* 1000-1650. In the absence of excavation, the primary aim of this thesis was to devise a methodology for the consistent study of the archaeology of the sixteen medieval ecclesiastical sites which are known to have existed in this barony throughout the study period, and, to facilitate this end, the thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter I outlines the aim, scope and remit of the thesis and also provides a general historical background to the study area. Chapter II details a statement of the methodology as well as some alternative avenues of research. Chapter III discusses the archaeology of the pre-Norman foundations in the barony from *c.* 1000-1189 which were located at Faughart, Proleek, Roosky and Cornamucklagh; it also examines the re-use and development of the sites at Faughart, Proleek and Roosky from *c.* 1189-1650. Chapter IV assesses the archaeology of the eight rural Anglo-Norman churches which were located at Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Castletowncooley, Templetown, Willville, Grange, Muchgrange and Knocknagoran, while Chapter V analyses the archaeology of the four urban ecclesiastical sites which were situated in the medieval town of Carlingford; the Church of the Holy Trinity, St. Mary's Church, St. Michael's Church and the Dominican Abbey.

The thesis adopts an interdisciplinary approach because, as well as incorporating the extant archaeological data available from fieldwork, a wide range of primary source, cartographic and aerial photographic material was also employed in a bid to present the most balanced assessment of the archaeological evidence possible. Chapters III-V each opens with a concise introductory section, while the evidence for each ecclesiastical site is then considered individually under the sub-headings detailed in the methodology. Finally, Chapter VI serves as a concluding discussion of the major findings of the thesis, and their implications for the examination of medieval ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland more generally in a national context.

The major findings of this thesis can be succinctly summarized in the following manner. In the early medieval period the extant archaeological and historical evidence suggests that ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk was represented by at least four religious foundations at Faughart, Proleek, Roosky and Cornamucklagh. Historical evidence has indicated that the two early medieval ecclesiastical settlements at

Faughart and Roosky were originally female foundations, while that at Cornamucklagh was a male community. Compared with overall distribution patterns of pre-Norman ecclesiastical establishments for Co. Louth, the settlement pattern apparent for this barony is one of the sparsest and contrasts greatly with the denser concentrations of contemporary sites in the more southerly regions of the county. Moreover, it was also found that the settlements at Faughart, Proleek and Roosky were re-used by the Anglo-Normans in the period after 1189, while that at Cornamucklagh is not likely to have survived the ravages of the Viking raids of the ninth and tenth centuries.

In the period following the Anglo-Norman incursion into Louth it was found that ecclesiastical settlement patterns in the barony of Lower Dundalk changed irrevocably. In addition to the three sites at Faughart, Proleek and Roosky, which were subsumed by the Anglo-Norman settlers, at least eight additional rural churches were established at Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Castletowncooley, Templetown, Willville, Grange, Muchgrange, and Knocknagoran, although none of them appear to have survived in use after the end of the medieval period *c.* 1650. All of these churches, except for Knocknagoran, were located in the fertile south and south-eastern portions of the Cooley Peninsula, indicating a distinct avoidance of the central mountainous portions of the isthmus and a singular preference for the more agriculturally viable low-lying plains which span the periphery of this land mass. In addition to these sites, a further three urban churches were established at the medieval town of Carlingford; the Church of the Holy Trinity, St. Mary's Church and St. Michael's Church, along with a Dominican Abbey which was founded in the town *c.* 1305.

Finally, it was found that the process of sub-infeudation of this barony does not appear to have been as intensive as that experienced in the adjoining barony of Upper Dundalk, and it would seem that this settlement tendency was due to both the political friction which emerged between the rival Anglo-Norman de Lacy and de Verdun families at a critical period in the colonization process, and the geographical considerations which ensured that only certain portions of the peninsula could be effectively and safely colonized. Ultimately these restricted trends of settlement were to have a profound impact upon the development of the medieval church in the barony of Lower Dundalk, not only in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but for the duration of the entire medieval period.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

I. AIM OF THE THESIS

For any study of the parishes and priests of Armagh, a consideration of the church buildings as the focal point in each community, and the place in and around which the liturgy and so many of the rites of passage were celebrated is very important...the church buildings of County Louth may be used as an index of the 'state of the church' in the later middle ages.[1]

(H.A. Jefferies, 1997)

The above observation, made in the 1990s by Henry Jefferies in his detailed study of the sixteenth century priests and prelates of Armagh, aptly captures the importance of medieval church archaeology, not only to the discipline of archaeology itself, but also to the study of medieval history be it ecclesiastical, political or social. The fundamental aim of this thesis is therefore to examine the archaeological evidence for ecclesiastical settlement, both urban and rural, in the barony of Lower Dundalk, Co. Louth in the period from *c.* 1000-1650. [2] However, a core tenet of this research is based upon the hypothesis that pursuing a solely archaeological study of these ecclesiastical sites in isolation as a group of 'churches and monasteries' is inadequate. Alternatively it has proven much more productive to conduct an interdisciplinary examination of this topic which takes into account the associated political and social factors which impacted upon the development of these sites in the medieval period and which also engages the relevant evidence available from primary documentation as well as from etymological, cartographic and aerial photographic sources. Essentially these supplementary resources have been employed in a bid to present the most balanced assessment of the archaeological data possible, as the study itself is primarily driven and focused from an archaeological viewpoint.

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[1] JEFFERIES, H.A., *Priests and Prelates of Armagh in the Age of Reformations 1518-1558,* (Dublin, 1997), pp. 20-22.

[2] It should be noted that throughout the course of this thesis the term 'rural' is intended to denote those ecclesiastical settlements which evolved outside 'true towns' during the study period. This is a settlement definition which has previously been utilised by O'Conor. See O'CONOR, K.D., *The Archaeology of Medieval Rural Settlement in Ireland,* Discovery Programme Monograph Number 3, Discovery Programme, Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 1998), p. xi. Therefore, for the purposes of this study the ecclesiastical settlements at Carlingford have been designated as 'urban', while the remaining sites at Faughart, Proleek, Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Templetown, Castletowncooley, Willville, Grange, Muchgrange, Knocknagoran and Cornamucklagh have all been defined as 'rural'.

Furthermore, the archaeological perspective of this study has not addressed the topic from a uniquely ecclesiastical angle. Ultimately it seeks to determine not only the chronology, typology and morphology of the individual sites but also how they functioned within the wider network of the archaeological landscape surrounding them. Although this is an approach which has never before been applied to an archaeological study of the churches of Lower Dundalk, it has been previously utilized to good effect by several researchers, and perhaps most notably by Creighton in his 2002 publication, *Castles and Landscapes: Power, Community and Fortification in Medieval England.* In this volume Creighton examines the 'symbiotic link' or 'interrelationship'[3] between castle and hinterland and explores the principle of 'widening our frame of reference and adapting a "landscape approach" to castles' in order to 'achieve a more holistic and balanced understanding' of the sites in question as well as their 'spatial relationships' with other castle sites.[4]

In summary, while the primary aim of this thesis is to examine the archaeological evidence for medieval ecclesiastical settlement in Lower Dundalk, its subsidiary aim adopts a broader context of study and also assesses the interaction of these ecclesiastical sites with their neighbouring associated archaeological monuments while investigating their role in the surrounding archaeological landscape.

II. SCOPE OF THE THESIS

Political historians have traditionally tended towards the opinion that the year 1534 effectively marks the cessation of the medieval period in Ireland specifically because this year signalled the end of the Kildare stranglehold over the island and heralded the onset of the Tudor reconquest of the country.[5] However, from the perspective of archaeological settlement it has been acknowledged by several researchers that the medieval period in Ireland spans from 1169-*c.*1660.[6] Graham, in the 1970s, remarked that this method of dating could be validated on the following basis:

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[3] CREIGHTON, O.H., *Castles and Landscapes: Power, Community and Fortification in Medieval England,* (London, 2002), pp. 1-6 & pp. 223-26.

[4] CREIGHTON, (2002), pp. 2 & 4.

[5] O'CONOR, (1998), p. xi. See for example, MARTIN, F.X., 'Introduction: Medieval Ireland', *A New History of Ireland. Volume II Medieval Ireland 1169-1534,* ed. by A. COSGROVE, (Oxford, 1987), p. xlix. See also SMITH, B., *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland. The English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 1-2, who broaches the subject of whether or not colonial society in Ireland changed significantly in the years following 1550.

[6] JOPE, E.M., (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Belfast, 1966), p. iii; GRAHAM, B., 'The Evolution of the Settlement Pattern of Anglo-Norman Eastmeath', in

> *...in 1169 Anglo-Norman forces first landed in Ireland and...by 1660 the last vestiges of Norman influence on the landscape were disappearing in the era of change in landholding and settlement patterns which was part of the aftermath of Cromwell's conquest of Ireland in the early 1650s.*[7]

This is a stance which has more recently been endorsed by O'Conor who is of the opinion that the late eleventh and twelfth centuries mark the beginning of the medieval period while the latter half of the seventeenth century effectively symbolizes its termination on the grounds that the material remains of the past rarely change overnight and that various forms of medieval settlement types were only abandoned at this stage.[8] However, it is important to acknowledge that not all archaeologists are convinced of the veracity of this argument. O'Keeffe, to cite just one example, has questioned its validity and has alternatively suggested that a date of 1600 would be a more appropriate one for the close of the Middle Ages in this country mainly due to what he perceives as fundamental differences in the archaeology of seventeenth century Ireland which he believes displayed manifestations of Renaissance culture from *c.* 1600 onwards.[9]

After due consideration had been given to the above arguments it was originally determined that the scope of this thesis would cover the phase from *c.* 1180-*c.* 1650 to include the period between the initial Anglo-Norman colonization of Co. Louth and the political and religious upheavals of the first half of the seventeenth century, when several of the medieval churches under review were reported as having fallen into ruin.[10] However, as the research process progressed it was decided that the range of this study should be expanded to also include the period from *c.* 1000-1169, both because of the fundamental political, religious and social changes which took place within this timespan[11] and also because it is impossible to accurately gauge the full force of the impression made by the Anglo-Norman incursion into the barony of Lower Dundalk

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Fields, Farms and Settlement in Europe, ed. by R.H. BUCHANAN, R.A. BUTLIN & D. MCCOURT, The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, (Belfast, 1976), p. 38; O'CONOR, (1998), p. xi; BARRY, T.B., 'The Chronology and Development of Medieval Rural Settlement in Munster', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society,* (2000), p. 191; MCNEILL, T.E., 'When should we place the boundary between the medieval and post-medieval periods in Ireland?' *The Post-Medieval Archaeology of Ireland 1550-1850,* ed. by A. HORNING, (Bray, 2007), pp. 7-14.

[7] GRAHAM, (1976), p. 38.

[8] O'CONOR, (1998), p. xi.

[9] O'KEEFFE, T., *Medieval Ireland: An Archaeology,* (Stroud, 2001), p. 14.

[10] See for example *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,*(T.C.D. MS. E.36), transc.& ed. by T. FITZPATRICK, 'The Royal Visitation of 1622', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VI, Number 1, (1925), pp. 4-11 & *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* transc. by J.B. LESLIE, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 1, (1929), pp. 19-41.

[11] Ó CRÓINÍN, D., *Early Medieval Ireland 400-1200,* (London & New York, 1995), p. 12.

without first considering pre-Norman indigenous settlement in the region as it existed prior to 1169.[12] Indeed, one predominant recurring feature of Anglo-Norman settlement in Co. Louth is the re-use, by the newcomers, of pre-existing native Irish settlement structures,[13] a trend which is particularly evident at ecclesiastical sites[14]and which has been noted in other regions of the country, for example in Counties Meath, Down and Offaly.[15] Thus, it is essential not to analyse the development of Anglo-Norman settlement in the region as though it evolved in a 'spatial vacuum',[16] when this was clearly not the case.

III. REMIT OF THE STUDY AREA

The initial aim of this thesis was to make an archaeological analysis of all of the ecclesiastical remains which are spread out in Co. Louth over the six baronies of Lower Dundalk, Upper Dundalk, Louth, Ardee, Ferrard and Drogheda and which number in excess of 100 sites.[17] However, it soon became apparent that it would be impossible to make any more than a fleeting investigation of each of these sites. Therefore, in order to present a much more in-depth and relevant analysis of the subject, the decision was made to reduce the territorial remit of this study to just one of the six Louth baronies, and after some careful consideration it was decided to focus solely upon the medieval ecclesiastical settlement of the barony of Lower Dundalk. [18]

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[12] BARRY, T.B, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (London & New York, 1989), p. 2.

[13] See for example Ó DRISCEOIL, C., 'Recycled Ringforts. The Evidence from Archaeological Excavation for the Conversion of Pre-Existing Monuments to Motte Castles in Medieval Ireland', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XXV, Number 2, (2002), pp. 189-201.

[14] BARRY, (1989), p. 15.

[15] For examples in Meath and Down see HUGHES, K., 'The Offices of S. Finnian of Clonard and S. Cianan of Duleek' *Analecta Bollandiana,* Tomus LXXIII, Fasc. III-IV, (1955), p. 342 & pp. 344-345. For Offaly see FITZPATRICK, E. & O'BRIEN, C., *The Medieval Churches of County Offaly,* Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1998), p. 149.

[16] BARRY, (1989), p. 15.

[17] See Figure 1. Buckley lists 163 ecclesiastical sites (including convents, cemeteries & killeens) for Co. Louth in the *Inventory* while Buckley & Sweetman list 115 in the *Survey.* See BUCKLEY, V.M., (ed), *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin 1986), pp. 71-85; BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991), pp. 218-70.

[18]These modern baronies are administrative divisions which roughly correlate with the ancient Irish territorial boundaries which were initially adopted by the Anglo-Norman administration from the thirteenth century onwards and then later used by the government in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to identify the territorial entities, in the form of provinces, counties and baronies, which shaped the organizational structure for local government in Ireland. A barony was usually formed from several Gaelic-Irish 'tuaths'. From the seventh century onwards the northern portion of County Louth, including the barony of Lower Dundalk, was occupied by a large tribe known as the Conailli Muirthemne and their territory appears to have comprised two distinct regions of Magh Muirthemne and Cuailgne, which are coterminous with the modern baronies of Upper and Lower Dundalk respectively. See JOPE, (1966), p. 104; GOSLING, P., *A Survey and Report on the Archaeology of the Town and District, Part 1, Introduction*

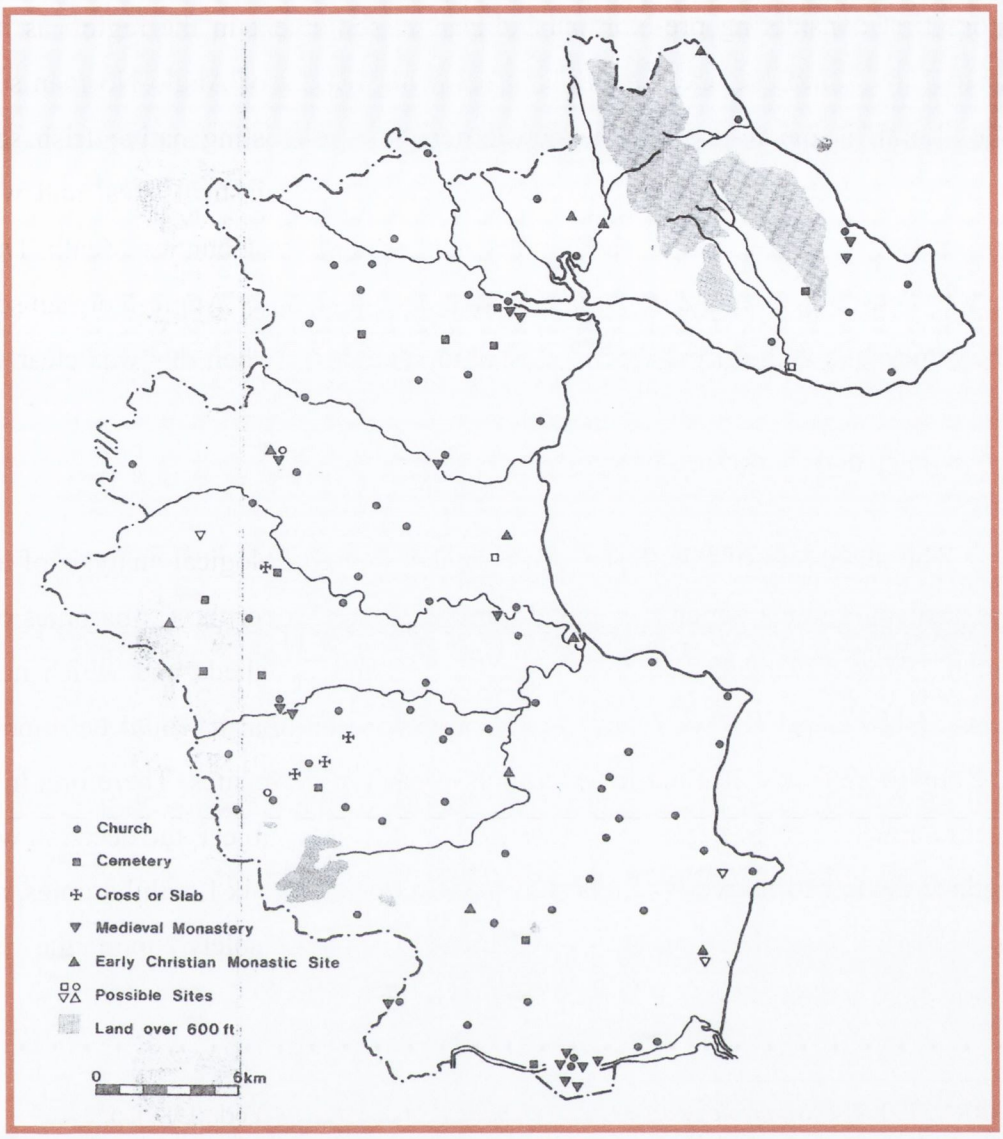


Figure 1: Distribution of Ecclesiastical Remains in County Louth with early Christian monastic sites indicated with upright triangles.
(BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991)).

The reasoning behind this decision was manifold. Firstly, the barony of Lower Dundalk is coterminous with the Cooley Peninsula, a land mass measuring approximately 20km in length and 155 square kilometres in area which separates Carlingford Lough to the north-east from Dundalk Bay to the southwest.[19] The topographical distinctiveness of this peninsula, which is dominated by the upland spine of the Cooley Mountains and which is endowed with a variety of unique geological and geographical features, has long been acknowledged.[20] Indeed, the topographical uniqueness of this barony has been discussed in great detail by Hughes who has concluded that:

> *Few sections of the eastern coastland of Ireland possess such a variegated landscape, both physical and cultural, as the peninsula which separates Carlingford Lough from Dundalk Bay in north County Louth...it shares in three of the country's main physiographic provinces...the peninsula's distinctiveness has always been well-attested as is shown by the survival of the regional name Cooley (Cuailgne).*[21]

It is precisely this topographical and geographical diversity which makes the barony of Lower Dundalk such an ideal subject for analysis because the 'variegated landscape' has undoubtedly had a major impact upon the settlement patterns of the region for several hundred years. It is notable that medieval ecclesiastical patterns of settlement on this peninsula were all concentrated in a broad ring stretching from Faughart in the north-west, right down to Templetown in the south, and then back up again to Carlingford in the north-east.[22] The positioning of these sites, along with the other interspersed settlements located at Proleek, Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Grange, Muchgrange, Castletowncooley, Willville and Roosky, are all co-extensive with the agriculturally

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and Review, Dundalk Urban District Council, (Dundalk, 1982), p. 15; GILLESPIE, R. & O'SULLIVAN, H. 'Introduction', to *The Borderlands. Essays on the History of the Ulster-Leinster Border,* ed. by R. GILLESPIE & H. O'SULLIVAN, The Institute of Irish Studies, (Belfast, 1989), p. 1; BUCKLEY, V.M., 'From the Darkness to the Dawn: The Later Prehistoric and Early Christian Borderlands', in *The Borderlands. Essays on the History of the Ulster-Leinster Border,* ed. by R. GILLESPIE & H. O'SULLIVAN, The Institute of Irish Studies, (Belfast, 1989), p. 33; BYRNE, F.J., *Irish Kings and High Kings,* Second Edition, (Dublin, 2001), p. 118.

[19] COONEY, G., BRADY, C. & BROGAN, C., *The Cooley Peninsula: An Archaeological Landscape in County Louth,* Archaeology Ireland Heritage Guide Number 15, (2001), p. 1.

[20] AALEN, F.H.A., 'Some Historical Aspects of Landscape and Rural Life in Omeath, Co. Louth', *Irish Geography,* Volume IV, Number 4, (1962a), pp. 256-278; AALEN, F.H.A., 'Tradition and History in Omeath, County Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XV, Number 2, (1962b), pp. 121-24; HUGHES, T.J., 'Land Holding and Settlement in the Cooley Peninsula of Louth', *Irish Geography,* Volume IV, Number 3, (1961), pp. 149-174; BASSETT, G.H., *Bassett's County Louth 1886: Guide and Directory,* (Dundalk, 1998), p. 13; COONEY, BRADY, & BROGAN,(2001), p. 1.

[21] HUGHES, (1961), p. 149.

[22] See Figure 2. In Chapters II & III the sites have also been discussed in this order, starting with those located in the north-west of the barony and then moving down to the south and then back up to the north-east.

fertile and calcareous lowlands of the peninsula. Indeed, in the years after the arrival of the Anglo-Norman settlers to this area, in the late 1180s, there appears to have been a deliberate avoidance of settlement on the mountainous mid-section of the peninsula which continued to be populated by the Gaelic-Irish of the region and which was primarily composed of marginal land with limited agricultural potential.[23]These settlement trends were to have serious ramifications, not only for the evolution of the medieval Church in Lower Dundalk, but also for the future political development and stability of the barony itself.

Moreover, research conducted by Hughes has determined that an early indication of the significance of the lowlands of the peninsula for the history of colonization and settlement in Cooley is provided by the occurrence of the generic element 'baile', or homestead, in placenames dotted around this area. In eastern Leinster 'baile' is frequently associated with a personal name of Anglo-Norman origin and as such has been commonly anglicized as 'town.' It is therefore extremely significant that 'baile' and 'town' names in Cooley are almost entirely confined to the low-lying plains of the southeast and south, and indicate areas of permanent Anglo-Norman settlement. In direct contrast to this pattern Hughes has found that the early placenames found in the mountainous sections of the peninsula are usually Gaelic toponyms which describe distinguishing physical qualities of individual areas.[24]

Initially it was decided to concentrate solely upon the rural element of the ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk and make an archaeological study of the churches and church sites located at Faughart, Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Templetown, Castletowncooley, Willville, Grange, Muchgrange, Knocknagoran, Cornamucklagh and Roosky. The primary rationale for this decision was that a large corpus of secondary research, both archaeological and historical, had already been carried out upon the medieval settlement at Carlingford and its attendant ecclesiastical foundations, while the archaeology of the rural churches and monasteries of the peninsula had never been studied collectively or comparatively as a regional grouping. However, the scarcity of physical remains at some of the rural sites, particularly at Grange, Muchgrange, Willville, Castletowncooley, Cornamucklagh and Knocknagoran, meant that, in the absence of extensive excavation at these churches, the primary data set was significantly limited in the degree of archaeological information

[23] JEFFERIES, (Dublin, 1997), p. 16.
[24] HUGHES, (1961), p. 151.

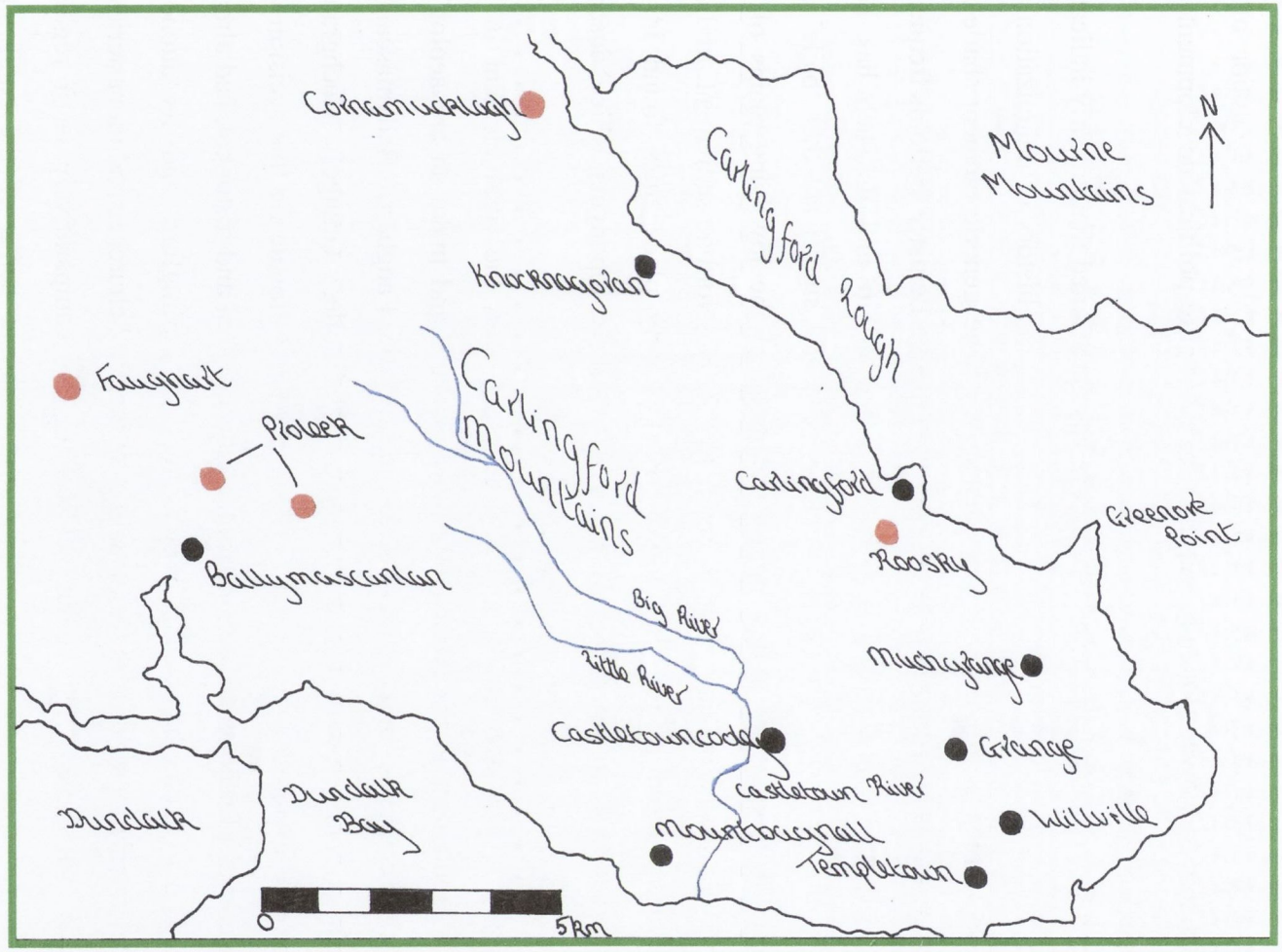


Figure 2: Rough distribution map of the ecclesiastical sites in the barony of Lower Dundalk. The pre-Norman sites are indicated in red, the Anglo-Norman sites in black.

which could be elicited. Consequently it was decided to extend the remit of the primary data set to also include the urban ecclesiastical settlements at Carlingford, which comprised three additional churches and a Dominican priory.[25] Notwithstanding the existence of numerous historical publications and excavation reports concerning the ecclesiastical sites of Carlingford, no previous attempt has been made to conduct a comparative archaeological assessment of these sites with their rural counterparts on the Cooley Peninsula, and it is therefore hoped this study can make an original contribution to the field of research. Accordingly, this thesis has evolved as a regional study of the archaeology of medieval ecclesiastical settlement, both urban and rural, in the barony of Lower Dundalk, Co. Louth, from *c.* 1000-1650.

IV. GENERAL HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY AREA

This thesis is an archaeological analysis of medieval ecclesiastical settlement in one Louth barony; it has not therefore been feasible to also include a detailed historical investigation of the study area. However, it would be impossible to make a complete and competent assessment of this subject without also considering the numerous historical events which undoubtedly impacted upon the evolution of medieval ecclesiastical settlement in the region. Moreover, it is important to provide a general historical background to the study area which will allow its medieval ecclesiastical archaeology to be discussed within the relevant historical context and as such it is not intended as a conclusive historical narrative, but rather as a starting point from which to begin a comprehensive appraisal of the ecclesiastical archaeology of the barony of Lower Dundalk from *c.*1000-1650. There are three distinct periods of the history of the barony of Lower Dundalk to be considered; the first phase, *c.* 1000-1189 covers the period directly preceding the Anglo-Norman colonisation of the peninsula, the second segment, *c.* 1189-1485, addresses the period of Anglo-Norman colonisation in the barony right up until the accession of Henry VII, the first Tudor king in 1485, while the third section, *c.* 1485-1650, tackles the Tudor and Cromwellian periods right up until the effective cessation of the medieval period in Ireland.

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[25] On the advice of Dr. Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, of the Department of Archaeology, NUI Galway & Dr. Katharine Simms of the Department of Medieval History, Trinity College, Dublin, pers. comm., (March, 2009). It was also decided at this stage to include two enclosures at Proleek. Although there are now no extant remains at either of these sites, Buckley and Sweetman are of the opinion that they are early medieval monastic enclosures. See BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256. See also Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, III. Proleek.

a. The Pre-Norman Period, *c.* 1000-1189

From the seventh century onwards the northern portion of County Louth, including the barony of Lower Dundalk, was occupied by a tribe known as the Conailli Muirthemne, or the O'Connells of the Plain.[26] The very first historical entry pertaining to this kingdom of the Conailli Muirthemne occurred in 688 A.D.,[27] and from this point, the territory of the Conailli Muirthemne appears to have comprised two distinct regions of Magh Muirthemne and Cuailgne, which roughly correlate to the modern baronies of Upper and Lower Dundalk respectively.[28] During this period documentary sources indicate that the Louth territories of the Conailli Muirthemne constituted a kingdom within Ulster,[29] and indeed, Victor Buckley has asserted that this tribe even considered themselves to be 'ethnically linked' to the kingdoms of Ulaid. [30] However, by the early eighth century the political fortunes of the Ulaid were in abeyance and *c.*735 A.D. the High King and founder of the Cenél Eoghain dynasty in Ulster, Aéd Allan, exacted a crushing defeat on the Ulaid at Faughart, in north Co. Louth. [31] F.J. Byrne has credited this pivotal conflict at Faughart with determining the political shape of Co. Louth right up until the end of the eleventh century. [32]

Until relatively recently the conventional view of the early Irish Church during this period was that it was principally monastic in nature and was presided over by abbots

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[26] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 33.
[27] BYRNE, F.J., *Irish Kings and High Kings,* Second Edition, (Dublin, 2001), p. 118.
[28] GOSLING, P., *A Survey and Report on the Archaeology of the Town and District, Part 1, Introduction and Review,* Dundalk Urban District Council, (1982), p. 15.
[29] BYRNE, (2001), p. 90 & p. 118; BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 39; GOSLING, (1982), p. 15.
[30]BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 33.
[31] The *Annals of Ulster* and the *Annals of Tigernach* record this event in 735 while the *Annals of the Four Masters* have included it under the year 732. See *Annála Uladh: Annals of Ulster, Otherwise Annala Senait, Annals of Senat; A Chronicle of Irish Affairs A.D. 431 to A.D. 1540, Volume I, A.D. 431-A.D. 1056,* ed. & trans. with notes by W.M. HENNESSY, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1887), 735; *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131), Part 1,* ed. by S. MACAIRT and G. MACNIOCAILL, The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, (Dublin, 1983), 735; *Cathal Óg Mac Maghnusa and the Annals of Ulster / Aubrey Gwynn,* ed. by N.Ó MURAÍLE, The McManus Clan Association, (Enniskillen, 1998), 735; *Annals of Tigernach,* ed. & trans. by W. STOKES, (Llanerch, 1993), 735; *Annála Rioghachta Eireann: Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters from the Earliest Period to the Year 1616, Volume II,* ed. by J. O'DONOVAN, (New York, 1966), 732; *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland: From the Earliest Times to the Year 1616 / The Four Masters [Michael O'Clery et al.],* ed. by K. NICHOLLS, (Dublin, 1990), 732. See also, TEMPEST, H.G., *Gossiping Guide to Louth and Parts of Surrounding Counties: Descriptive and Historical,* Second Edition, (1920), p. 97; BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 32; BYRNE, (2001), p. 117; LACEY, B., *Cenél Conaill and the Donegal Kingdoms AD 500-800,* (Dublin, 2006), p. 289.
[32] BYRNE, (2001), p. 118.

rather than by bishops.[33] This theory purported that in the sixth or seventh century the early diocesan system was mainly supplanted by abbatial government; the bishop was effectively replaced by the abbot as the supreme figure in the church, and that the entire structure of delimited dioceses became obsolete. The widely held opinion was that at this point a system of dispersed jurisdiction, the 'monastic *paruchia,'* developed comprising a host of scattered subject churches over which principal monasteries, like Iona or Clonmacnoise, had ultimate authority.[34] However research conducted in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s by Corish, Sharpe and Etchingham, has questioned this analysis and spearheaded an interesting discussion about the organization of the early Church throughout this period.[35] For example, Corish has suggested that a non-monastic pastoral clergy was only superseded with the arrival of the Vikings towards the close of the eighth century,[36] while Sharpe has convincingly argued that 'the model of change from an early diocesan and episcopally ruled church, to one of dispersed monastic jurisdiction governed by abbots, rests on no very firm evidential base'. [37] According to Etchingham, the alternative hypothesis of 'episcopal, abbatial and temporal authority in a single, flexible and hybrid system, the salient features of which were not change and confrontation but continuity and diversity,'[38] is a far more reliable one.

What is clear, however, is that the monastic movement in Ireland continued to gain momentum throughout the course of the seventh and eighth centuries and the new foundations which it spawned became great centres of culture and learning.[39] In the barony of Lower Dundalk four early medieval foundations were established at this point, at Faughart, Proleek, Roosky and Cornamucklagh. These religious developments must

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[33] ETCHINGHAM, C., 'Bishops in the Early Irish Church: A Reassessment', *Studia Hibernica,* Volume 28, (1994), p. 36. See for example TODD, J.H., *St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland,* (Dublin, 1864), pp. 1-89 & BURY, J.B., *The Life of St. Patrick,* (London, 1905), pp. 166-83, 243-44 & 375-79. See also SHARPE, R., 'Some Problems Concerning the Organisation of the Church in Early Medieval Ireland', in *Peritia* Volume III, (1984), pp. 230-51.

[34] ETCHINGHAM, (1994), pp. 36-37.

[35] SIMMS, K., pers. comm., (March, 2009).

[36] CORISH, P.J., 'The Pastoral Mission in the Early Irish Church', in *Léachtaí Cholm Cille,* Volume II, (1971), pp. 14-25; CORISH, P.J., *The Christian Mission; A History of Irish Catholicism,* Volume I, Number 3, (Dublin, 1972), pp. 32-40 & 44-49; ETCHINGHAM, (1994), p. 37

[37] SHARPE, (1984), pp. 230-70; SHARPE, R., 'Churches and Communities in Early Medieval Ireland: Towards a Pastoral Model', in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish,* ed. by J. BLAIR & R. SHARPE, (Leicester, 1992), pp. 81-109. See also ETCHINGHAM, (1994), p. 38.

[38] SHARPE, (1984), pp. 230-70; SHARPE, (1992), pp. 81-109; ETCHINGHAM, (1994), p. 38.

[39]HARBISON, P., *The Archaeology of Ireland,* (London, Sydney & Toronto, 1976), p. 64; HARBISON, P., *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland,* Third Edition, (Dublin, 1992a), p. 12; SIMMS, K., 'Frontiers in the Irish Church-Regional and Cultural', in *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland. Essays Presented to J.F. Lydon,* ed. by T.B. BARRY, R. FRAME & K. SIMMS, (London & Rio Grande, 1995), p. 191; CONCANNON, M., *The Sacred Whore: Sheila Goddess of the Celts,* (Dublin, 2004), p. 3.

have had considerable political ramifications; for example, the power of the pagan priest-kings, such as those at Tara, must have declined significantly as they were gradually replaced with kings whose power was purely political.[40]This balance of power was severely dislocated once again in the late eighth century with the arrival of the Vikings from Scandinavia in 795 A.D.[41] For the next fifty years groups of Vikings made a series of devastating raids upon Irish monastic settlements, and although by *c.*840 A.D. they were establishing permanent communities in Ireland,[42] the localized nature of Irish political structures was one factor which restricted their territorial acquisitions in Ireland.[43]

The early medieval monasteries of Co. Louth did not escape the onslaughts of these Viking marauders, and in the barony of Lower Dundalk annalistic entries indicate that the monastery at Cornamucklagh was attacked on a number of occasions.[44] Furthermore, there is tentative evidence to suggest that there may have been some form of Viking settlement located at Carlingford during this period. While the placename Carlingford itself, which is derived from the old Norse *Kerlingafjorthr*, or 'the old woman's fjord', [45] certainly suggests that the Lough was utilized by the Vikings, research conducted by Bradley for the 'Urban Archaeological Survey of Co. Louth' has concluded that the precise nature of their activity and settlement in the region is uncertain.[46] Additionally, the anglicized form of this placename can alternatively be interpreted as a derivative of the Irish word *Cairlinn* which means 'rough lough'.[47] In the *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland* the lough is referred to as *Snamh Aighneach* and according to the

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[40] HARBISON, (1992a), p. 12.

[41] *Annals of Ulster,* 795. See also Ó CRÓINÍN, D., *Early Medieval Ireland 400-1200,* (London & New York, 1995), p. 4; ETCHINGHAM, C., *Viking Raids on Irish Church Settlements in the Ninth Century: A Reconsideration of the Annals,* Maynooth Monographs Series Minor 1, (Maynooth, 1996), p. 60; GRAHAM-CAMPBELL, J., 'The Early Viking Age in the Irish Sea Area', in *Ireland and Scandinavia in the Early Viking Age,* ed. by H.B. CLARKE, M. NÍ MHAONAIGH & R. Ó FLOINN, (Dublin, 1998), p. 104.

[42] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Introductory', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941a), p. 6; GWYNN, A. & HADCOCK, R., *Medieval Religious Houses,* (London, 1970), p. 2; HARBISON, (1992a), p. 14; WILSON, A.M., *Saint Patrick's Town: A History of Downpatrick and the Barony of Lecale,* (Belfast, 1995), p. 40.

[43] DOWNHAM, C., *Viking Kings of Britain and Ireland. The Dynasty of Ívarr to A.D. 1014,* (Edinburgh, 2007), p. 12.

[44] See Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Cornamucklagh.

[45] MARSTRANDER, C.J.S., *Bidrag Til Det Norske Sprogs Historie I Irland,* (Kristiana, 1915), p. 28; BRADLEY, J., 'Urban Archaeological Survey of Co. Louth', with contributions by H. KING, Volume I, Office of Public Works, (Dublin, 1984), p. 33.

[46] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 33.

[47] MARSTRANDER, (1915), p. 28; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 33.

annalists it was the scene of a battle between rival Viking fleets in the early 850s.[48] Furthermore, in 921 A.D. the 'foreigners' of Snamh Aighneach are mentioned, while another entry for 1149 makes reference to the 'harbour' of Snamh Aighneach, all of which would seem to indicate that there was a Viking settlement somewhere on the lough. Even so, however, it should be noted that although these annalistic references can tentatively be construed as proof of a Viking settlement on Carlingford Lough there is no firm evidence to conclusively locate it on the site of the present town. Indeed, Bradley has observed that from a 'purely topographical point of view, such a settlement, if it existed, would be more likely placed further up the lough, perhaps in the vicinity of Narrowwater.'[49]

By 1000 the Irish Church had undergone some profound and irrevocable developmental changes, and was in many respects fundamentally different from the church which St. Patrick had first envisaged in the fifth century. The period from 1000-1169 in Ireland was characterized by innovative new advances in religious architecture, a marked surge in the construction of churches, and a distinct move towards political centralization, with prominent provincial dynasties emerging as major patrons of the Irish Church.[50] Therefore, the twelfth century was undoubtedly a period of innovation in church construction, no doubt encouraged by a burgeoning level of pilgrimage traffic to monastic centres, like Faughart, but it was also an era of ground-breaking ecclesiastical reform which was primarily instigated as a result of the Synod of Rath Breasail in 1111 and the Synod of Kells in 1152. Through these synods a new nationwide church organisation was being promoted in a bid to supplant the older monastic system with a new ecclesiastical network of bishoprics and parishes[51] a process which, according to Katharine Simms, 'caused something of an ideological split in the Irish church.'[52]

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[48] *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland,* ed. by J.N. RADNER, The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, (Dublin, 1978), p. 91; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 33; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, *Carlingford Historic Town Walls, County Louth. Conservation & Management Plan: Final Draft*, (Oxford, 2007), p. 7. For a more detailed discussion of this Viking activity in Carlingford Lough see Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Cornamucklagh.

[49] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 33.

[50] HARBISON, (1992a), p. 21; KELLY, E.P., *Sheela-na Gigs: Origins and Functions,* (Dublin, 1996), p. 8; O'KEEFFE, T., *Romanesque Ireland: Architecture and Ideology in the Twelfth Century,* (Dublin, 2003b), p. 42.

[51] GWYNN, A., 'The Diocese of Limerick in the Twelfth Century', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal,* Volume V, Numbers 2 & 3, (1946-47), p. 35; ROE, H. M., *Medieval Fonts of Meath, Meath Archaeological and Historical Society,* (Longford, 1968), p. 1; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 2; HARBISON, (1992a), p. 21; SIMMS, (1995), p. 184; FITZPATRICK & O'BRIEN, (1998), p. 118.

[52] SIMMS, (1995), p. 198.

One individual who has historically been credited with spearheading the reform of the twelfth century church in Co. Louth is Donnchad Ua Cerbaill, who ruled over vast tracts of land in the county, including the baronies of Upper and Lower Dundalk, as king of Airgialla from 1125-68. Whether or not Ua Cerbaill's ecclesiastical fervour was born from genuine religious zeal or from political expediency is a matter of debate. However, with historical hindsight Ua Cerbaill's motives have now become secondary to his accomplishments, and perhaps the greatest indication of his ties to the Louth reform movement lay in his relationship with the renowned reformer Mael Maedoc Ua Morgair; subsequently known as St. Malachy. Indeed it has even been postulated that it was in the diocese of Clogher that Malachy was to achieve the greatest degree of success in establishing reform structures;[53] a far cry indeed from the picture of the vice-ridden anti-religious society which was to later be so damningly painted by Giraldus Cambrensis.[54] It was undoubtedly as a result of this mutually beneficial partnership that Ua Cerbaill convinced Malachy, whose brother Christian had been Bishop of Clogher since 1135, to transfer the headquarters of this see to Louth, which was the hub of his own secular power. By the mid-1140s the residence of the bishop and the cathedral chapter had been successfully relocated from Clogher to the town of Louth; and from then Louth was accepted as part of the diocese of Airgialla just as it was acknowledged as part of the kingdom of Airgialla.[55] For the next sixty years the title 'Bishop of Clogher' fell into abeyance and was substituted instead by the title 'Bishop of Louth' or 'Bishop of Airgialla'.[56] It is certainly a testament to the accomplishments of Ua Cerbaill and Malachy that it was not until the thirteenth century, when the Anglo-Norman occupation had effectively redefined Co. Louth into 'English Oriel', that this territory was re-assimilated into the primatial diocese of Armagh.[57]

In fact, it seems entirely possible that at the time of Ua Cerbaill's rule, which directly preceded the Anglo-Norman colonisation of his kingdom, that tithes and parishes had also been recognised characteristics of ecclesiastical traditions in Airgialla for a

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[53] FLANAGAN, M.T., 'Henry II, the Council of Cashel and the Irish Bishops', *Peritia,* Volume 10, (1996), p. 199; SMITH, (1999), p. 17.

[54] See *The History and Topography of Ireland,* Giraldus Cambrensis, ed. by J.J. O'MEARA, (Mountrath & Harmondsworth, 1982).

[55] SIMMS, K., 'The Origins of the Diocese of Clogher', *Clogher Record,* Volume, 10, (1980), p. 190; FLANAGAN, M.T., 'St Mary's Abbey, Louth, and the Introduction of the Arrouasian Observance into Ireland', *Clogher Record,* Volume 10, (1980), pp. 223-34; GWYNN, A., *The Twelfth-Century Reform,* (Dublin & Sydney, 1968), pp. 39-53; SMITH, (1999), p. 19.

[56] *A Charter of Christian, Bishop of Louth,* ed. by H.J. LAWLOR, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 32, Section C, (1913-16), p. 30.

[57] BYRNE, (2001), pp. 126-7.

considerable period of time, as is indicated by the following quotation from a copy of a prayer which is contained in the fourteenth century *Antiphony of Armagh*:

> *By him* [Ua Cerbaill] *the church throughout the land of Oirgialla was reformed and a regular bishopric was made and the church was placed under the jurisdiction of the bishop. In his time tithes were received and marriage was assented to, and churches were founded and temples and bell-houses were made and monasteries of canons and monks and nuns were re-edified...*[58]

Originally composed in 1170, this extract from the *Antiphony of Armagh* accentuates the great pains to which Ua Cerbaill went to promote and assist with the work of the twelfth century church reformers in his kingdom. It emphasises his labours to extend the authority and financial resources of the local bishop, it also highlights his enthusiasm for the new monastic orders, his faith in canonical teaching on marriage and his promotion of sacred scholarship. Significantly, it also states that tithes were collected throughout the duration of Ua Cerbaill's rule in Airgialla. Indeed, even taking into consideration the panegyric writing which is obviously in evidence here, other contemporary accounts do corroborate Ua Cerbaill's interest in and commitment to the reform movement. When he died in 1168, after a lengthy reign of over 40 years, it is notable that the majority of contemporary annals were favourable in their comments.[59] One typical example of the great esteem in which Ua Cerbaill was apparently held is contained within *Mac Carthaigh's Book*, a primary source which includes a wealth of information on Airgialla for this period and which notes his death with these flattering phrases:

> *"Donnchadh son of Cu Chaisil O Cearbhaill, high king of Oirghialla...chief ornament of the north of Ireland, and even of all Ireland...for bestowing treasure, food, bounty, and reward to laymen and clergy, for overwhelming all evil and exalting all goodness, for protecting bells, croziers, and the monasteries of canons and monks...died after repentance, having bequeathed much gold, silver and stock, and having partaken of the Body of Christ.*[60]

It cannot be denied that from *c.* 1140 onwards, reform developments in Louth intensified at a rapid pace and Ua Cerbaill has been credited with thoroughly restructuring the religious organization of his kingdom in the years which followed.[61]

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[58] TCD MS 77 B 1.1; *The Martyrology of Gorman*, ed. by W. STOKES, (London, 1895), p. xx; *St. Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of St. Malachy*, ed. by H.J. LAWLOR, (London, 1920), p. 170. See also SMITH, (1999), p. 16.

[59] *Annals of Tigernach* 1168; *Annals of Ulster*, 1168.

[60] *Miscellaneous Irish Annals (AD 1114-1437)*, ed. by S. O'HINNSE, (Dublin, 1947), 1167; MACNIOCAILL, G., *The Medieval Irish Annals*, (Dublin, 1975), p. 26.

[61] SMITH, (1999), p. 20

One of the most enduring legacies of Malachy's reform agenda for the kingdom of Airgialla revolves around the introduction into the county of some of the new religious orders which were flourishing on the continent. Ua Cerbaill himself was largely instrumental in these developments and certainly did not appear to hesitate in granting numerous tracts of land to these new orders. One of the first Augustinian houses of the Arrouaisian observance in Ireland was founded by him *c.* 1142 at Louth, with Bishop Aéd Ua Caellaide as its first prior, and some later medieval church remains have survived at this site.[62] Louth was also Ua Cerbaill's chief residence,[63] a fact which highlighted the political intimacy of the relationship between king and bishop; and in many respects this was also indicative of the trend of aristocratic patronage of monasteries and churches which would be continued by his Anglo-Norman successors in the region. In 1148 Ua Cerbaill founded another Arrouaisian house, dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul at Thomastown,[64] in close proximity to the Louth foundation, and it is likely that houses for Augustinian canons and nuns at Termonfeckin[65] were established at approximately the same time, although the extant archaeological evidence in these instances is unfortunately sparse.[66]

Undoubtedly the most famed foundation to emerge from this period of ecclesiastical building activity in Co. Louth was what the *Antiphony of Armagh*, described as 'the monastery of monks on the banks of the Boyne'.[67] This was of course Mellifont Abbey, the first Cistercian house in Ireland, which was established in 1142 [68] on lands of minor economic value which Ua Cerbaill had granted to the order on the banks of the River Mattock, some 5km north of the Boyne, and which had only recently been conquered and assimilated into the kingdom of Airgialla. The grant should not however be solely mistaken as an act of sincere religious devotion. This choice of land represents a sharp and calculating political decision on the part of Ua Cerbaill, who was well aware of the ramifications it would have both for secular and ecclesiastical boundaries. Although he was certainly portraying an outward obligation to the tides of

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[62] SMITH, (1999), p. 20.
[63] *Annals of the Four Masters,* 1164. See also SMITH, (1999), p. 20.
[64] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 80; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 261.
[65] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 80; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 261.
[66] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), pp. 195 & 324; BRADLEY, J., 'The Medieval Borough of Louth: An Archaeological Study', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XXI, Number 1, (1985), p. 14; SMITH, (1999), p. 20.
[67] TCD MS 77 B 1.1; *The Martyrology of Gorman,* (1895), p. xx; *St. Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of St. Malachy*, p. 170. See also SMITH, (1999), p. 16.
[68] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 239-40; BARDON, J., *A History of Ulster,* Second Edition, (Belfast, 2005), p. 31.

religious reform, he was also more cynically creating a buffer on the southern frontier of his kingdom, effectively removing it from possible conquest by his enemies while at the same time extending that frontier southwards to the Boyne.[69] In 1111 the Synod of Rath Breasail had placed the southern limit of the province of Armagh at the Sliab Breagh Hills, some 7km north of the river Boyne, but Ua Cerbaill's grant to Mellifont in 1142 had the effect of thrusting this boundary further south, and thereafter 'the mid-water of the Boyne' came to be accepted as the southern frontier of the province of Armagh.[70] Interestingly this is also a trend which has been discerned by Fitzpatrick and O'Brien for several other monastic foundations in Co. Offaly.[71]

Donnchad Ua Cerbaill died in 1168 and was subsequently succeeded as king of Airgialla by his son Murchad, who had been king of Uí Méith since at least 1157. His apparently uncontested accession to the kingship of Airgialla is a good indication of the success and relative stability of the basic political legacy which had been bequeathed to him by his father.[72]Ua Cerbaill however also left a legacy of religious reform and ecclesiastical building in Louth which was to have a profound impact upon the ensuing development of the local church in the years following the Anglo-Norman colonisation of the county. It must also be noted at this juncture that whilst the growth in authority of native Irish kings has attracted little academic criticism from modern historians, the church reform movement has recently been denigrated for having destabilised the traditional basis of scholarly erudition in Ireland and for having been anti-intellectual in tone.[73] However, as Smith has so cogently argued, the evidence from Airgialla suggests firstly that political and religious developments must be seen as a single phenomenon rather than as two distinguishable themes, and secondly, that the successful fusion of both by Donnchad Ua Cerbaill gave a tremendous boost to the intellectual life of this part of Ireland. When the Anglo-Norman colonists first set foot on Irish soil, authority in the local church rested with a bishop who controlled a diocese that contained a key Cistercian

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[69] STALLEY, R.A., *The Cistercian Monasteries of Ireland: An Account of the History, Art and Architecture of the White Monks in Ireland from 1142-1540*, (London, 1987), pp. 31-40; SMITH, (1999), p. 20.

[70] *Pontificia Hibernia: Medieval Papal Chancery Documents Concerning Ireland, Volume II 640-1261,* ed. & ann. by M. P. SHEEHY, (Dublin, 1962-65), pp. 68-72; GWYNN, A., 'Armagh and Louth in the Twelfth Century', *Seanchas Ard Mhacha,* Volume 1, Number 1, (1954), p. 2; SMITH, (1999), p. 21.

[71] FITZPATRICK & O'BRIEN, (1998), pp. 2-3.

[72] GWYNN, A., *The Irish Church in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, (Dublin, 1992), p. 295; SMITH, (1999), p. 22.

[73] SIMMS, K., *From Kings to Warlords: The Changing Political Structure of Gaelic Ireland in the Later Middle Ages*, (Suffolk, 1987), pp. 10-14; SIMMS, (1995), p. 192; SMITH, (1999), p. 24; Ó CRÓINÍN, D., (ed), *A New History of Ireland Volume 1: Prehistoric and Early Ireland*, (Oxford, 2005), pp. 44-52.

monastery and no fewer than five Augustinian houses. Furthermore, within the diocese and kingdom of Airgialla an intellectual lead was given by learned ecclesiastical men who were familiar with the trends of modern thinking then current in the rest of Europe.[74]

b. The Anglo-Norman Period, c. 1189-1485

Although the Anglo-Normans had first landed at Bannow Bay in 1169 and had begun an immediate subjugation of the surrounding territories, there is no evidence to suggest any significant settlement activity in Louth until at least 1185, even though John de Courcy had passed through the county in 1177,[75] and Buckley and Sweetman have contended that 'the Anglo-Normans do not appear to have taken possession of north Louth until the late 1170s when John de Courcy passed through on his way to conquering eastern Ulster.' [76] It has even been suggested that de Courcy was responsible in the 1170s for the construction of the motte and bailey at Castletown in the barony of Upper Dundalk[77] and also for the erection of King John's Castle in Carlingford in the barony of Lower Dundalk. However, the documentary record in the former case, and the archaeological evidence in the latter instance would indicate that these suggestions in dating are erroneous. Moreover, as previously discussed, from the first arrival of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland in the 1170s until the establishment of Gilbert Pipard and Bertram de Verdun in Louth, the entire county appears to have remained firmly under the control of Murchad Ua Cerbaill, except for the Drogheda area and a small portion of land located to the north of Dundalk. [78] Considering the fact that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Ua Cerbaill dynasty had succeeded in extending their territories southwards to the Boyne, absorbing the territories of the Conailli Muirthemne of Ulster and the Uí Neill sub-kingdom of Fir Arda Ciannachta,[79]it is almost certain that in the 1180s Murchad Ua Cerbaill retained control over the territories comprising the barony of Lower Dundalk.

The extensive remit of the Ua Cerbaill territories at this stage was unquestionably due to the expansionist policies of Murchad's father and predecessor Donnchad, who

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[74] SMITH, (1999), p. 27.
[75] GWYNN, (1954), p. 9; GAVIN, J. & O'SULLIVAN, H., *Dundalk: A Military History,* (Dundalk, 1987), p. 3.
[76]BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 214.
[77] IBID, p. 214.
[78] IBID, p. 214.
[79] STALLEY, (1987), pp. 31-40; SMITH, (1999), pp. 19-20; BYRNE, (2001), p. 125.

during his forty-three year rule had expanded the boundaries of his kingdom far beyond the original territorial legacy of Monaghan and north Louth to include south Louth, as well as segments of terrain now located within the modern counties of Armagh, Meath and Down. Although Murchad Ua Cerbaill had initially submitted to King Henry II in 1172,[80] he appears to have had an uneasy relationship with the Anglo-Norman newcomers. From 1176 onwards the colonists of Dublin and Meath raided extensive territories which ran all the way from the River Boyne to south Armagh, causing particular damage around the centre of Ua Cerbaill authority at Louth.[81] Murchad Ua Cerbaill responded to these attacks by diplomatically allying himself with the most powerful local ruler in the area, Hugh de Lacy, lord of Meath; and in 1184 he and Ua Cerbaill together raided Armagh.[82]

The visit of Prince John, Lord of Ireland, and future heir of King Henry II, to Ireland in 1185, provoked in part by a lingering suspicion of the political motivations of Hugh de Lacy,[83] was to have a profound impact upon the historical development of the barony of Lower Dundalk, initiating a new epoch in the history of the Anglo-Norman colony in Ireland.[84] It has long been attested that it was in this year that John granted the territorial possessions of Murchad Ua Cerbaill in Louth to two members of his entourage, both experienced officials, Gilbert Pipard and Bertram de Verdun.[85] However, it would seem more plausible, considering subsequent events, that these lands were only conditionally granted by John, who seems to have simultaneously forged an agreement with Ua Cerbaill allowing him to remain in control of all or some of his possessions until his death,[86] the exact details of any such arrangement have not survived but John was later to assert that Murchad had held his lands of him.[87]

What can be stated with certainty is that in 1185 John appears to have made a grant to Bertram de Verdun of four and a half cantreds of land in Co. Louth, and left him

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[80] *Annals of Ulster,* 1171; *Miscellaneous Irish Annals,* 1171 & 1172. See also OTWAY-RUTHVEN, A.J., *A History of Medieval Ireland,* Second Edition, (London, 1980), pp. 47-50; SMITH, (1999), p. 22.
[81] SMITH, (1999), p. 22.
[82] *Annála Uladh,* 1184; *Miscellaneous Irish Annals,* 1184. See also SMITH, (1999), p. 23.
[83] SMITH, (1999), p. 23.
[84] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 64.
[85] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 70; GOSLING, (1982), p. 18; GAVIN & O'SULLIVAN, (1987), pp. 3-4.
[86] *Annals of the Four Masters* ,1189. See also SMITH, (1999), pp. 23-24.
[87] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, A.J., 'The Partition of the de Verdon lands in Ireland in 1332', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume. 66, Section C, (1968), p. 402; SMITH, (1999), pp. 23-24.

behind in Ireland as his seneschal following the royal visit.[88] De Verdun himself hailed from Alton in Staffordshire, was the scion of a prominent Norman family who had first arrived in England from Normandy in 1066 with William the Conqueror,[89] and must have been a trusted adviser of the prince in 1185. However, the circumstances surrounding this significant land grant are in many respects cloaked in mystery and it is not at all clear whether or not the grant itself was made in an official capacity in 1185. Recently, O'Sullivan has suggested that although 'the circumstances surrounding the initial occupation by the Anglo-Normans of what is now the county of Louth are shrouded in uncertainty and contradiction' it is likely that de Verdun conducted negotiations with Murchad Ua Cerbaill, who was then in retirement in Mellifont Abbey, and made some sort of agreement not to encroach upon his lands until after his death.[90] This certainly seems a convincing scenario, as it is only from 1189, when Murchad Ua Cerbaill died in Mellifont Abbey, leaving no son to succeed him, that the colonization of the barony of Lower Dundalk by de Verdun can be definitively traced.

This is not a new hypothesis, and Otway-Ruthven, having studied the surviving text of the original grant in 1968, is convinced that the charter could not be dated earlier than 1189 because it was granted by John as Earl of Mortain,[91] nor later than 1191, when one of the signatories, Roger de Planes, was killed.[92] The weight of historical evidence would certainly seem to favour a date of 1189, when the death of the heirless Murchad Ua Cerbaill would have paved the way for an uncomplicated take-over of his territories by Pipard and De Verdun. Indeed it is significant in this respect that at approximately the same time Peter Pipard had a charter confirming to him the land which he had from his brother Gilbert of his acquisition in Uriel,[93] prompting Otway-Ruthven to comment that 'it would seem that the occupation had begun some years earlier, probably by agreement

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[88] GOSLING, (1982), p. 17; HAGGER, M.S., *The Fortunes of a Norman Family: The de Verduns in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, 1066-1316,* (Dublin, 2001), p. 249; O'SULLIVAN, H., 'The Catholic Parishes in the Barony of Cooley. Part 1: From Earliest Times to the End of the Seventeenth Century', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 20, Number 2, (2005), p. 38.

[89] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402.

[90] O'SULLIVAN, H., *Irish Historic Towns Atlas No. 16, Dundalk, Royal* Irish Academy, (Dublin, 2006), p. 1.

[91] The absence of the title 'Count of Mortain' suggests a date earlier than 1189 when John's elder brother, the new king Richard, endowed him with the county of Mortain in Normandy and with extensive estates in England. On March 31 1194 John was formerly deprived of the honours of Mortain, Gloucester and Eye at a council in Nottingham. From that date to the final reconciliation in 1195 John was still referred to as lord of Ireland but had no longer any right to style himself Count of Mortain. See GWYNN, (1946-47), p. 43 for a more detailed discussion on this.

[92] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 70; GOSLING, P., *Carlingford Town: An Antiquarian's Guide,* Carlingford Lough Heritage Trust, (Carlingford, 1992), pp. 1-3.

[93] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 214.

with O'Carroll [Ua Cerbaill], and that the position already reached was now being confirmed by John.'[94]

Despite the confusion surrounding the dating of this charter, the details of the exact grant of land made to de Verdun are a lot easier to establish. According to the text of the charter de Verdun was granted '...four cantreds of land in Uriel and one half cantred of the land of Luva, that namely which is towards the sea' to hold in the service of twenty knights.[95] These four and a half cantreds included the two former territories of the Conailli in north Louth, Muirthemne and Cuailgne, later to become known as the baronies of Upper and Lower Dundalk respectively.[96] It also included the eastern part of the barony of Louth, as well as lands stretching far north into Co. Armagh, though no attempt appears to have been made to occupy these, de Verdun apparently contenting himself with drawing rents from the Irish kings.[97] It also seems that the baronies in Louth at the early stages of the settlement represented fairly well the pre-existing boundaries of the region, so that the charters given to Pipard and de Verdun merely reflected these pre-existing divisions. It is hardly likely that John could have granted one half of the cantred in Louth to de Verdun if the county was not already divided.[98]

Approximately ten years after these four and a half cantreds were first unofficially bestowed upon de Verdun he negotiated a marriage between his daughter, Lescelina, and Hugh de Lacy II. It is unclear when exactly this political alliance was cemented, but it seems likely that the marriage itself took place at some time between 1194 and 1195. What is known with certainty is that Lescelina brought with her into the union two and a half knights' fees of lands in Louth as part of her dowry. The exact details of this marital transaction have not survived in documentary form, but it is known from various sources of information preserved in the *Gormanston Register* that her dowry included lands located within the barony of Lower Dundalk, and more specifically, on the Cooley peninsula.[99]As part of the marriage settlement it was decreed that Hugh de Lacy and his brother-in-law, Bertram's son Thomas de Verdun, would

> *...divide equally between themselves whatever they might acquire in the land of war, in their parts of Uriel, as they had divided the land of peace.*[100]

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[94] TCD MS F. 1. 14; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 70.
[95] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 70; GAVIN & O'SULLIVAN, (1987), pp. 3-4.
[96] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 38.
[97] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 70.
[98] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 215.
[99] *Calendar of the Gormanston Register,* ed. by J. MILLS & M.J. MCENERY, (Dublin, 1916), p. 144.
[100] *Calendar of the Gormanston Register*, p. 144.

However, even after 1194-5 when it can only be presumed that Hugh de Lacy and Thomas de Verdun had made the predicted acquisitions in the *land of war,* it is not at all certain what lands on the peninsula were conquered in this fashion or indeed which Anglo-Norman magnate had conquered them. Otway-Ruthven has commented upon the fact that the division of the Cooley peninsula between de Verdun and de Lacy at this point did not constitute a clear-cut boundary, as nearly 150 years later, in 1332, the de Verduns were still the lords of the New Town of Coly, or Mountbagnall, as it is now more commonly known. She also stated that the remainder of the Cooley peninsula had passed to de Lacy, except for certain lands at its western extremities which remained under the remit of the de Verdun family.[101] The agriculturally poorer hill lands of Omeath, in contrast, never encouraged Anglo-Norman settlement and the area was left exclusively to the native Irish.

Indeed, unlike the unfolding settlement patterns in the barony of Upper Dundalk, where the Anglo-Norman settlers were conducting a fairly successful and extensive sub-infeudation of the area in and around Castletown and Dundalk, the same cannot be said for the barony of Lower Dundalk, which at this period was still held by the Uí Méith under their king O'Hanratty, a vassal of Ua Cerbaill.[102]Gosling has observed that although the Cooley Peninsula, along with north Louth had been officially granted to Bertram de Verdun at some point between 1189 and 1191, there is no evidence to suggest that he had gained any physical part on the eastern part of the peninsula before his death in 1192.[103] Documentary records however indicate that he had already made considerable headway with the colonization of the barony of Upper Dundalk. For example, before he left Ireland in 1188 to join the crusades de Verdun confirmed a grant that he had already made to St. John the Baptist's Church at Castletown of 'all the tithes and ecclesiastical benefices of my whole land of Dundalk, including the lands of the burgages.'[104]

In any case, all of the surviving evidence would seem to corroborate the fact that while at least some of the southern facing part of the peninsula was in de Verdun hands, there is no evidence to suggest that Carlingford or any of the northern part of the peninsula was ever held by this family. Instead this area seems to have been considered to have been part of Ulster. This is illustrated most explicitly in a charter of 1212 in which

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[101] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 404.
[102] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 38.
[103] GOSLING, (1992), pp. 1-3. .
[104] O'SULLIVAN, (2006), p. 1.

King John granted Reginald, King of Man, a fee near Carlingford 'in Ulster'[105] in the period after Hugh de Lacy had been toppled from his position as earl of this province. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, Cooley had been considered an integral part of Ulster long before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans. Moreover a north-south political division of Cooley also reflects the geography of the peninsula, where the Carlingford Mountains with their mass of associated highlands effectively cut the area in two, with the northern part forming an extension of Ulster across Carlingford Lough and the southern side forming a natural appendage to the territories of the Conailli.[106]

This inclusion of the northern half of the peninsula as part of Ulster would certainly go a long way towards explaining Hugh de Lacy's willingness to relinquish the south-western end of Cooley to Thomas de Verdun. After all, if he was already harbouring ambitions to acquire the earldom of Ulster at this stage, which is indeed very probable, then it stands to reason that he would be more interested in controlling that northern section of the peninsula which had traditionally been regarded as part of Ulster. Significantly these ambitions came to fruition in May of 1205 when de Lacy was finally created Earl of Ulster. However, this success was only to be short-lived and in 1210 King John, having fallen out with de Lacy, returned to Ireland and advanced northwards where he stayed at Carlingford, an event which was recorded by the *Annals of Ulster*.[107]Crossing the lough into Ulster the king pursued de Lacy to Carrickfergus where he expelled him from his earldom. However, by 1227 the political situation in Ulster had come full circle and de Lacy succeeded in having his earldom returned to him.[108] Somewhere in the midst of all of this political manoeuvring, a daughter named Matilda was born to Hugh de Lacy and Lescelina de Verdun, and it was her daughter, the granddaughter of Hugh de Lacy, also named Matilda, who was the only known individual to have bestowed grants of land to the Order of the Knights Templar in Co. Louth.[109] The exact extent of the lands eventually held on the Cooley Peninsula by Hugh de Lacy is clearly expressed by the surviving charters through which he granted to the Cistercians of

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[105] *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland: Vol. I: 1171-1251,* ed. by H.S. SWEETMAN, Public Record Office, (London, 1974), p. 70; HAGGER, (2001), p. 55.
[106] HAGGER, (2001), p. 55.
[107] *Annals of Ulster,* 1210 A.D.
[108] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 404; BARDON, (2005), pp. 39-42; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 39.
[109] See *Extracts from a Lawsuit of 1302 Concerning the Advowson of the Church of Carlingford: Irish Records Commission Repertory to De Banco Rolls 29 and 30 Ed. I, No. 64*, ed. & trans. by D. MACIOMHAIR, 'The Knights Templars in County Louth', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca*, Volume 4, Number 1, (1960-61), pp. 73-74.

Mellifont the manor of Ballymascanlan, and to his daughter Matilda, upon the occasion of her marriage to David, Baron of Naas, the castle of Carlingford.[110]

Indeed, King John's Castle at Carlingford is a structure which is pivotal to this study primarily because medieval documentary references to the churches and religious foundations of Carlingford are quite scarce, while allusions to the castle are much more numerous. A combined examination of the primary source material pertinent to both the ecclesiastical structures and the castle at Carlingford has therefore provided an important insight in to the development and growth of the town in the medieval period, which in turn can aid the analysis of ecclesiastical settlement in cases where the documentary record is lacking. The exact date of the foundation of the town remains unknown, as does the original date of construction for the castle, and in fact, it is not even certain whether the castle and town were always a 'single entity'[111] or if the foundation of one predated the other.

The earliest known reference to Anglo-Norman activity at Carlingford occurred in 1185 when the 'ferry of Carlingford' was mentioned in a grant made by John de Courcy to Downpatrick Priory. [112] No doubt it is this grant which has given rise to speculation that the founder of the town may have been John de Courcy.[113] However, the first suggestion of a medieval town at Carlingford did not occur until several years after the ferry grant of 1185 when Peter Pipard, the lord of Ardee, was granted 'four burgages in the new vill of Carlingford with fishing rights on the lough' by Prince John as part of the official grant of the barony of Ferrard made sometime between 1189 and 1192.[114] The description the 'vill' of Carlingford being 'new' is certainly significant here because if it were known what exact period of time constituted a vill being 'new' then it be clearer whether or not the town had in fact been founded in 1185 by John de Courcy, or in years following 1189 when the official grant of Lower Dundalk seems to have been made by Prince John to Bertram de Verdun. In any case, Bradley has emphasized that the reference of 1185 indicates that the initial importance of the site 'undoubtedly rested in

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[110] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 405; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY,(2007), p. 8.
[111] OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 7.
[112] *Calendar of Ormond Deeds, 1172-1603 A.D: Volume I,* ed. by E. CURTIS, The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1932-43), p. 364; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY,(2007), p. 7.
[113] *Calendar of Ormond Deeds, 1172-1603 A.D: Volume I,* p. 364; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34.
[114] *Calendar of Ormond Deeds, 1172-1603 A.D: Volume I,* p. 364; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 7.

the easily defended harbour from which men, equipment and livestock could be transported across the lough into Co. Down'.[115]

It is of course possible that de Courcy utilized the site as a temporary military base in 1185 and that the town itself was only founded following the death of Murchad Ua Cerbaill in 1189, as there is no evidence, historical or archaeological to indicate that the castle was constructed in or prior to 1185, although the dating of the castle is matter of contentious debate. In 1984 Bradley concluded that the earliest phase of building at the castle could only be dated to the early thirteenth century,[116]even though he also surmised in the same publication that John de Courcy may possibly have been responsible for the foundation of an important manor at the site in this year, and that:[117]

> *...the town probably received much of its initial importance from the castle, established most likely by John de Courcy but not referred to until 1210 when monies were spent on its repair.*[118]

The construction of the castle had been traditionally attributed to King John himself during a visit to Carlingford in 1210.[119] However, by the early 1980s this theory had been effectively disproven, not only by the fact that it would have been logistically impossible to construct a stone castle of its size in such a short space of time, but also by the archaeological examinations and surveys which had been undertaken at the castle in the decades after the castle underwent conservation work by the Office of Public Works in the 1950s.[120] According to the *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford* in 1992, the western portion of the castle pre-dates King John's visit and was probably commissioned by Hugh de Lacy *c.* 1190.[121] Sweetman however, having surveyed the castle in 1986 has a more precise chronology for the dating of the castle:

> *King John is credited with its building but the type of gateway and the shape of the tower at the SW angle suggest a slightly earlier date, and possibly around the turn of the twelfth century would be more appropriate for the west half of the structure.*[122]

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[115] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34.
[116] IBID, p. 42.
[117] IBID, p. 39.
[118] ORPEN, G.H., *Ireland Under the Normans: 1169-1333,* (Dublin, 2005), p. 252; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34.
[119] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford,* (Carlingford, 1992), no pg. numbers. *Annála Uladh*, 1210.
[120] King John's Castle was surveyed in 1964, 1965 & 1986. The 1986 survey was carried out by P.D. Sweetman. See RMP LH 005-04202, King John's Castle, Carlingford.
[121] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, no pg. numbers.
[122] SWEETMAN, P.D., 'Survey of Church & Tower of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford', (RMP LH 005-04210, 30th January 1992).

While it is certain that the primary significance of the town probably did in fact revolve around the castle, there is no evidence to indicate that it was founded by de Courcy, although Bradley has hypothesized that after de Courcy was outlawed in 1205 the castle was granted to the De Lacys. [123] More recent commentators have conjectured that the castle was most likely built by De Lacy mainly due to the well-recorded visit of King John to Carlingford on his trip to Ireland in July 1210 when he seized 'Hugh de Lacy's' castle, which was to remain in royal hands until 1226, and carried out repairs,[124] for which he made payments to carpenters, quarries, ditchers and miners, all of which suggest that he strengthened the castle's defences.[125]

Also in 1210, King John re-granted the barony of Lower Dundalk to Nicholas de Verdun and on return from a trip to Ulster he stopped once again at Carlingford in August of the same year.[126] From there on in, sporadic references to the town, its castle and its churches give a good indication of the prevalent social and economic conditions at Carlingford. For example, in 1217 William de Lacy was told to surrender Carlingford Castle to the Justiciar, Geoffrey de Marisco,[127] and upon the dismissal of de Marisco in 1221 the castle was surrendered to King Henry III,[128] while in 1227 Hugh de Lacy's lands were restored to him by Henry III, including Carlingford.[129] A fair at Carlingford was granted in 1227 to Hugh de Lacy in August for thirteen days after the feast of the Assumption,[130]and indeed this grant would appear to indicate that there was an existing market already in place in the town. A further grant was made to the Earl of Ulster, Lionel of Antwerp,[131] in 1358 for a weekly Tuesday market in Carlingford[132] and the

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[123] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 34-35.
[124] ORPEN, (2005), p. 251; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[125] ORPEN, (2005), p. 252; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 39.
[126] ORPEN, (2005), p. 261; FOSTER, R.F., *The Oxford History of Ireland* (Oxford, 2000), p. 142; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[127] ORPEN, (2005), p. 21; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 89; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[128] ORPEN, (2005), p. 21; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[129] ORPEN, (2005), p. 254; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[130] *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland: Volume I: 1171-1251,* ed. by H.S. SWEETMAN, Public Record Office, (London, 1974), p. 232.
[131] Lionel of Antwerp, also known as the Duke of Clarence (born 29th November 1338 and died 7th October 1368) was the third son, but the second son to survive infancy, of King Edward III of England and Philippa of Hainault. Betrothed when a child to Elizabeth de Burgh, the fourth Countess of Ulster (died 1363), daughter and heiress of William de Burgh, the third Earl of Ulster (died 1332), he was married to her in 1352, but before this date he had entered into possession of her great Irish inheritance. He was known as Earl of Ulster from 1347.
[132] *Chartae, Privilegia et Immunitates: Being Transcripts of Charters and Privileges to Cities, Towns, Abbeys, and Other Bodies Corporate 18 Henry II. to 18 Richard II, 1171 to 1395,* Irish Record Commission (Dublin, 1829-30), p. 60; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34; GOSLING, (1992), p. ;OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), pp. 8-9.

town received an additional grant of a weekly market in 1450.[133] Despite its relatively isolated location, the role of Carlingford as a market town for the surrounding region undoubtedly aided its economic growth and development in the medieval period. Indeed, it is likely that by the first half of the thirteenth century the town must have been well-established with streets, a harbour and a market place[134] and if this was the case then it stands to reason that by the time of the grant of the first fair in 1227 there must have been a parish church operating within the town precincts, although no documentary evidence survives to corroborate this theory.

Two years later, Hugh de Lacy granted the town of Carlingford and its castle to his daughter Matilda, wife of David, Baron of Naas, upon the occasion of their marriage in 1229,[135] and she held both town and castle until her father's death in 1242.[136] Ownership of the castle and town are unclear in the years following 1242 but a Pipe Roll dating to 1260-62 records repairs which were undertaken at the castle and it has been speculated that it may have been under the control of the Crown at this point.[137]In light of these records, which detail the transportation of quarried stone and mortar to Carlingford and Greencastle in the early 1260s,[138]and also the surviving archaeological evidence, Sweetman has been able to date the eastern portion of the castle to *c.* 1262. The next significant record of the castle occurred in *c.* 1280 when Matilda de Lacy granted to her own daughter, also Matilda and wife of John le Botiler, 'the castle of Carlingford and all the land I had in free marriage in Cooley and Uriel'. [139] If indeed the castle had reverted to the Crown in the 1260s it is clear that by 1280 it had once again fallen under the control of the de Lacy family, and two years later, in 1282, the earliest reference to the town as a port was recorded when it was listed as together with Dundalk, Strangford, Carrickfergus and Coleraine as one of the 'ports of Ulster'.[140]

Following on from this, the de Lacy holdings in Carlingford descended to Matilda Botiler's grandson, William de London, and his son, also William, sold the manor of

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[133] *Statute Rolls of the Parliament of Ireland: Reign of King Henry VI,* ed. by H.F. BERRY, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1910), p. 205.
[134] OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[135]OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 405; GOSLING, (1992), p. ;OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007).
[136] ORPEN, (2005), p. 264; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[137] ORPEN, (2005), p. 264; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[138] RMP LH 005-04202, King John's Castle, Carlingford; ORPEN, (2005), p. 279; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 39; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 320.
[139]ORPEN, (2005), p. 278; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 9.
[140]*Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland, Volume II, 1252-1284,* ed. by H.S. SWEETMAN, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (London, 1877, Reprinted, 1974), p. 417; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 9.

Carlingford and all of the de Lacy lands in Cooley and Omeath to Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster, in 1305.[141] Locally, Richard has long been reputed as the founder of the Dominican Priory in Carlingford in 1305, although it is also possible that the foundation was initiated by two Dominican Archbishops of Armagh, who were incidentally also familial brothers, Walter and Roland Joyce.[142] King John's Castle was still considered to be part of the earldom of Ulster on the death of Richard de Burgh in 1326,[143] and in the same year the town of Carlingford was granted the right to levy a murage tax for six years to repair walls, although it unlikely that this was the first occasion that the town was so fortified.[144] When the subsequent Earl of Ulster, William de Burgh, died in 1333 the castle reverted back to the Crown and for the duration of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it was managed by a succession of royal constables,[145] for example it is known that in 1408 the Navarrese native, Janico Dartas, was its constable although little is known of its ensuing history.[146]

Notwithstanding its peripheral position in Louth, and the fact that it has recently been described as 'rather marginal to the life of the county' in the medieval period, [147] the town of Carlingford undoubtedly played a key role as a strategic place of passage throughout this period, being located as it was on the coast road towards Ulster and being so readily accessible by sea. So despite its marginality and relative isolation it repeatedly had a hand to play in the political and military skirmishes of the era. For example, the town was plundered and burnt by Lord Nithsdale with an army of 500 Scots in 1388, against whom the military service of Carlingford was raised,[148] while in 1392 in his bid to conquer Dundalk, the Great Niall O'Neill, Lord of Tyrone, led an army through the

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[141] *Calendar of the Gormanston Register*, p. 149; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 405; BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 34-35; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.

[142] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 222; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8. The brothers are also referred to in some sources as Roland and Walter Jorz, see for example SMITH, (1999), pp. 91 & 128. Walter held the Archbishopric of Armagh from 1307-11 while Roland succeeded him from 1311-22. See Chapter IV: Urban Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford, V. The Dominican Abbey.

[143] ORPEN, (2005), p. 148; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.

[144] *British Borough Charters 1307-1660,* ed. by M. Weinbaum, (Cambridge, 1943), p. 197. See Chapter IV: Urban Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford, VI. The Associated Urban Settlement.

[145] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 35.

[146] *Dowdall Deeds,* ed. by C. MCNEILL & A.J. OTWAY-RUTHVEN, Stationery Office for the Irish Manuscripts Commission, Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1960), no. 371; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 39. See also WALKER, S., 'Janico Dartasso: Chivalry, Nationality and the Man-at-Arms', *History,* Volume 84, (2002), pp. 31-51.

[147] OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 9.

[148] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 321; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 9.

whole Cooley peninsula leaving it wasted and destroyed.[149] Sixteen years later, in 1408, the town served as a landing point for the new Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Duke of Lancaster, from whence he travelled on to Dublin.[150]

Despite the fact that Carlingford had traditionally been considered as an integral part of Ulster, by the early fifteenth century documentary sources reveal that it was also now regarded as a northern frontier of the Pale, as is evidenced by the following letter of complaint written and dispatched to the authorities by inhabitants of Carlingford and Cooley in March 1410:

The town and lordship are situated on the frontier of the marches of County Louth in a valley between the sea and the mountains...and are cut off from the rest of the county by high mountains and wooded passes, as well as by the arm of the sea flowing backwards and forwards, so that they are not able to be helped against the Irish and Scots, and on account of that they are often burned and devastated.[151]

Probably as a result of this letter the town was granted in the same year a quittance of subsidies and tallages until the coming of age of the Lord of the Town.[152] However, with the progression of the fifteenth century the people and churches of Carlingford continued to suffer a number of depredations. In 1415 the new Lord Lieutenant, Sir John Talbot, proclaimed the royal service at Carlingford in commencing his campaign against the Irish,[153] and in 1423 an indulgence was granted for repairs to the Dominican Church after damage inflicted by 'enemies and robbers.'[154] Another market was granted to Carlingford in 1450,[155] and in 1467 the rights of mintage were bestowed upon Carlingford, and also upon Drogheda. To date no coins from any such Mint at Carlingford have been discovered,[156] nonetheless however, the right of mintage itself, along with the market grants certainly appear to indicate that Carlingford was still surviving and possibly even thriving in an era when numerous other medieval Irish towns were falling into abeyance.

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[149] *Annála Connacht: The Annals of Connacht A.D. 1224-1544,* ed. by A. M. FREEMAN, The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, (Dublin, 1970), 1392; *Annals of the Four Masters,* 1393; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 325; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 9.

[150] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 345; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p.9.

[151] *Rotulorum Patentium et Clausorum Cancellariae Hiberniae Calendarium, Volume I, Pars. I: Henry II-Henry VII,* (Dublin, 1828), p. 75; COSGROVE, A. (ed), *A New History of Ireland. Volume II Medieval Ireland 1169-1534,* (Oxford, 1987), p. 536; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 9.

[152] *British Borough Charters 1307-1660*, (1943), p. 197; LEWIS, S., *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland,* Volume I, (London, 1837), p. 254.

[153] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1980), p. 349; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), pp. 9-10.

[154] *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland: Papal Letters Volume 7, 1417-1431,* ed. by J.A. TWEMLOW, His Majesty's Stationery Office, (London, 1906), 1423; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 222; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 9.

[155] *Statute Rolls of the Parliament of Ireland: Reign of King Henry VI,* p. 205; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34.

[156] COSGROVE, (1997), p. 823; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.

c. The Tudor-Cromwellian Periods, *c.* 1485-1650

The defeat of Richard III by Henry Tudor at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485 signalled a turning point for both English and Irish history;[157] civil war between the English barons finally ceased and the way was prepared for the recovery of English power in Ireland.[158] From this point onwards, the expansion of the power of the Tudor-English monarchy in Ireland resulted not only in an increasing struggle between the Crown forces and the northern Gaelic-Irish lords, but also in a conflict between the 'New English' and 'Old English' settlers in the colony. The proclamation of Henry VIII as King of Ireland in 1542 was a defining moment in the history of the Irish lordship.[159] Perhaps the most momentous act of Henry's reign, for the purposes of this study, was the dissolution of the monasteries which took place from 1536-41 and was the formal process by which he disbanded monastic communities in England, Wales and Ireland and confiscated their property. He was given the authority to do this by the *Act of Supremacy*, passed by Parliament in 1534, which made him Supreme Head of the Church in England, and by the *First Suppression Act* of 1536 and the *Second Suppression Act* of 1539.[160] During this period Henry systematically dismantled the saints' shrines to the immense gain of the Royal Treasury, rood figures were demolished and burnt until finally images of saints were ordered to be removed from all churches in 1548.[161] However, these years of destruction were undoubtedly responsible for the demise of the medieval church in Ireland, especially in the eastern areas of the country,[162] and the results of this destructive act were also to be felt acutely in the barony of Lower Dundalk.

Even so, in Ireland and in some parts of Wales the 'old religion' survived many generations,[163] for example, this seems to have been the case with the churches at Templetown and Faughart, where devotions to the Virgin Mary and St. Brigid

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[157] O'SULLIVAN, H., 'The Landed Gentry of the County of Louth in the Age of the Tudors', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XXII, Number 1, (1989a), p. 67.
[158] BARDON, (2005), p. 49.
[159] See BRADY, C., 'Court, Castle and Country: The Framework of Government in Tudor Ireland', in *Natives and Newcomers: Essays on the Making of Irish Colonial Society 1534-1641,* ed. by C. BRADY & R. GILLESPIE, (Suffolk, 1986), pp. 25-31 for a more detailed discussion of Henry VIII's policies towards Ireland.
[160] JEFFERIES, H.A., 'Dr. George Cromer, Archbishop of Armagh (1521-1543), and Henry VIII's Reformation', in *Armagh History & Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by A.J. HUGHES & W. NOLAN, (Dublin, 2001), pp. 228-29.
[161] FARMER, D., *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints,* Fifth Edition, (Oxford, 2004), pp. xvii-xviii.
[162] BARRY, (1989), p. 140; BARDON (2005), p. 73. See also BRADSHAW, B., *The Dissolution of the Religious Orders in Ireland Under Henry VIII,* (Cambridge, 1974) & DUFFY, E., *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1400-c. 1580,* (London, 2005).
[163] FARMER, (2004), p. xvii.

respectively, which owe their origins to medieval precedents, are still practised annually in the veneration of holy wells at both of the sites. Furthermore, although over four hundred years have lapsed since Henry VIII brought the medieval monastic era to an end there are many cathedrals and numerous ruined abbeys in England that now form an integral part of the English landscape and heritage.[164] However, the churches and monasteries of Ireland did not fare so well throughout this difficult period. The ruin which came to so many monastic buildings, the dispersal of monastic lands to lay owners and the sale or destruction of church furnishings effectively marked the end of medieval ecclesiastical architecture in Ireland, though medieval styles of building were to survive for almost a century in the domestic architecture of the country, notably in the later tower houses of the gentry.[165]

Protestant doctrine had not arrived in Ireland until after the accession of King Edward VI in 1547, and while it made some progress among colonists in Dublin and Galway, it had certainly not become widespread by the time of the accession of the Catholic Queen Mary I to the English throne in 1553.[166] The coming of Elizabeth I to the throne in 1558 imposed a Protestant settlement by law but she had neither the money nor the manpower to effectively enforce the new religious regimen. Soon after her succession she made several attempts to enforce English law and the *Act of Supremacy* in Ireland and also to suppress all remaining religious houses. In response, the Irish strongly resisted these developments and the rebellions and wars that followed led to widespread devastation of whole districts and also to countless bloody massacres.[167] In addition to this, with the progression of Elizabeth's reign, trained priests returned to Ireland from the Catholic seminaries of Louvain, Salamanca and Rome, fuelled by the ideals and aspirations of the Counter-Reformation.[168]

In the barony of Lower Dundalk the later sixteenth century saw renewed attempts to colonize the region and particularly the hinterland of the town of Carlingford, primarily in a bid to wrest it from Irish control.[169] After the dissolution much of the monastic land on the Cooley Peninsula was granted to the Bagenal family, whose

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[164] BRABBS, D., *Abbeys and Monasteries,* (London, 1999), p. 16.
[165] LEASK, H.G., *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings Volume III: Medieval Gothic: The Last Phases,* (Dundalk, 1960), p. 4.
[166] BARDON, (2005), pp. 73-74.
[167] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 10.
[168] BARDON, (2005), p. 74.
[169] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 35.

fortunes were greatly elevated by the successes of Sir Nicholas Bagnall.[170] As with the earlier centuries of the Middle Ages, precise documentary references to the churches on the Cooley Peninsula at this point are quite rare, while the town and churches at Carlingford are noted more frequently, although, as with the earlier periods, these references are intermittent. King John's Castle clearly continued to play an important role in the survival of the town of Carlingford itself. A parliamentary mandate of 1494-5, echoing the provisions of Poyning's Law, decreed that the constables of the King's castles in Ireland, including that at Carlingford, had to be Englishmen born in England.[171] In 1501 a murage grant was bestowed upon the town for 24 years for fortifying the town with a stone wall.[172]

A survey of Crown lands in 1540 described the 'manor of Carlingford' as *ancient demesne* of the king; the 'capital messuage' of the manor was 'a certain old castle situate on a branch of the sea' which was by a port resorted to by fishermen for herrings in September and October, who paid customs of a 'castle mease' of herrings when the catch was abundant, and other port dues. At this stage the castle was reported as being in a state of dilapidation and in need of repair, but was also described as being a vital element in the protection of the town from the 'Hanlan's, Magynness, Adneles and another fierce Irish men' who were apparently terrorizing the region. Moreover, there was a small park of one acre near the castle, the 'Porter's Park' and the Constable of the Castle had 50 acres of arable land referred to as *Mollaghtye.* The bailiffs, burgesses and community of Carlingford paid the Constable £4 a year for the 'fee-farm' of the town, a fixed sum paid to the crown in return for the borough's financial independence.[173] Indeed a recent survey of the town, commissioned by Louth County Council for conservation purposes and carried out by Oxford Archaeology, has speculated that this financial autonomy, along with the claim of *ancient demesne,* could possibly suggest that the town was originally a royal foundation. [174]In 1596 an attempt to capture King John's Castle by Hugh O'Neill's son-in-law failed,[175] and by the seventeenth century although Carlingford was only playing a relatively minor role in the wars of the era, it was a role that nonetheless demonstrated the ongoing strategic significance of the town. For example, Lord

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[170] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 35.
[171] COSGROVE, (1997), p. 640; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.
[172] WEINBAUM, (1943), p. 197; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.
[173] *Crown Surveys of Lands, 1540–41, with the Kildare Rental Begun in 1518*, ed. by G. MACNIOCAILL, Irish Manuscripts Commission, (Dublin 1992), pp. 75-76; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.
[174] OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.
[175] TEMPEST, (1983), p. 87; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 35.

Mountjoy arrived in Carlingford to launch his military campaign in Ulster in 1600,[176] and installed a sizeable garrison in the town.[177] The manuscript map of the Moyry Pass drawn by Richard Bartlett *c.* 1602 shows Carlingford as a walled town, as does John Norden's map of *c.* 1610.[178]

Although the Plantation of Ulster was arguably the most extensive and successful of the Irish plantations, when the settlement faltered the Catholic population decimated the settlements of the planters in the infamous rebellion of 1641.[179] From 1641 onwards the political situation changed drastically and parliamentarians no longer made a distinction between the 'Old English' of the Pale and the Gaelic-Irish rebels. The subsequent Cromwellian conquest of Ireland which took place from 1649-53 eventually resulted in the re-conquest of Ireland by the forces of the English Parliament, led by Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell landed in Ireland with his New Model Army on behalf of the English Parliament in 1649. Since the rebellion of 1641, Ireland had remained mainly under the control of the Irish Confederate Catholics, who in 1649 had signed an alliance with the English Royalist party, which had been defeated in the English Civil War. However, Cromwell's forces defeated the Confederate and Royalist coalition in Ireland and occupied the country - bringing to an end the Irish Confederate Wars. He passed a series of severe Penal laws against Roman Catholics which confiscated almost all of their land and effectively brought about a swift end to the medieval period of Irish history. [180] Even after the Williamite confiscations of the seventeenth century the majority of landowners in the barony of Lower Dundalk, as well as the general population, remained

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[176] COSGROVE, (1997), 131; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 11.

[177] O'SULLIVAN, H. 'The Magennis Lordship of Iveagh in the Early Modern Period, 1534 to 1691' in *Down History and Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by L. PROUDFOOT, (Dublin, 1997), p. 166; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 11.

[178] DOLAN, J. T., 'The Down Survey or Cromwellian Plantation Maps of Louth and Drawing of Fragment of Down Survey Parish Map of Dundalk which Survived the 1711 Fire (destroyed 1922),' *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal, (*1928), pp. 247-49; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 12.

[179] See CLARKE, A., 'Colonial Constitutional Attitudes in Ireland, 1640-60', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 90, Section C, (1990), pp. 357-75, CLARKE, A., *The Old English in Ireland 1625-42,* (Dublin, 2000), pp. 220-34 & SMYTH, W.J., 'Ireland A Colony: Settlement Implications of the Revolution in Military-Administrative, Urban and Ecclesiastical Structures, *c.* 1550-1730' in *A History of Settlement in Ireland,* ed. by T.B. BARRY, (New York, 2000), pp. 163-65 for a more detailed account of the events leading up to the rebellion of 1641 and its political and social ramifications.

[180] See DUDLEY-EDWARDS, R., *An Atlas of Irish History,* (London, 1973), p. 200; CORISH, P.J., 'The Cromwellian Conquest, 1649-53', in A *New History of Ireland. Volume III: Early Modern Ireland 1534-1691,* ed. by T.W. MOODY, F.X. MARTIN & F.J. BYRNE, (Oxford, 1991), pp. 336-52 & LENIHAN, P., *Confederate Catholics at War 1641-49,* (Cork, 2000), pp. 110-16 for an in-depth historical account of the Cromwellian conquest of Ireland. For a more specific account of military activities in Co. Louth at this time see O'SULLIVAN, H., 'Military Operations in County Louth in the Run-Up to Cromwell's Storming of Drogheda', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XXII, Number 2, (1990), pp. 187-208.

Catholic, suggesting that the pre-Reformation churches or their sites, such as Templetown, Faughart and Mountbagnall, had remained in Catholic usage. Bearing this in mind, it is interesting to examine the contents of an entry for the year 1613 which has been preserved in the *Dowdall Deeds* and which details notes of fines for recusancy which were imposed in several townlands in Cooley for failure to attend Protestant services. Sixteen people were listed as having paid 12s. 4 ½ d. for half of the fines for recusancy in the townland of 'Balloug,' while in the townland of 'Templetowne' one Shan Ó Ferghaise was also listed as a recusant.[181]

v. SOURCES

The principle sources used in this thesis are the churches and church sites themselves, and, after field work had been conducted, a number of additional sources were consulted in order to make the most balanced archaeological assessment of the sites possible.[182] These sources included excavation reports, aerial photographs, maps, a number of Irish annals, the *Life of St. Darcerca/Monenna,* the archiepiscopal registers of Armagh, as well as a host of other primary documents, the most important of which are listed here. Additionally, numerous secondary works were also consulted, and two of the most significant for this study were the descriptions of some of the churches of Lower Dundalk which were recorded by Isaac Butler and Thomas Wright in 1744 and 1748 respectively. Finally, a number of web sources were also utilized in this examination.

Of the fourteen ecclesiastical sites under review in this study, only four of them, approximately 28%, have ever undergone archaeological excavation; Faughart Church,[183]the site of Grange Church,[184] the Church of the Holy Trinity, Carlingford,[185]

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[181] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1613.

[182] No list of abbreviations was included either at the beginning of the thesis or in the concluding bibliography because full names of journals etc. have been cited in the footnotes and in the bibliography.

[183] O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-29.

[184] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=4982
O'CARROLL, F., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2000:0707; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8704
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1359; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360.

[185] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133; BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford', (*Sites and Monuments Record*).

and the Dominican Priory, also in Carlingford.[186] Despite the fact that this leaves a majority of approximately 72% of the churches of Lower Dundalk unexcavated, the four excavations which have been undertaken are nonetheless vital for the purposes of this thesis. For example, O'Connor's 1966 excavation of Faughart Church, though limited by time constraints and manpower, identified three key periods of activity at the site.[187] In her final excavation report O'Connor stated that she had firstly uncovered evidence for a medieval church which had been built at two different times and secondly, evidence for a period of twelfth century or earlier occupation which overlay a third trench of an unspecified earlier date.[188]At the time of the excavation O'Connor herself acknowledged the dangers of forming any definitive conclusions from these results and commented that:

> *The investigation at Faughart was conducted on the smallest possible scale; in view of this the results must be regarded as indications of the archaeological content of the site and not as a definitive statement of the latter.*[189]

In summary, the additional data produced by the excavations at Faughart, Grange and Carlingford have highlighted the fact that although there is a certain amount of knowledge to be derived for the study of medieval churches, both from the written record, in the form of contemporary primary documentation, and also from the graphic record, in the form of cartography and aerial photography, there is also a significant corpus of additional information which can ultimately only be extracted from archaeological excavation alone, and , for any medieval church site, this is a very important distinction to make.[190]

Aerial photographic evidence has been utilized in this thesis for the study of two of the early medieval monastic enclosures which were located at Faughart and Proleek.[191] Both of the photographs were taken by St. Joseph during a series of flights which were

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[186] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=3256
CASSIDY, B., Excavation Report, Carlingford Priory, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1991:093; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=2910
CHANNING, J., Excavation Report, Carlingford Abbey, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1993:154; BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford', (*Sites & Monuments Record*) ; CHANNING, J., 'Excavation Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford,' (*Sites and Monuments Record*).
[187] O'CONNOR, (1966), pp. 125 & 126.
[188] IBID, p. 129.
[189] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 129.
[190] O'BRIEN, E., 'Archaeological Study of Church Cemeteries: Past, Present and Future: Part 1: Past Rites, Future Concerns', in *Church Archaeology: Research Directions for the Future*, ed. by J. BLAIR & C. PYRAH, CBA Research Report 104, (York, 1996), p. 165.
[191] CUCAP ALK 22 & CUCAP BGL 46.

undertaken in Co. Louth in successive years from 1963-71.[192] These flights were primarily undertaken in the first half of July when the cereal crops of the county were most likely to have been responsive to variations in soil moisture and would thus reflect any buried archaeological features in the form of cropmarks.[193] These photographs now form part of the large Irish collection at the Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography, (CUCAP), which consists of high quality obliques taken specifically for archaeological and historical purposes. These photographs are extremely significant to this thesis for a number of reasons. Aerial photographs taken from the air under the right conditions will highlight certain features which cannot be seen, or will emphasize features which can only be seen with difficulty from ground level.[194] Any features in relief such as banks and ditches are sharply distinguished in oblique light, and oblique photographs, like the Faughart shot are taken with the camera pointed between the horizontal and the vertical.[195] For these reasons, aerial photography has provided evidence for significant sites on Faughart Hill which are no longer visible at ground level; as well as the large enclosure which is evident around the church and graveyard, there is a second significant cropmark of a large subcircular enclosure located approximately 150m to the south-east of the church in the field on the opposite side of the road, and, although some of the surviving archaeological features of the church date to the later-medieval and post-medieval periods, the aerial photograph of this site indicates that it was once part of a much larger pre-Norman enclosure. At Proleek, although there are now no physical remains extant on site at all, aerial photography has provided a clear view of one of two early medieval enclosures which is not evident at ground level.

However, while it is certainly true that aerial photographs, like the Faughart and Proleek examples, contain a wide variety of new archaeological evidence, both Wilson for England, and Barrett for Ireland, have highlighted the need to be aware of the

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[192] BARRETT, G.F., 'The Reconstruction of Proto-Historic Landscapes Using Aerial Photographs: Case Studies in County Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Volume XX, Number 3, (1983), p. 220.
[193] IBID, p. 220.
[194] HUGHES, K., *Early Medieval Ireland: Introduction to the Sources,* (London, 1972), p. 34; BUCKLEY, V.M., 'From the Darkness to the Dawn: The Later Prehistoric and Early Christian Borderlands', in *The Borderlands. Essays on the History of the Ulster-Leinster Border,* ed. by R. GILLESPIE & H. O'SULLIVAN, The Institute of Irish Studies, (Belfast, 1989), p. 30.
[195] HUGHES, (1972), p. 34; CONDIT, T., *Ireland's Archaeology from the Air,* (Dublin, 1997), p. 6.

problems inherent in this data source.[196] Firstly, the extent of aerial reconnaissance is relatively limited and only a few sites have been examined in more than one year. Preferably, archaeological features should be photographed over a prolonged period, since the details revealed are likely to vary according to lighting, soil moisture and crop conditions and ideally, successive flights over a number of years are required to enable a fuller acquisition of information for each individual site.[197] Secondly, the likelihood of crop marks appearing is very much dependent on current land-use patterns. So while deep-rooted cereals such as barley, oats and wheat are very responsive to the existence of archaeological features, grass, and crops with shallow root systems, such as Swedes, turnips and potatoes are likely to be unrewarding.[198]

Nonetheless, the benefits of aerial photography to the study of archaeology cannot be denied. Indeed, Glasscock has even speculated that aerial photography is far more important to the study of medieval settlement in Ireland than it is in England because 'we have not got a good documentary coverage to give us a lead in tracing medieval sites.'[199] Unlike a map an aerial photograph presents an unedited view of the land as it appears when the photograph is taken. The patterns of settlement in relation to the natural topography may be seen and the order of the development of sites may be worked out and in many cases, the landscape also provides a record for the changing religious beliefs of prehistoric and early historic peoples.[200] Thus the applications of aerial photography are manifold: research and discovery, monitoring of the condition of the sites, conservation and managements and when used in combination with other forms of research, such as geophysical prospection, or Aerial LiDAR [Light Detecting and Ranging]. it becomes a

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[196] WILSON, D.R., 'Some Pitfalls in the Interpretation of Air Photographs', in *Aerial Reconnaissance for Archaeology,* ed. by G. WEBSTER, CBA Research Report Number 12, (London, 1974), p. 59; BARRETT, (1983), p. 220.

[197] ST. JOSPEH, J.K.S, 'Air Photography and Archaeology', in *The Uses of Air Photography,* ed. by J.K.S. ST. JOSEPH, (London, 1977), p. 138; DONEUS, M., BRIESE, C., FERA, M., FORNWAGNER, U., GRIEBL, M., JANNER, M.& ZINGERLE, M., *Documentation and Analysis of Archaeological sites Using Aerial Reconnaissance and Airborne Laser Scanning,* XXI International CIPA Symposium, (Athens, 2006), p. 2.

[198] WILSON, (1974), p. 59; BARRETT, (1983), p. 220. Moreover, in an archaeological survey of Northamptonshire, England, which was undertaken in the 1980s, aerial photography was found to be of only partial use and gave little insight into the earliest periods of settlement. See TAYLOR, C.C, 'Towards Total Archaeology? Aerial Archaeology in Northamptonshire', in *The Impact of Aerial Reconnaissance on Archaeology,* ed. by G.S. Maxwell, CBA Research Report Number 49, (London, 1983), p. 54.

[199] GLASSCOCK, R.E., 'The Study of Deserted Medieval Settlements in Ireland (to 1968)', in *Deserted Medieval Villages,* ed. by M.W. BERESFORD and J.G. HURST, (London, 1971), p. 279.

[200] CONDIT, T., *Ireland's Archaeology from the Air,* (Dublin, 1997), pp. 5 & 15.

truly powerful tool for field archaeologist in their efforts to reconstruct past landscapes.[201]

Cartographic sources have been of chief importance to the study of the archaeology of the medieval settlement in Lower Dundalk because they provide pictorial representations of several of the churches under review in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[202] However, it is extremely difficult to classify a historical map as either a 'primary' or 'secondary' source.[203] Some researchers have argued that a map represents a 'snapshot' in time of a specific area and can therefore be justly classified as a primary source.[204] However, there are problems of reliability inherent in the use of any cartographical source for the purposes of archaeological investigation and, on the balance of evidence, the classification of maps as primary sources does not appear to be a suitable one. There are several factors which have influenced this reasoning. Firstly, as highlighted by Prunty, maps cannot be accurately regarded as a 'snapshot in time' as the very process of mapmaking itself meant that there was inevitably a time lag, however brief, between surveying, mapmaking and publication.[205] This is not the only problem to be encountered with historical maps as they were frequently employed to represent a specific region in more than one period, and it has often been found that new survey material was regularly superimposed onto existing cartographical frameworks.[206] In light of these predicaments, Prunty has suggested a method for the analysis of cartographical sources to aid historical research which can also be very easily applied to the use of maps for archaeological purposes. She has advised that each individual map be assessed individually and a reasonable attempt made to determine who funded the creation of the map and for what purpose, whether the content of the map has been manipulated, what has been included and what has been omitted and why, and finally over what timespan

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[201] TAYLOR, C.C., 'Aerial Photography and the Field Archaeologist', in *Aerial Reconnaissance for Archaeology,* ed. by G. WEBSTER, CBA Research Report Number 12, (London, 1974), p. 136; CONDIT, (1997), p. 6. See also SHELL, C. & ROUGHLEY, C., 'Exploring the Loughcrew Landscape: A New Airborne Approach', *Archaeology Ireland,* Volume 18, Number 2, (2004), pp. 22-25; NICHOLLS, J & SHIEL, D., 'Shades of Grey: A Summary of Recent Geophysical Surveys Along the Route of the M3 Motorway', *Seanda,* Issue 1, (2006), p. 12; ROYCROFT, N., 'Geophysical Survey', *Seanda,* Issue 1, (2006c), p. 11; http://www.arch.cam.ac.uk/~cfa1001/loughcrew/loughcrew.htm; http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/archaeology/archaeology_grant1.html

[202] See section VII below, Methodology and Structure, part 4. Cartography and Aerial Photography for details of the maps used throughout this thesis.

[203] OLIVER, R., *Ordnance Survey Maps. A Concise Guide for Historians,* Second Edition, The Charles Close Society, (London, 2005), p. 21.

[204] OLIVER, (2005), p. 22.

[205] PRUNTY, J., *Maps and Map-Making in Local History,* (Dublin, 2004), pp. 15-16.

[206] IBID, pp. 15-16.

was the map created.[207] This is clearly an important method of analysis and one which has been reiterated by Andrews.[208]

For the purposes of this thesis, the primary source material contained within the various texts of the Irish annals has proven invaluable, especially as, previous to the coming of the Anglo-Normans, Ireland lacked documents of an administrative nature like taxation lists and chartularies.[209]Indeed, the scope and content of the surviving annals is quite extensive, despite the small population and geographic extent of this island.[210] Research by Etchingham has indicated that although the annals of the ninth and tenth centuries are mainly preoccupied with ecclesiastical affairs and obits, by the second half of the tenth century there was a significant increase in the inclusion of secular events which carried on into the later centuries.[211] The annals employed throughout the course of this study include; the *Annals of Ulster,*[212] the *Annals of the Four Masters,*[213] the *Annals of Inisfallen,*[214] the *Annals of Tigernach*[215], the *Annals of Loch Cé*[216], the *Annals of Connacht*[217], the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*[218], and the *Chronicum Scotorum.*[219] Undoubtedly the most important of these annals are the *Annals of Ulster* which have

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[207] PRUNTY, (2004), p. 316.

[208] ANDREWS, J.H., 'Foreword' to *Maps and Map-Making in Local History,* by J. PRUNTY, (Dublin, 2004), p. 9.

[209]MARTIN, F.X., 'Foreword' to *The Medieval Irish Annals*, by G. MACNIOCAILL, (Dublin, 1975), p. 5.

[210] MCCARTHY, D.P., *The Irish Annals,* (Dublin, 2008), p. 7.

[211] ETCHINGHAM, C., Viking Raids on Irish Church Settlements in the Ninth Century: A Reconsideration of the Annals, Maynooth Monographs Series Minor 1, (Maynooth, 1996); MCCARTHY, D.P., The Irish Annals, (Dublin, 2008), p. 7.

[212] *Annála Uladh: Annals of Ulster, Otherwise Annala Senait, Annals of Senat; A Chronicle of Irish Affairs A.D. 431 to A.D. 1540, Volume I, A.D. 431-A.D. 1056*, ed. & trans. with notes by W.M. HENESSY, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1887); *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131), Part 1,* ed. by S. MACAIRT and G. MACNIOCAILL, The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, (Dublin, 1983); *Extracts from the Annals of Ulster,* ed. & trans. by L. DE PAOR, *Saint Patrick's World: The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age,* (Dublin, 1993), pp. 118-122; *Cathal Óg Mac Maghnusa and the Annals of Ulster / Aubrey Gwynn*, ed. by N.Ó MURAÍLE, The McManus Clan Association, (Enniskillen, 1998).

[213] *Annála Rioghachta Eireann: Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters from the Earliest Period to the Year 1616, Volume II,* ed. by J. O'DONOVAN, (New York, 1966); *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland: From the Earliest Times to the Year 1616 / The Four Masters [Michael O'Clery et al.],* ed. by K. NICHOLLS, (Dublin, 1990); *Extracts from the Annals of the Four Masters,* ed. & trans. by L. DE PAOR, *Saint Patrick's World: The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age,* (Dublin, 1993), pp. 128-34.

[214] *Annals of Inisfallen (MS. Rawlinson B. 503),* ed. by S. MACAIRT, The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, (Dublin, 1951); *Extracts from the Annals of Inisfallen*, ed. & trans. by L. DE PAOR, Saint Patrick's World: The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age, (Dublin, 1993), pp. 123-25.

[215] *Annals of Tigernach,* ed. & trans. by W. STOKES, (Llanerch, 1993).

[216] *Annals of Loch Cé, Volumes I & II* ed. & trans. by W.M. HENNESSY, The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1939).

[217] *Annála Connacht: The Annals of Connacht A.D. 1224-1544,* ed. by A. M. FREEMAN, The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, (Dublin, 1970).

[218] *Annals of Clonmacnoise: Being Annals of Ireland from the Earliest Period to A.D. 1408*, ed. by D. MURPHY & trans. by C. MACGEOGHEGAN, (Llanerch, 1993).

[219] *Chronicum Scotorum: A Chronicle of Irish Affairs from the Earliest Times to A.D. 1135: with a Supplement, Containing the Events from 1141 to 1150*, ed. & trans. by W.M. HENESSY, (Wiesbaden, 1964).

survived to the present day in the form of two closely allied texts of the late fifteenth century. As denoted by their title, these annals are primarily concerned with political and ecclesiastical events in Ulster and the northern half of Ireland in general, although the broad range of their entries covers the whole of Ireland for the earlier centuries right up until the twelfth century.[220] These annals are therefore extremely useful for the study of the history of the early medieval period in Ireland, and for the history of the Irish monasteries during these centuries the *Annals of Ulster* constitute a major source of primary knowledge.

In the 1970s, research conducted by Gwynn and Hadcock indicated that, although the *Annals of Ulster* were not wholly reliable for the fifth, sixth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the entries from the eighth century onwards were relatively trustworthy.[221] However, more recent research undertaken by McCarthy has suggested that the *Annals of Ulster* can no longer be considered as the most authoritative annal chronology, particularly in the period 431-664 A.D.[222] Furthermore, he has determined that the A.D. chronology of the *Annals of Ulster,* which in modern times has been regularly cited for the chronology of Irish history, has been shown to be dependable only for the years 1014-1192 and 1379-1543.[223] It is also worth noting that information contained in one of the extant Ulster manuscripts was extensively re-used by the compilers of the later *Annals of the Four Masters* and a very large number of the resulting entries can be identified as copied, and not always entirely faithfully, from several earlier sources including earlier accounts from the *Annals of Ulster.*[224] Indeed, the compilers of the *Annals of the Four Masters* have even been found to have updated vocabulary significantly, sometimes misunderstanding and misrepresenting original entries. Therefore, considering the fact that 'there is reason to believe that the compilers of the *Annals of Ulster* transcribed texts from earlier examples without major change of wording or even spelling, though they

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[220] DUMVILLE, D. & GRABOWSKI, K., *Chronicles and Annals of Mediaeval Ireland and Wales,* Studies in Celtic History 4, (Suffolk, 1984), p. 5.
[221] GWYNN, A. & HADCOCK, R., *Medieval Religious Houses,* (London, 1970), pp. 23-24.
[222] MCCARTHY, D.P., 'The Chronology of the Irish Annals', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 98, Section C, (1998), p. 240.
[223] MCCARTHY, D.P., 'Chronological Synchronisation of the Irish Annals', (2005), in https://www.cs.tcd.ie/Dan.McCarthy/chronology/synchronisms/annals-chron.htm. See also MACNIOCAILL, G., *The Medieval Irish Annals,* (Dublin, 1975), pp. 18-20 & MCCARTHY, D.P., *The Irish Annals,* (Dublin, 2008), pp. 34-37.
[224] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), pp. 24-25.

may have abbreviated them', the *Annals of Ulster* are probably more reliable than the *Annals of the Four Masters.*[225]

The *Four Masters* also cite a *Book of Clonmacnoise* as among the sources from which they copied some entries in the seventeenth century. The original copy of this book has not survived intact, although one other manuscript from Clonmacnoise, *Chronicon Scotorum,* has survived and it is an abbreviated transcript of a lost Clonmacnoise chronicle made by the famous Irish scholar Dubhaltach MacFirbisigh in the seventeenth century.[226] One other set of annals derived from a Clonmacnoise text has also survived in the English translation made by Conall MacGeoghegan in 1627, and published under the title the *Annals of Clonmacnoise.*[227] Although its reliability is fairly flawed for the entries pertaining to the early medieval period, it does contain some valuable information regarding Irish monastic history in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, although it terminates abruptly in 1408.[228]

The oldest known surviving set of Irish annals, now commonly referred to as the *Annals of Inisfallen,* are primarily concerned with events in Munster, although they do also contain numerous entries pertaining to other regions of the country.[229] Another important source for Irish history from 973-1178 A.D. is the text of the *Annals of Tigernach* which appears to be primarily concerned with events in Meath and the midlands.[230] Gwynn and Hadcock have criticized this document for its twelfth century entries which they disparage as being little more than a series of entries commemorating the wars of Toirdelbach Mór Ó Conchobhair.[231] Unfortunately, the text of this document ends abruptly in the middle of 1178, owing to an imperfection in the surviving manuscript.

Additionally, the texts of two western annals have also survived; the *Annals of Connacht* and the *Annals of Loch Cé.* The records of the *Annals of Connacht* commence in 1224, owing to a defect in the surviving manuscript, but they do continue right up until

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[225] Ó MÁILLE, T.S., *The Language of the Annals of Ulster,* (Manchester, 1910); SIMMS, K., pers. comm., (September, 2008). See also MCCARTHY, D.P., *The Irish Annals,* (Dublin, 2008), pp. 56-60.
[226] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 24; MACNIOCAILL, (1975), pp. 21-23.
DUMVILLE, & GRABOWSKI, (1984), p. 6. MCCARTHY, D.P., *The Irish Annals,* (Dublin, 2008), p. 25-26.
[227] MACNIOCAILL, (1975), pp. 21-23.
See DUMVILLE, & GRABOWSKI, (1984), pp. 6-7; MCCARTHY, (2008), pp. 10-11, 53 &56.
[228] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 24.
[229] MACNIOCAILL, (1975), pp. 24-25.
See DUMVILLE, & GRABOWSKI, (1984), p. 3. MCCARTHY, (2008), pp. 11-12 & 37-40.
[230] MACNIOCAILL, (1975), pp. 18-20.
See DUMVILLE, & GRABOWSKI, (1984), pp. 5-6. MCCARTHY, (2008), pp. 21-24.
[231] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 25.

the last entry, which was made in 1544, with one final additional entry being made in 1563.[232] In contrast to this, the document preserving the *Annals of Loch Cé* can more appropriately be described as a composite text, since there is a gap in the existing manuscript from 1316-1412, and for which the editor has compensated by inserting the corresponding texts for those years from the *Annals of Connacht.* Although the opening entry for 1014 in the *Annals of Loch Cé* is quite a lengthy record concerning the battle of Clontarf, its text down to the last years of the twelfth century has been identified as little more than a transcript from the *Annals of Ulster.*[233]

Bearing in mind the territorial limitations of these annalistic sources, as well as the repetitive nature of some of them, the evidence offered by these texts has proven to be of enormous consequence to the study of medieval ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk. However, it is important to also acknowledge that although the annals can aptly be described as 'principal sources' for the history of medieval Ireland,[234] and particularly for the periods of the Viking raids of the ninth and tenth centuries,[235] they do in fact illustrate marked discrepancies in their content, scope and style over relatively short periods[236] so that they cannot be considered to as thoroughly reliable primary sources. Even so, however research conducted by Ó Cróinín has indicated that many annalistic entries dating tot eh sixth and seventh centuries have 'strong claims to be accepted as genuine records of the events they profess to relate,'[237] although of course the question remains as to how many of the exact details from these earlier records can be wholly relied upon.[238]

One other principal primary source which has been used quite extensively in this thesis for the study of pre-Norman ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk is the *Life of St. Darcerca/Monenna.*[239] Fortunately, for the purposes of this study, two Latin texts of the *Life of St. Monenna* were printed in the *Acta Sanctorum* of

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[232] MACNIOCAILL, (1975), pp. 28-29, 32-35.
MCCARTHY, (2008), pp. 44-48.
[233] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 24; MACNIOCAILL, (1975), pp. 29-30; MCCARTHY, (2008), pp. 48-52.
[234] BYRNE, F.J., 'The Trembling Sod: Ireland in 1169', in *A New History of Ireland. Volume II Medieval Ireland 1169-1534,* ed. by A. Cosgrove, (Oxford, 1987), pp. 1-42.
[235] ETCHINGHAM, C., Viking Raids on Irish Church Settlements in the Ninth Century: A Reconsideration of the Annals, Maynooth Monographs Series Minor 1, (Maynooth, 1996), p. 58.
[236] ETCHINGHAM, (1996), p. 59.
[237] Ó CRÓINÍN, (2003), p. 86.
[238] IBID, p. 84.
[239] St. Darcerca is more commonly referred to as Monenna, or Moninna, in both primary and secondary source material and so for reasons of clarity will be referred to only as Monenna throughout the course of this study.

the Bollandist Fathers under 6th July; one is anonymous and is derived from the *Codex Salmanticensis,*[240] while the other has been attributed to the Irish author Conchubranus[241] and has survived in a manuscript form of eleventh-twelfth century provenance.[242] Although the Latin version of the anonymous *Life* of Monenna has previously been edited on three separate occasions,[243] it was not translated into English until 1993 by de Paor.[244] A more recent translation of the *Life* was also published by Sperber in 2001[245] and both of these translations have been used and referenced in this thesis. Conchubranus' *Life* of Monenna has also been edited three times, but it is the final edition, which was published in three parts in *Seanchas Ard Mhaca* from 1979-82 and which contains an English translation by the Ulster Society for Medieval Latin Studies, which was utilized and referenced throughout this study.[246]

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[240] The printed version of this *Life* is preserved, along with several other saints' *Lives,* in a folio volume, which formerly belonged to the Irish College in Salamanca, Spain, and which was part of a fourteenth century collections of saints' *Lives* called the *Codex Salmanticensis.* In the first half of the seventeenth century a number of Franciscan scholars, including John Colgan and Michael O'Clery, came together in the newly founded college of St. Anthony at Louvain with an ambitious plan to gather and publish all known texts concerning the *Lives* of Irish saints. The plan was inspired in part by the historical and hagiographical work of Heribert Rosweyde, (1569-1629), and Jean Bollandus, (1596-1665), who were the founders of the great Bollandist *Acta Sanctorum,* the great collection of saints' *Lives* arranged by days in the order of the calendar. The idea of the *Acta Sanctorum* had been first conceived by Rosweyde, a Dutch Jesuit, and when he died his work was continued by Bollandus, after whom the Bollandist Fathers were named. See GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), pp. 22-23; GODDING, R., 'Irish Hagiography in the *Acta Sanctorum* (1643-1794), in *Studies in Irish Hagiography: Saints and Scholars,* ed. by J. CAREY, M. HERBERT, & P. Ó RIAIN, (Dublin, 2001), pp. 289-316; SPERBER, I., 'The Life of St. Monenna or Darcerca of Killevy', in *Armagh History & Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by A.J. HUGHES & W. NOLAN, (Dublin, 2001), p. 63; LACEY, B., *O'Brien Pocket History of Irish Saints,* (Dublin, 2003), pp. 13-14; http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/BLA_BOLLANDISTS.html.

[241] There is virtually nothing known about Conchubranus himself, except that he was probably writing in the eleventh century. See BARTLETT, R., 'Introduction' to *Geoffrey of Burton: Life and Miracles of St. Modwenna,* ed. & trans. by R. BARTLETT, (Oxford, 2002), pp. xiv-xv.

[242] O'HANLON, J., *Lives of the Irish Saints,* Volume VII, (1892), pp. 55-63 & 79-93; KENNEY, J.F., *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: An Introduction and Guide,* (New York, 1929), pp. 367-71; O'KANE, L. & BESSBROOK, C.C., *Lower Killevy – Ireland: Outlines of Their History,* (Newry, 1955), p. 11; BUTLER, A., *Butlers Lives of the Saints,* ed., revised & supplemented by H. THURSTON & D. ATTWATER, Second Edition, (London, 1956), p. 56; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 327; BARTLETT, (2002), pp. xiv-xv; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 34.

[243] *Acta Sanctorum Volume II,* ed. by SOCIETY OF BOLLANDISTS, (Antwerp, 1721), pp. 290-96; *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniae Ex Codice Salmanticensi,* ed. by C. DE SMEDT & J. DE BACKER, (Edinburgh & London, 1888), pp. 165-88; *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae Ex Codice Olim Salmanticensi Nunc Bruxellensi,* ed. by W.W. HEIST, *Subsidia Hagiographica,* Volume XXVIII, (Brussels, 1965), pp. 83-95. See also BARTLETT, (2002), pp. xiv-xv.

[244] *Life of St. Darcerca, or Moninna, the Abbess*, ed. & trans. by L. DE PAOR, *Saint Patrick's World: The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age*, (Dublin, 1993), pp. 281-94.

[245] *Life of St. Monenna or Darcerca of Killevy*, ed. & trans. by I. SPERBER, *Armagh History & Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by A.J. HUGHES & W. NOLAN, (Dublin, 2001), pp. 68-80.

[246] *Acta Sanctorum Volume II*, pp. 290-96; *Conchubrani Vita Sanctae Monennae,* ed. by M. ESPOSITO, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Volume 28, Section C, (1910), pp. 202-238; *Life of Saint Monenna by Conchubranus: Part I,* ed. & trans. by ULSTER SOCIETY FOR MEDIEVAL LATIN STUDIES, Seanchas Ard Mhaca, Volume 9, Number 2, (1979), pp. 250-73; *Life of Saint Monenna by*

The *Life* of St. Monenna is a source of the utmost importance to the analysis of the medieval ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk because it makes the claim that Monenna was responsible for the foundation of at least two early medieval establishments in the study area, Faughart and Roosky, as well as Killeavy in Co. Armagh, which survived until the dissolution of the monasteries in the early sixteenth century. Indeed, the importance of this *Life* to the study of the early medieval history of this region has already been noted by O'Sullivan who has described it as 'the earliest surviving account of the district.'[247] According to de Paor, the *Life of St. Monenna* is a fairly plausible account of the life of a monastic foundress of the beginning of the sixth century,[248] although of course it is also peppered with numerous allusions to her miraculous powers and unparalleled piety, and so in this sense is not a wholly reliable primary source. Its usefulness to this thesis lies primarily in the information which it can provide for the religious foundations at Faughart and Roosky, and indeed, evidence for Irish female monastic foundations in the early medieval period comes almost exclusively from this type of hagiography.[249]

However, there are a number of other fundamental problems associated with the use of this genre of source for archaeological studies and it is important to acknowledge them at the outset. According to Sperber, the anonymous version of Monenna's *Life* which survived in the *Codex Salmanticensis* is very possibly an abridgement of an earlier *Life.* She has determined that the original version of this anonymous *Life* must have predated Conchubranus' composition as he appears to have used it extensively in his work.[250] Even so, however, there are notable differences in the two *Lives,* for example Sperber has described the anonymous source as a 'simple and straightforward saint's life' while she has concluded that 'Conchubranus' *Life* is entirely different, lengthy and bizarre.'[251] To briefly summarize the primary discrepancies it can be noted that in the anonymous *Life* Monenna remained in Ireland for the duration of her life, whereas according to Conchubranus she travelled extensively through Britain, founding numerous

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Conchubranus: Part II, ed. & trans. by ULSTER SOCIETY FOR MEDIEVAL LATIN STUDIES, Seanchas Ard Mhaca, Volume 10, Number 1, (1980-81), pp. 117-41; *Life of Saint Monenna by Conchubranus: Part III,* ed. & trans. by ULSTER SOCIETY FOR MEDIEVAL LATIN STUDIES, Seanchas Ard Mhaca, Volume 10, Number 2, (1982), pp. 426-454.

[247] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 34.

[248] DE PAOR, L., *Saint Patrick's World: The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age,* (Dublin, 1993), p. 49.

[249] DE PAOR, (1996), p. 49.

[250] SPERBER, (2001), p. 63,

[251] IBID, p. 63.

churches in England and Scotland. Therefore, it would appear that Conchubranus drew upon several additional sources for this *Life* of Monenna, including the *Life* of the English St. Modwenna who was the patron of the monastery of Burton-on-Trent and also possibly a *Life* of the Scottish St. Ninian.[252] This apparent confusion is a common feature of medieval saints' *Lives* and the early Irish practice of giving hypocoristic, or pet, names to saints has often resulted in a 'multiplicity of names, apparently of different individuals but actually referring to the same person.'[253] These inconsistencies have also been lamented by Esposito who, in the introduction to his edition of Conchubranus' *Life* of Monenna, commented that:

> *Through all these Lives run an extraordinary confusion of names, dates and places, and there seems to be no doubt that Conchubranus and the other biographers have mixed up two, and perhaps three different saints of the same name.*[254]

On the balance of evidence it would thus appear that the earlier anonymous *Life* of Monenna is the most reliable of the two compositions. Nonetheless, it must also be remembered that the earliest surviving version of the anonymous text only dates to the fourteenth century and is therefore not a contemporary account of the events which it describes. For the study of the archaeological chronology of early medieval Irish churches it therefore becomes necessary to check the chronological order of the relevant written works and then note the different descriptions of these churches.[255] At all times it must be borne in mind that medieval saints' *Lives* were fictionalized propaganda commissioned and written with specific motivations, often political.[256] It seems accurate to acknowledge that these documents undoubtedly say more about the time during which they were written rather than the era they were supposed to be describing. The intricacies of these documents are probably best summed up by Lacey who has determined that 'hagiography is all about codes for the reader…saints' *Lives* are coded documents to be broken and there are rules as to how to do this.'[257] This is a difficult enterprise to undertake and numerous scholars have in the past endeavoured to break these hagiographical 'codes'. The renowned eighteenth century collector of saints' *Lives,*

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[252] SPERBER, (2001), p. 63.
[253] LACEY, (2003), p. 14.
[254] ESPOSITO, M., 'Conchubrani Vita Sanctae Monennae', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 28, Section C, (1910), p. 204.
[255] LACEY, B., pers. comm., (September, 2008).
[256] For example, the cults of St. Patrick and St. Brigid experienced a rapid increase in popularity mainly due to the strong support of the Uí Néill and Uí Dunlainge clans respectively. See LACEY, (2003), p. 15.
[257] LACEY, B., pers. comm., (September, 2008).

Alban Butler, was heavily criticized for the ruthless way in which he dealt with miracles, which had previously played a prominent part in standard *Lives* of saints.[258] Although his work is not all-inclusive, or completely accurate, it was quite pioneering in nature because he was genuinely attempting to present true historical studies rather than pietistic legends.[259] Modern hagiographical studies have greatly benefited from developments in historical studies but even today the effort is often thwarted by a debilitating dearth of information.[260]

Indeed, even a brief consideration of the history of the history of hagiography itself as a discipline goes a long way towards explaining the genesis of some of these problems. Hagiography can trace its origins back to the fourth century when the initial development of the idea of the saint resulted in the creation of some of the earliest known forms of hagiography.[261] These earliest examples primarily consisted of sermons for delivery on the saint's feast day but they soon developed into more extensive *Acta* (Acts), and *Vitae* (Lives) of the saints. However, even these earliest hagiographical works were not entirely reliable in the information which they provided leading Lacey to observe that:

> *These were works intended more to excite veneration than to be biographies in our modern sense. They were designed not to give biographical facts about a saint's life but to enlarge the reputation of the subject. The academic study of the hagiography of the saints often reveals major discrepancies between what we know about a saint's actual historical lie and her hagiographical 'Life'.*[262]

Similarly, one of the most palpable drawbacks of the *Life* of Monenna is that it offers very little in the way of historical facts pertaining to the saint herself, and, as with so many other medieval saints' biographies, the authors seem to have prioritized moral purpose rather then literal truth.[263] In a more general context, the most extreme result of this approach was that individual saints' lives were constructed from a myriad of various

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[258] BURNS, P., Butlers Lives of the Saints: The Third Millennium: First Supplement to the Twelve-Volume New Full Edition Published Between 1995 and 2000, (London & New York, 2005), p. xi.
[259] BURNS, (2005), p. xi.
[260] BURNS, P., 'Preface' to *Butlers Lives of the Saints: New Full Edition: February,* by A. BUTLER, ed. & revised by P. BURNS, (Kent & Minnesota, 1998), p. ix.
[261] The word 'hagiography' itself is derived from the Greek *hagios,* meaning 'holy' and *graphein,* meaning 'to write'.
[262] LACEY, (2003), p. 9.
[263] See for example LACEY, B., (ed), *Manus O'Donell's Life of Colum Cille,* (Dublin, 1998), p. 14 & STRIJBOSCH, C., *The Seafaring Saint: Sources and Analogues of the 12th Century Voyage of St. Brendan,* trans. by T. SUMMERFIELD, (Dublin, 2000), p. 209.

sources and some stories were even written about saints that had never existed at all.[264] Although the public veneration of saints in the Christian Church is known to have existed since the second century,[265] when it comes to the study of the Irish Church there is a sharp distinction to be made between a small and factually reliable group of early saints' lives which were penned mostly in the seventh or eight centuries, and the much larger number of saintly compositions which, like Conchubranus' *Life* were inscribed in the eleventh and twelfth centuries , and which are notoriously unreliable in the historical information which they provide.[266] So much so, in fact, that Dumville has surmised that:

> *When from the late seventh century onwards, information about the preceding quarter-millennium was either non-existent or not available in detail sufficient for any particular purpose, recourse was had to invention – to wishful thinking or to unrestrained activity.*[267]

Although any information pertaining to the life and activities of this saint must be primarily reliant upon her *Life,* especially in the absence of any other relevant primary sources, a study conducted by Bartlett into the cults of twelfth century saints has highlighted the dangers of being over-dependent on any source of that genre.[268] Combining the previous research of Kenney and Ryan with his own, Bartlett revealed numerous inconsistencies in this *Life* and even recounted how the bones of one St. Modwenna were claimed by the Benedictine abbey of Burton-on-Trent. Abbot Geoffrey of Burton, who took up office in 1114, was apparently eager to find out as much as he could about Modwenna, evidently lacking a suitable *Life* or any other written traditions. Having pursued his investigations far and wide, he was eventually sent from Ireland a copy of the *Life* of St. Monenna, whose death was recorded for 517 A.D. in the *Annals of Ulster.*[269] At some point, it is not exactly clear when, the previously consistent and exclusively Irish vocation of this early medieval saint was fused with two other traditions,

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[264] NOBLE, T.F.X., & HEAD, T., (eds), *Soldiers of Christ: Saints and Saint's Lives from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages,* (Pennsylvania, 1995), p. xxx; DE PAOR, (1996), p. 50; BARTLETT, R., 'Cults of Irish, Scottish and Welsh Saints in Twelfth-Century England', in *Britain and Ireland: 900-1300,* ed. by B. SMITH, (Cambridge, 1999), p. 69; MCMAHON, M. *Saints: The Art, The History, The Inspiration,* (London, 2006), p. 146.

[265] MANNING, C., *Early Irish Monasteries,* (Dublin, 1995), pp. 5-6; LACEY, (2003), p. 8; FARMER, D., *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints,* Fifth Edition, (Oxford, 2004), p. ix.

[266] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 20.

[267] DUMVILLE, D., 'St. Finnian of Movilla –Two Studies. 1. St. Finian of Movilla: Briton, Gael, Ghost?', in *Down History and Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by L. PROUDFOOT, (Dublin, 1997), p. 71.

[268] BARTLETT, (1999), pp. 67-86.

[269] *Annals of Ulster,* 517. See also BARTLETT, (1999), p. 69.

one with a Scottish, and one with an English locale.[270] Indeed, Bartlett has commented that:

> *In matters of cult and hagiography the British Isles was by no means a unity, but it was a unit, within which contact and communication were continued and fertile.*[271]

Thus, the detailed *Life of St. Monenna,* along with numerous other saintly biographies have proven that in twelfth century England it was certainly not undesirable to worship a saint of Irish origins, and some Irish saints, such as Monenna, and also Brigid, who was greatly revered at Glastonbury for many centuries,[272] were very widely and ostentatiously commemorated at prominent religious centres in England, Scotland and Wales. Moreover, the hagiographical investigation of female saints in early medieval Ireland is in its own right an individual discipline,[273] and while this study does not in any way attempt to provide a detailed hagiographical study of St. Monenna it is hoped that through an examination of various elements of her *Life* that a fuller understanding of the early medieval ecclesiastical patterns in the barony of Lower Dundalk may be gleaned.

The archiepiscopal registers of Armagh provided a host of useful sources for the study of the medieval ecclesiastical settlement patterns in the barony of Lower Dundalk. These primatial documents include the *Register of Milo Sweteman 1361-80;*[274] the *Register of John Swayne 1418-1439;* [275] the *Register of John Mey 1443-56;* [276] the *Register of Nicholas Fleming 1404-16;* [277] the *Register of John Prene 1439-43;* [278] the

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[270] KENNEY, (1929), p. 367; RYAN, J., *Irish Monasticism: Origins and Early Development,* (Dublin & Cork, 1931), p. 138; BARTLETT, (1999), pp. 69-70.

[271] BARTLETT, (1999), pp. 75 & 86.

[272] ROBINSON, J.L., 'St. Brigid and Glastonbury', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland,* Volume 83, (1953), p. 97.

[273] BITEL, L., 'Saints and Abbesses', in *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia,* ed. by M. SCHAUS, (New York & London, 2006), p. 410.

[274] *A Calendar of the Register of Archbishop Sweteman,* ed. by H.J. LAWLOR, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 29, Section C, (1911), pp. 213-310; *Extracts Relating to Co. Louth from the Calendar of the Register of Primate Milo Sweteman, 1361-1379* ,ed. by A. GWYNN, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XI, Numbers 3, (1947), pp.189-203; *The Register of Milo Sweteman, Archbishop of Armagh 1361-1380,* ed. by B. SMITH, The Manuscripts Commission, (Dublin, 1996).

[275] *The Register of John Swayne, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland 1418-1439,* ed. by D.A. CHART, His Majesty's Stationary Office, (Belfast, 1935).

[276] *Registrum Iohannis Mey: The Register of John Mey, Archbishop of Armagh, 1443-1456,* ed. by W.G.H. QUIGLEY & E.F.D. ROBERTS, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Belfast, 1972).

[277] *Extracts Relating to Co. Louth from the Calendar of the Register of Primate Nicholas Fleming,* ed. by A. GWYNN, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XI, Number 4, (1948), pp. 221-37; *The Register of Nicholas Fleming, Archbishop of Armagh 1404-1416,* ed. by. B. SMITH, The Irish Manuscripts Commission, (Dublin, 2003).

[278] Although the *Register of Archbishop John Prene* has not been published yet, there are three surviving manuscripts sources for this register. The original is held in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, while two further transcripts by William Reeves are preserved in the Armagh Public Library and in the

Register of Octavian De Palatio 1478-1513; [279] the *Register of George Cromer 1539-43;* [280] and the *Register of George Dowdall 1543-63.* [281] The archiepiscopal registers of Armagh are of key importance to the study of the medieval ecclesiastical settlement in Lower Dundalk because they are vital for the comprehension of the late medieval and early Reformation period of the Irish Church and they are remarkably unique in the sense that no other Irish see has any comparable wealth of material relating to provincial and diocesan government.[282] Although the information contained within the various different primatial registers are of the utmost important to the analysis of the Church on the Cooley Peninsula in the later Middle Ages, it is crucial to also acknowledge that they cannot be considered as a comprehensive record of ecclesiastical history in this period. This problem of primary documentation in relation to the Church has been highlighted by Jefferies in his historical study of the diocese of Dromore in the sixteenth century.[283] He has remarked upon the fact that the conventionally negative accounts of the Irish Church at the latter end of the medieval period are founded to a considerable degree upon only a limited selection of documents among the state papers of Henry VIII and he has warned

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Trinity College Library. SIMMS, K., pers. comm., (March, 2009). See also LOVE, H.G., *The Records of the Archbishops of Armagh: Being an Indexed Catalogue of Manuscripts, Documents and Books in the Archiepiscopal Registry of Armagh,* (Dundalk, 1965); SAYLES, G.O., *Scripta Diversa,* (London, 1982), p. 128; JEFFERIES, (1997a), p. 175 & http://www.proni.gov.uk/introduction_armagh_diocesan_registry_archive.pdf.

[279] *Registrum Octavani Alias Liber Niger: The Register of Octavian De Palatio Archbishop of Armagh 1478-1513, Volumes I & II,* ed. by M.A. SUGHI, The Irish Manuscripts Commission, (Dublin, 1999).

[280] *Archbishop Cromer's Register,* ed. by L.P. MURRAY, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volumes VII-IX, Number 4, (1932-38).

[281] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall, commonly called the "Liber Niger" or "Black Book,"* ed. by L.P. MURRAY, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volumes VI-VII, (1926-1930). These registers are preserved in a series of volumes which are held in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. The first seven volumes are original manuscripts surviving from the late medieval and early Reformation periods, spanning from 1361-1543, and mostly incorporating material from the aforementioned seven primacies but also including random records from some others. The text of the eighth volume, The Register of George Dowdall, survives only in the form of a transcript of the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. See WATT, J.A., 'Review of *Registrum Iohannis Mey. The Register of John Mey Archbishop of Armagh, 1443-1456*, ed. by W.G.H. QUIGLEY & E.F.D. ROBERTS, (Belfast, 1972)', *English Historical Review*, Volume 92, Number 365, (1977), pp. 853 & QUIGLEY, W.G.H. & ROBERTS, E.F.D., 'Introduction' *to Registrum Iohannis Mey: The Register of John Mey, Archbishop of Armagh, 1443-1456*, ed. by W.G.H. QUIGLEY & E.F.D. ROBERTS, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, (Belfast, 1972).

[282] QUIGLEY & ROBERTS, (1972), p. x; WATT, (1977), p. 853; DUNLOP, E., 'Introduction' to *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor and Dromore Consisting of a Taxation of Those Dioceses Compiled in the Year MCCCVI,* by W. REEVES, (First Published Ballymena, 1847, Reprinted Ballymena, 1992), pp. xix-xxi; LYDON, J.F., 'Foreword' to *Registrum Octavani Alias Liber Niger: The Register of Octavian De Palatio Archbishop of Armagh 1478-1513, Vols. I & II,* ed. by M.A. SUGHI, The Irish Manuscripts Commission, (Dublin, 1999), p. xii.

[283] JEFFERIES, H.A., 'The Diocese of Dromore on the Eve of the Tudor Reformation', in *Down History and Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by L. PROUDFOOT, (Dublin, 1997b), pp. 123-140.

that a much fuller investigation of the Irish Church is necessary to examine the surviving evidence relating to individual dioceses and parishes.[284]

There are some briefer primary documents which have proved extremely useful to the study of the medieval churches of the barony of Lower Dundalk, some of which include the *Grant of the Manor of Coly and Advowson of the Church of Carlingford by Matilda de Lacy to the Templars in Ireland* which was edited and published in 1906-7 by Wood and provides details of the ecclesiastical possessions of the Order of the Knights Templar on the Cooley Peninsula;[285] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* which was transcribed and edited in 1925 by Fitzpatrick for the *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* and which deals specifically with the churches of Louth[286] and *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* which was transcribed by Leslie in 1929 were also of paramount importance for this study,[287] while the *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions 1540-42* which was edited and published by White in 1943 has also proven to be an important source for the churches of Lower Dundalk in the sixteenth century.[288]

The *Journal of Isaac Butler,* an account of a tour made in the year 1744 from Dublin through North Dublin, Meath, Louth and several other Irish counties has been used prominently in this study. The original manuscript of this journal is still preserved in the Armagh Public Library[289] and the *Extracts* used extensively through the course of this thesis relate directly to the barony of Lower Dundalk and were transcribed in 1922 from the original manuscript by Deane, who was then Assistant Librarian at the library.[290] These extracts are of vital importance to this study because they contain quite detailed description of the medieval ecclesiastical remains at Faughart, Carlingford, Grange, Templetown and Ballymascanlan as they survived in 1744. Described by Sir William

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[284] JEFFERIES, (1997b), p. 123.

[285] *Grant of the Manor of Coly and Advowson of the Church of Carlingford by Matilda de Lacy to the Templars in Ireland,* ed. by H. WOOD, 'The Templars in Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 26, Section C,(1906-7), p. 375.

[286] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,(T.C.D. MS. E.36),* transc.& ed. by T. FITZPATRICK, 'The Royal Visitation of 1622', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VI, Number 1, (1925), pp. 4-11.

[287] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* transc. by J.B. LESLIE, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 1, (1929), pp. 19-41.

[288] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions 1540-42,* ed. by N.B. WHITE, Irish Manuscripts Commission, The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1943).

[289] Armagh Public Library, MS K.IV.24.

[290] DEANE, J. (ed), 'Extracts from Isaac Butler's Journal, 1744', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume V, Number 2, (1922), pp. 93-106.

Wilde in 1847 as a 'Surgeon, Astronomer, Almanac Maker and Botanist,'[291] Butler was a well known Dublin astrologer and almanac writer from the 1720s on who had also dabbled in botany and archaeology. His talents as a botanist were recognised by Walter Harris and Dr. John Rutty and when the Physico-Historical Society, of which they were prominent members was established in 1744[292] they employed him as an 'inquirer'. Butler's first assignment had been to inquire after rare plants in Co. Dublin, and soon afterwards his remit was extended to the counties of Meath, Westmeath, Louth and Longford,[293] and it was in this manner that he came to visit the medieval remains at Faughart, Carlingford, Grange, Templetown and Ballymascanlan. Although Butler's writings on the antiquities of Louth are of great consequence for the purposes of this examination, it is also important to remember that he was not always completely accurate in the information which he recorded. For example, Frazer, in his assessment of Butler's description of a journey to Lough Derg, has remarked upon the inaccuracy of some of his versions of the burial inscriptions at the site.[294] Furthermore, records contained within the *Minute Book of the Physico-Historical Society,* indicate that the results of Butler's investigations in the south-east of the country in 1747-48 did not include the kinds of information and specimens that the members had originally commissioned him to acquire.[295]

The next source to be reviewed here is also the work of an eighteenth century antiquarian; Thomas Wright's *Louthiana.*[296] By the time of his death in 1786, Thomas Wright was a widely known figure who, like Isaac Butler, had experimented in a number

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[291] WILDE, W., 'Irish Astrologers' *Dublin Quarterly Journal of Medical Science*, Volume LV, (Aug-Nov 1847).

[292] The Physico-Historical Society was similar to most eighteenth century voluntary societies. It modelled itself on the Dublin Philosophical Society, and was, in turn, copied by the Medico-Philosophical Society which was active in the 1750s and 1760s. The initial aim of the Physico-Historical Society had been to record the antiquities, natural history, geography, economy and society of each of Ireland's counties. Over the eight years of the Physico-Historical Society's existence there were repeated references in the minutes of meetings to the 'inquirers', of which Butler was one, and he along with John Rutty and Charles Smith travelled extensively throughout Leinster and Munster on behalf of the society until at least January 1750, when the last mention of payments is made in the Minute Book (Royal Irish Academy, MS 24.E.28). Butler later died on 7 December 1755 at the age of 66 at the 'Sign of the Lion' tavern in Bull Lane, Dublin. MAGENNIS, E., pers. comm., (March, 2004). See also ANON, *An Account of the Rise and Progress of the Physico-Historical Society,* (Dublin, 1745), p. 1;DEANE, (1922), p. 93; MAGENNIS, E., " 'A Land of Milk and Honey': The Physico-Historical Society, Improvement and the Surveys of the Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 102, Section C, (2002), pp. 205-9.

[293] DEANE, (1922), p. 93; MAGENNIS, (2002), p. 205.

[294] FRAZER, D., 'A Journey to Lough Derg by Isaac Butler', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland,* Volume II, (1892), pp. 13-24; DEANE, (1922), p. 207.

[295] Royal Irish Academy, MS 24.E.28; MAGENNIS, (2002), p. 207.

[296] WRIGHT, T., *Louthiana: or, An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland*, Books I, II & III, Millennium Reprint of the First 1748 London Edition, (Dundalk, 2000).

of different specialist fields as an astronomer, mathematician, architect, garden designer and antiquarian.[297] Wright's literary critique of the antiquities of Louth, first published in 1748 , was almost immediately disparaged by some of his literary contemporaries. One such critic was Lord Orrery who caustically and unfairly observed on 21 September 1748 that:

> *A thin quarto named Louthiana, is most delicately printed and the cuts admirably engraved, and yet we think the County of Louth the most devoid of antiquities in any County in Ireland.*[298]

Criticisms like this have persisted, and Buckley for example, having studied Wright's personal diaries, surmised in 1945 that he 'lacked the liberal reading, the grace and polish, the insight and versatility of his more distinguished contemporary and fellow historian, Dr. Charles Smith.'[299] Despite the obvious drawbacks with Wright's archaeological and historical commentary, it cannot be denied that he was the first author to make a number of incisive observations upon the archaeological remains of Louth, and his illustrations have undoubtedly contributed to *Louthiana* being highly regarded today as an invaluable visual and archaeological aid. Though the accuracy of such early field drawings must surely stand open to question, it should be acknowledged that with his drawings of structures which he observed on top of mottes, in at least one case, at Faughart, he made a reasonable representation of what still remains today. Moreover, of the twenty-four definite motte castles which were identified for Louth by the *Archaeological Survey of Ireland* in 1991, Wright had already recorded eleven in 1748, while his total for fortified tower houses was an impressive fourteen out of the twenty-eight sites which have been recognized by the *Survey.*[300]

However, perhaps his most impressive legacy is to be found in Book III, where twenty-two of the thirty-seven monuments and artefacts he drew are now either totally destroyed or their locations have been irretrievable lost.[301] Gosling has commented that two hundred and sixty years after its first publication, Wright's *Louthiana* still stands as a landmark in the history of antiquarian research in Ireland.[302] From a number of perspectives its appearance marked a series of firsts in antiquarian publishing: it was the

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[297] OREL, H., *Irish History and Culture,* (Kansas, 1976), p. 165.
[298] BOYLE, E.C., *The Orrery Papers,* (London, 1903), p. 39.
[299] BUCKLEY, J., 'The Journal of Thomas Wright. Author of Louthiana (1711-1786)', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Journal,* Vol. II, No. 2, (1909), p. 167.
[300] See BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 281-99 for mottes & pp. 301-52 for tower houses.
[301] WRIGHT, (2000), Book III.
[302] GOSLING, P., 'Introduction', to *Louthiana: or, An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland, Books I, II & III,* by T. WRIGHT, Millennium Reprint of the First 1748 London Edition, (Dundalk, 2000), p. i.

earliest field survey of Irish monuments, it provided the first detailed visual record of many of the classic Irish monument types such as ringforts, souterrains and mottes, it offered the earliest detailed record of monuments of a particular locality, and it famously included the earliest detailed drawings of the impressive high crosses at Monasterboice.[303] Thus, the impact of *Louthiana* upon contemporary antiquarian and popular opinion appears to have been quite significant. Indeed in the years following its publication the sketching and painting of Irish antiquities became increasingly popular pursuits in the late 1700s, as witnessed by the work of Gabriel Beranger and Col. Charles Vallancey in the 1760s-1770s.[304] As will be demonstrated throughout the course of this thesis, *Louthiana* has proved to be an extremely valuable source for the study of ecclesiastical settlement in Louth, although perhaps the clearest indication of Wright's success with this volume is the fact that it was reprinted in 1758, a rare event indeed in eighteenth century publishing.[305]

Finally, a number of websites have been used throughout the course of this thesis and have all been listed in alphabetical order, along with the dates on which they were accessed by the author, in the concluding bibliography. Although authors in many different disciplines are increasingly using web citations in academic theses and publications it must be acknowledged that there are still some problems inherent with the use of web information for academic purposes. For example, the content of cited web pages may change significantly so that the data available to the reader is quite different to the information which the citing author originally viewed. Another dilemma is that websites can literally just disappear or become inactive after several months.[306] However every possible effort has been made in this study to ensure that the web content utilized throughout the course of the thesis was taken only from reliable websites which were all checked and found to be still active at he time of submission. Some of the most useful websites which were of particular value to this thesis were as follows: http://www.excavations.ie, the database of Irish excavation reposts; http://www.archaeology.ie, the website of the National Monuments Service; http://www.environ.ie, the website for the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government; http://www.heritagecouncil.ie, the website of the Heritage Council;

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[303] GOSLING, (2000), p. i.

[304] See for example, HARBISON, P., 'Barralet and Beranger's Antiquarian Sketching Tour Through Wicklow and Wexford in the Autumn of 1780', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 104, Section C, (2004), pp. 131-90.

[305] GOSLING, (2000), p. i.

[306] See http://www.webcitatiation.org for a more detailed discussion of these problems.

http://www.faughart.com/inscriptions-pages5467.html, which provided an electronic copy of MacIomhair's 1967 article on *Tombstone Inscriptions in Fochart Graveyard, Co. Louth,* and finally, https://www.cs.tcd.ie/Dan.McCarthy/chronology/synchronisms/annals-chron.htm, through which it was possible to access an electronic copy of McCarthy's 2005 article on the 'Chronological Synchronisation of the Irish Annals'.

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

The sources outlined here have been chosen because they have a specific relevance to the study of the medieval churches and monasteries in the barony of Lower Dundalk. Consequently it is intended that they can also be used to demonstrate exactly how this thesis can complement and build upon the research which has already been carried out in this field. It is hoped that this analysis of the literature will demonstrate that although there are several publications available which have dealt with individual aspects of the history and archaeology of the medieval church in Co. Louth, there has to date been no comprehensive study undertaken of the archaeology of ecclesiastical settlement patterns in the barony of Lower Dundalk in the early and later medieval periods. Thus, it is ultimately intended that this thesis will be able to supplement the research, both archaeological and historical, which has already been conducted in this field as well as offering some additional information and providing new avenues of archaeological research.

The first comprehensive archaeological examination of the medieval churches and monasteries of Louth was undertaken in the 1940s by Oliver Davies. From 1941 to 1945 he published a series of five articles in the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal* detailing the results of a survey which he himself had single-handedly carried out, on a barony to barony basis, of the 'old churches' of Co. Louth.[307] The article which

[307] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Introductory', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941a), pp. 5-7; DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), pp. 7-23; DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in the County of Louth: Barony of Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume X., Number 2, (1942), pp. 101-7; DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Barony of Ardee', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume X, Number, 3, (1943), pp. 200-212; DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Barony of Ferrard', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume X, Number 4, (1944), pp. 277-96; DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Barony of Drogheda', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XI, Number 4, (1945), pp. 21-27.

is of particular importance to this thesis is the first one, which was published in 1941, and which contains a general introductory section as well as the results of the survey of the baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk. In this article Davies presented the findings of his visits to the churches of Ballymascanlan, Faughart, Roosky, Carlingford, Knocknagoran, Grange, Muchgrange, Templetown and Mountbagnall.[308]

Although the entries pertaining to Ballymascanlan, Knocknagoran, Grange, Muchgrange and Mountbagnall are disappointingly brief in nature and provide little or no useful archaeological detail, the segments relating to Faughart, Roosky and Templetown are extremely comprehensive and are accompanied by a series of elaborate figures, for example, a plan of Roosky Priory, a plan of Templetown Church, and a detailed drawing of the east window at Templetown. Even though Davies' survey cannot be considered to be complete, when his entries for Faughart, Roosky Carlingford and Templetown are compared with the corresponding site records contained within the 1991 *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* they are extremely impressive, especially allowing for the fact that Davies was working entirely alone to carry out his examinations.[309]

The next notable survey of the medieval churches of Louth came in 1984 when the first of three pioneering publications regarding the archaeology of the county was published by the Office of Public Works. This study, entitled *Archaeological Survey of County Louth: A Preliminary Description of Field Antiquities in the County from the Mesolithic Period to the 17th Century AD,* was based upon a Sites and Monuments Record for the County which had been compiled by Buckley.[310] Although this record was described as a Stage 3 SMR, which effectively meant that it included not only ancillary research, but also information from the detailed field survey carried out in the county by the Archaeological Survey staff of the Commissioners of Public Works,[311] the final publication only consists of a list of the sites and monuments of the county and their locations on the Ordnance Survey six-inch maps.[312]Following on from this however, the

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[308] DAVIES, (1941), pp. 7-14.

[309] DAVEIS, (1941), p. 7 for Faughart, pp. 10-11 for Roosky & pp. 12-14 for Templetown; BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991), pp. 230-31 for Faughart, pp. 236-37 for Roosky & pp. 258-61 for Templetown.

[310] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth: A Preliminary Description of Field Antiquities in the County from the Mesolithic Period to the 17th Century AD*, The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1984).

[311] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SRUVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), pp. i-ii.

[312] The original Archaeological Survey record files pertaining to these inventories and surveys are currently available for examination at the National Monuments Service Archive, 6 Ely Place Upper, Dublin 2, and according to the National Monuments Service website, http://www.archaeology.ie, it is also intended that the record database will shortly be accessible via this website. The *Sites and Monuments Record* files

Archaeological Inventory of Co. Louth, which had also been compiled and edited by Buckley, was published by the Office of Public Works in 1986. In the introduction to the study its aims were summarized as follows:

The inventory of sites and monuments in County Louth is the first in the series of formal lists of archaeological remains in the Republic of Ireland. These inventories, though comprehensive I their inclusion of sites, will by definition be concise and basic to allow rapid dissemination of primary information. The decision to commence production of rapid non-intensive inventories was made in 1982 by the Commissioners of Public Works in order to enable them to formulate a comprehensive programme for the protection of monuments of national importance in the face of increased rates of destruction.[313]

The contents of this inventory were based upon fieldwork which had been carried out in the county in the years 1965-67, updated by further work in 1981-84 with additional cartographic information, ranging from estate maps through to the current edition of the Ordnance Survey six-inch maps.[314]Although the chapter entitled *Ecclesiastical Remains*[315] is quite comprehensive in the number of medieval church and monastery sites which it includes, the individual entries are, in most cases, so brief in nature that they hardly provide any relevant archaeological detail at all.

Fortunately the issuing of the *Inventory* was followed up in 1991 with the publication of the much more detailed *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* which had been compiled by Buckley, who was responsible for all the chapters up to and including toghers, and Sweetman, who recorded the sites of the medieval and later periods.[316] At the time of publication, the survey was on the second such in-depth volume to have been published for a county in the Republic of Ireland, the first having been compiled by Lacey in Donegal in 1983,[317] (although it is also important that both of these surveys had been preceded in 1966 by the publication in Northern Ireland of the *Archaeological Survey of County Down,* which had been compiled and edited by Jope.)[318] The chapter of

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relevant tot the medieval churches and monasteries of the barony of Lower Dundalk have all been inspected by the author and are referred to and referenced throughout the course of the thesis at relevant stages.

[313] BUCKLEY, V.M., (ed), *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin 1986), p. ix.

[314] IBID, p. ix. To date there have been nineteen volumes of archaeological inventories covering fifteen counties published by the ASI. See http://www.environ.ie/en/Heritage/Arcaheology-NationalMonumentsService/ArchaeologicalSurveyofIrelandandArchive & Appendix I.

[315] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 71-85.

[316] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 1.

[317] IBID, p. 1. See LACEY, B., (ed), *Archaeological Survey of County Donegal: A Description of the Field Antiquities of the County from the Mesolithic Period to the 17th century A.D.,* Donegal County Council, (Lifford, 1983).

[318] JOPE, E.M., (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Belfast, 1966).

the Louth survey entitled *Medieval Churches and Monastic Remains*[319] is extremely thorough in the archaeological information it provides pertaining to the medieval ecclesiastical remains of the county, and as such, has been of invaluable use for the purposes of this thesis. Regrettably however, entries for some of the most important churches of the barony of Lower Dundalk, for example Mountbagnall which was described in just twenty-eight words, are surprisingly sparse.[320] In addition to this, some of the ecclesiastical entries for the barony of Lower Dundalk which were included in the *Inventory,* for example Castletowncooley and Knocknagoran, have been excluded from the *Survey.* The explanation for these omissions was supplied as follows in the description of Appendix II:

> *A list of sites and possible sites which appear in the Archaeological Inventory of County Louth and which on reassessment have been excluded from this volume or have had their categories changed.*[321]

No further explanation for these exclusions was offered in the *Survey* and individually the decision to omit some of the sites certainly seems contradictory. For example, it can only be presumed that the medieval sites at Knocknagoran and Castletowncooley were omitted from the Survey because there are now no archaeological remains extant at these sites. Even so, there are several primary references to the church at Knocknagoran in the medieval period and there is surviving cartographic evidence from the early nineteenth century which records a church at Castletowncooley. Confusingly however the Survey lists ten church sites at Ballymascanlan, Balrobin, Castlebellingham, Castlering, Dunleer, Kane, Killincoole, Killineer, Kilpatrick and Kilsaran where there are no extant archaeological remains but where the existence of these churches is supported by primary evidence and cartographic records.[322] It is therefore intended that this thesis will provide clearer and more uniform definition of what constitutes a medieval church site in the barony of Lower Dundalk.

From an historical viewpoint there are several important sources to be considered in this literature review. The publication of Leslie's *Armagh Clergy and Parishes* in 1911[323] marked a milestone in the historical study of the medieval churches and parishes of Co. Louth. Leslie's book provides a succession list of the clergy of each parish and

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[319] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 218-68.
[320] IBID, p. 249.
[321] IBID, p. 391.
[322] IBID, pp. 221-234.
[323] LESLIE, J.B., *Armagh Clergy and Parishes,* (Dundalk, 1911).

office in the Archdiocese of Armagh right down to the period of the Reformation, as far as is ascertainable, and it also lists all of the Protestant clergy since that time, including genealogical and biographical notes and sketches of ecclesiastical history along with the records of the parishes.[324] Seventy-five Louth parishes are enumerated in this work, some of which have long since been subsumed into larger adjoining parishes. The entries for some of the smaller churches are quite scanty in the information which they provide, but Leslie's discussion of some of the others, for example Faughart, is quite extensive.[325] For the barony of Lower Dundalk Leslie details the history of the medieval churches of Ballymascanlan, Carlingford, Templetown, Roosky, Omeath, Faughart, Grange and Mountbagnall. This volume was complemented in 1948 by a *Supplement to "Armagh Clergy and Parishes."*[326]

More recently Henry Jefferies has greatly enhanced the historical knowledge of the medieval churches of the diocese of Armagh in the sixteenth century with his *Priests and Prelates of Armagh in the Age of Reformations 1518-1558.*[327] Consequently he has provided a valuable discussion on the history of the churches of Louth, particularly in chapters two and three, where he details the parishes and priests of Armagh *inter Anglicos* and *inter Hibernicos.*[328]

Undoubtedly one of the most important sources for the history of the churches under review in this thesis has been the detailed fifty-five page article which was written by Harold O'Sullivan, published in *Seanchas Ard Mhaca* in 2005 and entitled: 'The Catholic Parishes of the Barony of Cooley. Part 1: From Earliest Times to the End of the Seventeenth Century'.[329] This article has been highlighted here because it represents an exceptionally important secondary historical source, the contents of which cogently summarize the contents of extant primary source material relating directly to the medieval ecclesiastical sites on the Cooley Peninsula. Throughout the course of this historical commentary, O'Sullivan discusses the development and evolution of the medieval parishes located within the barony of Lower Dundalk from the early medieval period right up until the end of the seventeenth century and various primary references to

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[324] DOLAN, J.T., 'Review of *Armagh Clergy and Parishes,* by J.B. Leslie, (Dundalk, 1911)', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume II, Number 4, (1911), p. 437.
[325] DOLAN, (1911), pp. 437-38.
[326] LESLIE, J.B., Supplement to "Armagh Clergy and Parishes", (Dundalk, 1948).
[327] JEFFERIES, H.A., *Priests and Prelates of Armagh in the Age of Reformations 1518-1558,* (Dublin, 1997a).
[328] JEFFERIES, (1997a), Chapter 2, pp. 15-56 & Chapter 3, pp. 57-82.
[329] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 34-89.

the medieval churches and Faughart, Ballymascanlan, Roosky, Templetown, Grange, Muchgrange, Carlingford, Cornamucklagh and Knocknagoran are detailed and evaluated.

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY, STRUCTURE & ALTERNATIVE AVENUES OF RESEARCH

I. METHODOLOGY & STRUCTURE

a. INTRODUCTION

Due to the fact that only three of the sites under review were ever excavated,[1] (and even then only partially), the primary aim of this thesis is to devise a methodology for the consistent study of the evolution of the archaeology of these churches throughout the study period. There are thirteen sites under review in this study: Faughart, Proleek, Roosky,[2] Cornamucklagh, Grange, Muchgrange, Castletowncooley, Templetown, Mountbagnall, Ballymascanlan, Knocknagoran, Willville and Carlingford. At these sites a total of sixteen churches and church sites have been identified,[3] one at each of the first twelve sites and four at the medieval town of Carlingford.[4] The analysis of these sites has been presented in three separate chapters; Chapter III: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, Chapter IV: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement and Chapter V: Urban Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford.

Chapter III investigates the three pre-Norman foundations which were located at Faughart, Roosky and Cornamucklagh, and for reasons of clarity, and in order to follow a consistent methodology, it also follows the development of the sites at Faughart and Roosky in the post-Norman period after they were re-used by the Anglo-Norman settlers. Chapter IV examines the Anglo-Norman churches which were established at Grange,

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[1] These sites are Faughart, the Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford & the Dominican Abbey, also at Carlingford. For Faughart see O'CONNOR, L. 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-129. For the Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford see, Buckley, L.A., *Holy Trinity Church Carlingford: Skeletal Report,* (Unpublished, 1992b); Buckley, L., *Dominican Priory Carlingford: Skeletal Report,* 93E64, (1991b); http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=2910 [CHANNING, J., Excavation Report, Carlingford Abbey, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1993:154], http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=3256
[CASSIDY, B., Excavation Report, Carlingford Priory, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1991:093.]

[2] This spelling of this placename sometimes also occurs in secondary sources as 'Rooskey', see for example O'SULLIVAN, H., 'The Catholic Parishes in the Barony of Cooley. Part 1: From Earliest Times to the End of the Seventeenth Century', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 20, Number 2, (2005), pp. 34-105. However, for the purposes of this thesis it is referred to as 'Roosky', the spelling which has been utilized by BUCKLEY in the *Inventory* and also by BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), in the *Survey.* See BUCKLEY, V.M., (ed), *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin 1986), p. 76; BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991), p. 236.

[3] For the purposes of this study a *church* indicates a site where archaeological remains have survived, while a *church site* denotes a site where there are no extant archaeological remains but where the historical and cartographic records verify the existence of a medieval ecclesiastical settlement.

[4] See Appendices 1-4.

Muchgrange, Castletowncooley, Templetown, Mountbagnall, Ballymascanlan, Knocknagoran, and Willville, while Chapter V deals specifically with the medieval ecclesiastical sites which were established by the Anglo-Normans at Carlingford and includes a study of one Dominican priory and three churches.

In these three chapters each site is treated and analyzed individually under the headings which are outlined here in the methodology. The final chapter of the thesis, Chapter VI, offers a comparative discussion of the evidence which was outlined individually in the second, third and fourth chapters.

b. STRUCTURE OF THE METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the analysis of the archaeology of medieval ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk has been formulated and structured as follows:

1. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS & EXCAVATION REPORTS

The first step taken towards analyzing the twelve ecclesiastical sites under review was to determine the degree to which they had previously been surveyed and archaeologically excavated. So, for the purposes of this research, the individual introductory sections to each of these sites will include a brief summary of any surveying work and/or excavations which were previously carried out on that site. It should be noted that there are three principal surveys which are repeatedly alluded to throughout the thesis: Davies' survey of the 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', which was published in the *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* in 1941; the *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* edited by Buckley and published in 1986; and finally, the *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* edited by Buckley & Sweetman and published in 1991. At this stage excavation reports from the only four sites in the barony to have been excavated[5] were also consulted and are referred to at the relevant points in the thesis, and in particular in the 'Excavated Burials' and the 'Excavated Artefacts' sections of the discussion.

[5] Faughart Church, Grange Church, the Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford & the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

APPENDIX 1:

LIST OF THE PRE-NORMAN ECCLESIASTICAL FOUNDATIONS IN THE BARONY OF LOWER DUNDALK

1. Faughart
2. Proleek
3. Roosky
4. Cornamucklagh

APPENDIX 2:

LIST OF THE ANGLO-NORMAN PARISH CHURCHES IN THE BARONY OF LOWER DUNDALK

1. Ballymascanlan
2. Mountbagnall
3. Templetown
4. The Church of the Holy Trinity, Carlingford
5. Knocknagoran

APPENDIX 3:

LIST OF THE REMAINING MEDIEVAL CHURCHES IN THE BARONY OF LOWER DUNDALK LIKELY TO HAVE FUNCTIONED AS CHAPELS OF EASE

1. Grange
2. Muchgrange
3. Castletowncooley
4. Willville
5. St. Mary's Church
6. St. Michael's Church

APPENDIX 4:

LIST OF ANGLO-NORMAN RELIGIOUS HOUSES IN THE BARONY OF LOWER DUNDALK

1. The Dominican Abbey, Carlingford

2. FIELD WORK

Following on from this, the next stage of research involved visiting each of the sites and conducting the appropriate fieldwork. In particular, it was important to address and resolve the inconsistencies which had emerged between the three principal surveys carried out by Davies, Buckley and Buckley & Sweetman. This fieldwork was also significant in that it provided an up-to-date photographic record of each of the sites and their surviving archaeological features. The results of this field work are represented throughout the thesis in the photographic record of each of the churches, as well as in the discussion sections relevant to each of the sites.

3. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Once a basic familiarity with the extant archaeology of the churches had been established it was necessary to consult the relevant historical sources which made direct reference to the sites in order to determine if they could assist with the development of an accurate chronology. For this reason, the historical references which are specific to a particular church are summarized in the introductory section to that site, and then further analyzed at the relevant stages in the discussion.

4. CARTOGRAPHY & AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Having examined the surviving historical records of the medieval churches and monasteries of Lower Dundalk, and in order to make a truly interdisciplinary study of the topic, it was decided to also analyze the relevant cartographic and aerial photographic material.

There are eight principal maps which have been utilized throughout the course of this thesis to assist with the archaeological investigation of the medieval churches of the barony of Lower Dundalk. These eight maps are of chief importance to this study because they provide valuable pictorial representations of the churches under review in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The first map in question is a map of Co. Louth which was drawn in 1575 by Robert Lythe and which includes considerable detail of the three lordships of Newry, Greencastle and Mourne, and Carlingford and

Cooley.[6] The second is *County Louth and District in 1599* which was reproduced from Baptista Boazio's *Map of Ireland.*[7] The third is an extract from Richard Bartlett's *A Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula c. 1602.*[8] Also consulted was the 1624 map of *'O Hanlans Cvntrie'* which was drawn in the early seventeenth century by an anonymous cartographer and is of specific importance to the study of the churches of Carlingford.[9] The next map to be considered is the *Down Survey Map of Louth, 1654.*[10] Three eighteenth century maps have also assisted in this thesis: Mathew Wrenn's *Topographical Map of County Louth, 1766,* an extract from George Taylor and Andrew Skinner's *Map of the County of Louth, 1777,*[11] and finally the *Map of the Road from Dublin to Carlingford, 1778,* also a Taylor and Skinner work.[12] In addition to these cartographic sources a number of OS six inch maps were also utilized at relevant stages throughout the thesis.

Aerial photographic evidence was found to be relevant in the analysis of just one of the sites under review – Faughart. The aerial photograph in question was shot in 1965 and formed part of a selection of aerial photographs which were taken by J.K.S. St. Joseph during a series of flights which were undertaken in Co. Louth in successive years from 1963 to 1971. The photograph now forms part of the large Irish collection at the Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography, (CUCAP), which consists of high quality, low-level obliques taken specifically for archaeological and historical purposes.[13] This photograph is extremely significant to this thesis because it has provided evidence of significant sites on Faughart Hill which are no longer visible at ground level; as well as the large enclosure which is evident around the church and graveyard, there is a second cropmark of a large subcircular enclosure located approximately 150m to the south-east of the church in the field on the opposite side of the road and although the

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[6] O'SULLIVAN, 'A 1575 Rent-Roll, with contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XXI, Number 1, (1985), pp. 42-44.

[7] TEMPEST, H.G, 'Boazio's Map of Ireland, 1599', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XII, Number 4, (1952a), p. 278.

[8] BARTLETT, R., *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602.* (O'SULLIVAN, H., *Irish Historic Towns Atlas No. 16, Dundalk,* Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 2006)).

[9] ANON, *'O Hanlans Cvntrie'* (1624), Armagh County Museum, Accession Number 392.1935.

[10] DOLAN, J. T., 'The Down Survey or Cromwellian Plantation Maps of Louth and Drawing of Fragment of Down Survey Parish Map of Dundalk which Survived the 1711 Fire (Destroyed 1922),' *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal, (*1928), pp. 247-49 & OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 12.

[11] TAYLOR, G. & SKINNER, A., *A Map of the County of Louth, 1777.*
(Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).

[12] TAYLOR, G. & SKINNER, A., *Maps of the Roads of Ireland, 1778,* (Shannon, 1969).

[13] BARRETT, G.F., 'The Reconstruction of Proto-Historic landscapes Using Aerial Photographs: Case Studies in County Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XX, Number 3, (1983), p. 220.

surviving archaeological features of the church and graveyard at Faughart mostly date to the later and post-medieval periods, the aerial photograph of this site indicates that it was once part of a much larger pre-Norman enclosure.

As with the historical evidence, the cartographic and/or aerial photographic evidence relevant to each site is briefly summarized in the introductory section to each individual church, and then discussed in more detail at the relevant stages in the discussion.

5. LOCATION

The location of each of the twelve sites under review is discussed individually throughout the thesis on a site-to-site basis, and then reviewed collectively in the concluding discussion chapter. Factors which have been taken into consideration for the analysis of site location include the topography, geography and geology of the surrounding landscape, and the re-use of early medieval church sites by the Anglo-Norman colonists.

6. BARONY & PARISH BOUNDARIES

As previously mentioned, from the seventh century onwards the northern portion of County Louth, including the barony of Lower Dundalk, was occupied by a tribe known as the Conailli Muirthemne, or the O'Connells of the Plain.[14] Even at this early stage, the territory of the Conailli Muirthemne appears to have comprised two distinct regions of Magh Muirthemne and Cuailgne, which are co-extensive with the modern baronies of Upper and Lower Dundalk respectively.[15] From *c.* 1125-68 the territories of Magh Muirthemne and Cuailgne were under the control of Donnchad Ua Cerbaill, the king of Airgialla. Donnchad was succeeded as king in 1168 by his son Murchad who seems to have retained control over Cuailgne until his death in 1189, probably under an agreement with Bertram de Verdun who appears to have been conditionally granted the lands of

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[14] BUCKLEY, V.M., 'From the Darkness to the Dawn: The Later Prehistoric and Early Christian Borderlands', in *The Borderlands. Essays on the History of the Ulster-Leinster Border,* ed. by R. GILLESPIE & H. O'SULLIVAN, The Institute of Irish Studies, (Belfast, 1989), p. 33.

[15] GOSLING, P., *A Survey and Report on the Archaeology of the Town and District, Part 1: Introduction and Review,* Dundalk Urban District Council, (Dundalk, 1982) p. 15; O'SULLIVAN, H., 'The Beginnings of the Catholic Parishes of Dundalk, Haggardstown and Kilkerly in the County of Louth', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 19, Number 2, (2003), p. 51.

Cuailgne and Magh Muirthemne by Prince John *c.* 1185.[16] The four and a half cantreds of land in County Louth which were awarded to de Verdun at this stage included the two former territories of the Conailli in north Louth, Muirthemne and Cuailgne, later to become known as the baronies of Upper and Lower Dundalk respectively.[17] Buckley and Sweetman have speculated that the baronies in Louth which emerged at the early stages of the Anglo-Norman settlement represented fairly well the pre-existing political boundaries of the region.[18] What is certain is that by the time of Petty's Down Survey in the early 1650s, the former territories of Magh Muirthemne and Cuailgne were recorded as two separate baronies; Upper and Lower Dundalk.[19]

Today there are only three parishes in the barony of Lower Dundalk: Ballyboys; Ballymascanlan and Carlingford.[20] However, as far as can be discerned by this researcher, the barony of Lower Dundalk in the medieval period appears to have consisted of at least six parishes; Carlingford, Omeath, Faughart, Ballyboys,[21] Ballymascanlan, and the Newtown of Cooley, or Mountbagnall, as it is now referred to.[22] These medieval parish boundaries are extremely difficult to determine. According to Davies, the modern parish of Ballyboys formerly belonged to the parish of Newtown Cooley, or Newtown Bagnal, and its parish church would have been at Mountbagnall, which now forms part of the modern parish of Carlingford.[23] The churches of Ballymascanlan and Faughart and the enclosures at Proleek now form part of the modern parish of Ballymascanlan.[24]The modern parish of Faughart is located in the barony of Lower Dundalk, while the Faughart Church itself is currently located within the modern parish of Ballymascanlan, in the barony of Lower Dundalk. However, documentary evidence indicates that the medieval parish of Faughart was located within the boundaries

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[16] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, A.J., 'The Partition of the de Verdon lands in Ireland in 1332', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 66, Section C, (1968), p. 402; SMITH, B., *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland. The English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 23-24.

[17] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 38.

[18] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 215.

[19] See GOBLET, Y.M., *A Topographical Index of the Parishes and Townlands of Ireland in Sir William Petty's MSS Barony Maps, c. 1655-9*, The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1932).

[20] See Figure 1.

[21] In 1475 'Balliboys' is described both as a parish and a prebend with Thomas Halpenny as the latter, who was also the Collector of the Subsidy for the Deanery of Dundalk. LESLIE, J.B., *Supplement to "Armagh Clergy and Parishes",* (Dundalk, 1948).

[22] See Figure 2. It should also be noted that the modern parish of Castletown, which is located in the neighbouring barony of Upper Dundalk also has jurisdiction over a small portion of land which used to firm part of the parish of Ballymascanlan. The parish churches of these five parishes were the Church of the Holy Trinity, Knocknagoran Church, Faughart Church, Ballymascanlan Church, and Mountbagnall Church respectively.

[23] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), p. 7.

[24] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.



Figure 1: Rough map of the modern parishes of the barony of Lower Dundalk.



Figure 2: Rough map of the medieval parishes of the barony of Lower Dundalk.

of the barony of Lower Dundalk, and that Faughart Church functioned as the parish church. In the 1658 inquisition into the parishes of County Louth the parish of Ballymascanlan was recorded, [25] as was the parish of Faughart, with the church described as being out of repair.[26]

The churches located at Cornamucklagh, Knocknagoran, Roosky, Carlingford, Grange, Muchgrange, Willville, Templetown, Castletowncooley and Mountbagnall are all currently included in the modern parish of Carlingford. In 1658 Carlingford, Castletowncooley, Grange, Corbally (which is part of Willville) and Muchgrange were all listed as being part of the parish of Carlingford which at this point was conjoined with the parish of Omeath,[27]a practice which has been observed in other regions of the country, often due to difficulties with the supply of clergy.[28] The only churches not accounted for here were Ballymascanlan, Faughart and Mountbagnall, which were at this point still functioning as individual parishes. This leaves only the church at Templetown to be accounted for and it seems likely that it either formed part of the extensive parish of Carlingford, or alternatively, functioned as a parish church on its own, although there are no surviving documentary references to a 'parish' of Templetown.

The earliest direct documentary reference to any of the Anglo-Norman settlements under review in this thesis[29] occurred in a 1301 list of amercements, or fines which were imposed at a royal court in Drogheda on the 7 January, 1301.[30] This document has been studied in detail by MacIomhair and although it does not mention any churches specifically, it does give some indication of the degree of subinfeudation of the barony of Lower Dundalk which had been achieved by the Anglo-Normans at this point.[31] This is an extremely important source of information, especially considering the fact that, where documentary sources recording the process of parish formation have survived, they suggest that the 'pace of parish formation in Anglo-Norman areas was rapid', with a 'stable parochial network' being established in Co. Tipperary by the early

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[25] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* transc. by J.B. LESLIE, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 1, (1929), pp. 35-36.
[26] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* p. 35.
[27] IBID, p. 37.
[28] DUFFY, P.J., 'The Shape of the Parish', in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), p. 34.
[29] With the exception of Carlingford which is mentioned in several sources pre-1301. See Chapter IV: Urban Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford.
[30] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* ed. by D. MACIOMHAIR, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* , Volume XVI, Number 1, (1965), pp. 42-49.
[31] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 43.

thirteenth century.[32] The settlements of Carlingford, Grange, Ballymascanlan, Faughart, Castletowncooley, Mountbagnall, Willville and Templetown are all recorded in this document indicating that, at this stage, some degree of subinfeudation of these settlements had been achieved, which in turn opens up the possibility that churches may have been established in these townlands by 1301. From 1301 to 1658 there is no surviving historical document which records the exact territorial boundaries of the medieval parishes of Lower Dundalk. However, O'Sullivan is of the opinion that the parishes mentioned in the inquisition of 1658 give a reasonably accurate representation of medieval parochial organization in the barony. He has speculated that these seventeenth century parishes

...were derived from earlier parochial organisations of medieval foundation, which had evolved from the various vils and manors which had emerged in the aftermath of the twelfth-thirteenth centuries Norman sub-infeudation of North Louth. It also seems likely that many of the boundaries of these early parishes had pre-existed that sub-infeudation and that their origins lay in the then defunct Old Irish Kingdom of the Conailli Muirthemne which had ruled the areas of North Louth and South Armagh from the dawn of history to the early twelfth century when the kingdom was annexed by the kingdom of the O'Cearbhaills of Oirghialla.[33]

Furthermore, it is the view of Jefferies that the civil parish boundaries recorded by the Ordnance Survey in the nineteenth century preserve a fairly accurate record of the great majority of the late medieval parish precincts in the county,[34]and Duffy has observed that in many instances, the Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland parishes of the modern era have developed from the 'historic' parishes of the medieval period.[35]

In recent studies, the parish has increasingly been recognized as a vital social and ecclesiastical unit in the medieval period,[36] and it is obviously of paramount importance to the study of the churches of Lower Dundalk. Although it has been generally acknowledged that the reorganization of the Irish church into new territorial dioceses was

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[32] NÍ GHABHLÁIN, S., 'Late Twelfth-Century Church Construction: Evidence of Parish Formation?', in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), p. 147.

[33] O'SULLIVAN, (2003), p. 5.

[34] JEFFERIES, H.A., *Priests and Prelates of Armagh in the Age of Reformations 1518-1558,* (Dublin, 1997), p. 19; O'SULLIVAN, H., 'The Beginnings of the Catholic Parishes of Dundalk, Haggardstown and Kilkerly in the County of Louth', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 19, Number 2, (2003), p. 1.

[35] DUFFY, P.J., 'The Shape of the Parish', in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), p. 34.

[36] Ó FEARGHAIL, C., 'The Evolution of Catholic Parishes in Dublin City from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Centuries', in *Dublin from Prehistory to Present: Studies in Honour of J.H. Andrews,* ed. by F.H.A AALEN & K. WHELAN, (Dublin, 1992), p. 229; FITZPATRICK, E. & GILLESPIE, R., (eds), *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* (Dublin, 2006), Preface, p. 15.

more or less complete by the time of the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in 1169, it has been suggested that a system of organised territorial parishes evolved rather more slowly and that the parish, as an ecclesiastical division, was certainly not realised in any meaningful way until the Synod of Cashel in 1171-2 which decreed that every man should pay tithes to his parish church. For example, research conducted by Fitzpatrick and O'Brien has suggested that in the south and east of Ireland the formation of parishes can be dated with some degree of accuracy to the last quarter of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth century, coinciding with the Anglo-Norman settlement of these regions and that these parishes were 'characteristically small and coterminous with knights' fees.'[37] Indeed, this pattern of correlation of medieval manor and parish has been identified in many regions which were successfully colonised by the Anglo-Normans in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.[38] In contrast to this however, O'Keeffe has argued that:

There was a rise in the number of new churches in southern Ireland in the two decades after the Synod of Kells/Mellifont in 1152, and given that most of these were apparently not monastic churches, it may be appropriate to offer them as evidence of an emerging if not already emerged parish system.[39]

In any case, this confusion over the development of the parochial system has been compounded by the fact that the Anglo-Norman settlers appear in many cases to have used whatever boundaries they found in existence as a basis for their civil and ecclesiastical administration.[40] Indeed, this appears to have been the case in Co. Louth and it seems entirely possible that at the time of Donnchad Ua Cerbaill's rule, which lasted from 1125 until his death in 1168, tithes and parishes had also been recognised characteristics of ecclesiastical traditions in Airgialla for a considerable period of time, as

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[37] FITZPATRICK, E. & O'BRIEN, C., *The Medieval Churches of County Offaly,* (Dublin, 1998), p. 118.

[38] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Introductory', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941a), p. 6; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, A.J., *A History of Medieval Ireland,* Second Edition, (London, 1980), p. 119; BRAND, P., 'The Formation of a Parish: The Case of Beaulieu, County Louth', in *Settlement and Society in Medieval Ireland: Studies Presented to F.X. Martin,* ed. J. BRADLEY, (Kilkenny, 1988), pp. 261-62; FITZPATRICK & O'BRIEN, (1998), p. 118; HAGGER, M.S., *The Fortunes of a Norman Family: The de Verduns in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, 1066-1316,* (Dublin, 2001), p. 54.

[39] O'KEEFFE, T., *Medieval Ireland: An Archaeology,* (Stroud, 2001), p. 156.

[40] EMPEY, C.A., 'The Cantreds of the Medieval County of Kilkenny', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland,* Volume 101, (1971), p. 132. See also DOHERTY, C., 'The Idea of the Parish', in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), p. 31.

is indicated by the fourteenth century *Antiphony of Armagh* which recorded that 'in his [Ua Cerbaill's] time tithes were received.'[41]

In addition to this, an entry in the *Charter of Christian* recorded that in 1187 the Anglo-Norman magnate, Peter Pipard, received a grant from the Bishop of Clogher and the Prior of St. Mary's Abbey, Louth, of the advowsons to the churches of Clonkeen and Drumcar in the barony of Ardee, on condition that one third of the tithes of these churches continued to be paid to St. Mary's.[42] It therefore appears that since the Anglo-Norman settlement in the Ardee area was only in its infancy in 1187, that this grant is representative of the fact that the institution of tithes predated the Anglo-Norman settlement in Louth, as did the churches in question, which were dedicated to the Gaelic-Irish saints Edan and Finian respectively. Moreover, it has been suggested by Doherty that parishes can often be shown to correspond with pre-existing Gaelic units and that Anglo-Norman manors themselves are often based upon such units.[43]

Moreover, these topographical considerations also appear to have impacted upon the development of the parochial system in the barony of Lower Dundalk, where medieval parishes were in many instances quite small, in stark contrast with the situation in some of the other baronies in the county, for example in the barony of Louth, where some of the larger parishes covered quite substantial areas and included several churches.[44] The exceptions to this trend were the parishes of Ballymascanlan and Carlingford, which, even in the medieval period, appear to have been quite extensive. In fact, O'Sullivan has highlighted the discrepancies in size between these two large parishes and the relatively smaller parishes in the rest of the barony of Lower Dundalk, and indeed, in the rest of the county of Louth:

> *The sizes of the two parishes of Ballymascanlan and Carlingford can be compared with the rather smaller manorial parishes in the Pale areas where subinfeudation was more successful.*[45]

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[41] TCD MS 77 B 1.1; *The Martyrology of Gorman*, ed. by W. STOKES, (London, 1895), p. xx; *St. Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of St. Malachy*, ed. by H.J. LAWLOR, (London, 1920), p. 170. See also SMITH, (1999), p. 16.

[42] *A Charter of Christian, Bishop of Louth*, ed. by H.J. LAWLOR, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Volume 32, Section C, (1913-16), pp. 28-40; SMITH, (1999), p. 19.

[43] DOHERTY, C., 'Cluain Dolcáin: A Brief Note', in *Seanchas: Studies in Early and Medieval Irish Archaeology, History and Literature in Honour of Francis J. Byrne*, ed. by A.P. SMYTH, (Dublin, 1999), p. 188.

[44] DAVIES, (1941a), p. 6.

[45] O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2009).

7. SIZE

Where possible the dimensions of the churches under review were studied in an attempt to calculate internal area and in order to determine if there was a direct relationship between the size of these sites and their status and function in the medieval period, in line with recent research conducted by Ó' Carragáin.[46]

8. MORPHOLOGY

Following on from this, a discussion of the morphology of each structure was undertaken in an effort to determine different phases of development and construction and how they impacted upon the status and function of the site.

9. MASONRY STYLES

Medieval masons operating in the barony of Lower Dundalk would have had access to local belts of Silurian greywackes which extend as far as Carlingford, as well as an abundance of tertiary granites and carboniferous limestone,[47] and this is well in evidence at the seven sites where there are surviving masonry remains; Faughart Church, Ballymascanlan Church, Mountbagnall Church, Templetown Church, Roosky Priory, and the Church of the Holy Trinity and the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford. The earliest masonry styles evident in Lower Dundalk appear to have been at Mountbagnall and Ballymascanlan where the structures are composed of granite and greywacke. The masonry at the Dominican Abbey in Carlingford is primarily composed of roughly coursed limestone blocks and greywacke and displays fourteenth century construction work with fifteenth century additions. The tower of the Holy Trinity Church is also composed of limestone although the earliest construction work evident in this building appears to date to the late sixteenth century, although the surviving trefoil window in the tower appears to be earlier and possibly dates to the fifteenth century. The church at Templetown is similarly composed of roughly coursed limestone boulders, blocks and greywacke and would appear to date to the fifteenth-sixteenth century. The east window,

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[46] Ó CARRAGÁIN, 'Church Buildings and Pastoral Care in Early Medieval Ireland,' in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK, & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), pp. 91-123.

[47] VAUGHAN, A., 'The Geological Background', in *Archaeological Survey of County Louth*, ed. by V.M. BUCKLEY & P.D. SWEETMAN, The Stationery Office, Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1991), p. 8. See Figure 3.

in particular suggests a fifteenth century date, although the doorway evident in the south wall is much earlier, possibly dating to the fourteenth century. The remains of Roosky Priory are composed of uncoursed rubble granite and greywacke and have no distinguishing architectural features, although they appear to be of late medieval date. The church at Faughart is also constructed from granite and greywacke and is representative of two distinct periods of building; the west end of the church possibly dating to the twelfth century and the east end dating to the later medieval period.

10. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

In line with research carried out in south-west County Dublin in the 1990s by Máirín Ní Mharcaigh, surviving architectural features on the churches of Lower Dundalk were found collectively to be relatively scant,[48] although individually they differed greatly in form and content. Consequently it has proven difficult to devise a methodological formula for the analysis of the architecture of the twelve sites under review. While at some of the sites, like Faughart and Templetown, several of the architectural features listed in this methodology have survived intact, at some others, such as Cornamucklagh and Muchgrange, no features whatsoever remain. The following list is broadly representative of the wide-ranging variety of architectural detail to be found at the medieval churches of Lower Dundalk. Where applicable these features will be explained, analyzed and discussed on a site to site basis in the following order:

a. **PRIEST'S HOUSES**
b. **WINDOWS**
c. **DOORWAYS**
d. **BELLTOWERS**
e. **AUMBRIES, PISCINAS, CREDENCES & NICHES**
f. **ROODSCREENS**
g. **CORBELS & BEAM HOLES**
h. **MACHICOLATIONS**
i. **FIREPLACES**
j. **ALTAR STONES**
k. **STONE CARVINGS**

This list has been compiled based upon the surviving architectural evidence extant at the church sites of Lower Dundalk. However, it should also be noted that, despite the survival of the above-mentioned features at these sites, the churches of this barony are

[48] NÍ MHARCAIGH, M., 'The Medieval Parish Churches of South-West County Dublin', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 97, Section C, (1997), pp. 251-54.

also notable for the complete absence of some other key architectural features which could assist with the dating process, for example, baptismal fonts, holy water stoups, sedilia, tomb niches, or medieval inscriptions.

11. ANCILLARY BUILDINGS

In the case of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford, it was necessary to include a separate discussion of some ancillary buildings which were located on site and which had originally formed part of the monastic range.

12. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERIES

As demonstrated by this methodology, in order to achieve any sort of competent archaeological study of the churches of Lower Dundalk it is necessary to explore all avenues of evidence, be they historical, cartographic, photographic, topographical or geological. This interdisciplinary approach becomes even more vital when the paucity of actual archaeological remains at several of the sites is considered. In the same vein, it seems only logical that any archaeological analysis of the churches themselves should embrace the evidence offered by a study of their associated cemeteries, a practice which has been put to very good effect in assessing medieval church sites in England.[49]

Of course, at some of the sites, such as Muchgrange and Willville, there are no surviving cemeteries and therefore this portion of the methodology cannot be applied to all of the churches in question. However, at sites where the associated cemeteries have survived, and in particular at Faughart, and at two of the Carlingford sites, the Dominican Abbey and the Church of the Holy Trinity, where the surviving burial grounds have been partially excavated, this section is extremely important. The analysis of the associated cemeteries has been sub-divided into the following categories:

a. **GRAVE SLABS/STONES**
b. **HIGH CROSSES**
c. **ROUND TOWERS**
d. **HOLY WELLS**
e. **EXCAVATED BURIALS**

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[49] O'BRIEN, E. & ROBERTS, C., Introduction to 'Archaeological Study of Church Cemeteries: Past, Present and Future', in *Church Archaeology: Research Directions for the Future*, ed. by J. BLAIR & C. PYRAH, CBA Research Report 104, Council for British Archaeology, (York, 1996), p. 159.

13. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

At those churches where archaeological excavations have taken place, the discussion will include an investigation of any excavated artefacts which can assist with an archaeological analysis of the site.

14. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

As the purpose of this thesis is to make a thorough assessment of medieval ecclesiastical patterns of settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk it has not been possible to make a detailed archaeological analysis of each of the non-ecclesiastical archaeological sites which can be associated with the churches themselves. However, a fully comprehensive examination of the ecclesiastical remains at each in individual site cannot be undertaken without an accompanying consideration of the other associated medieval site types as they evolved and developed in their rural or urban contexts. Therefore, it is proposed in this thesis to include a brief but relevant discussion of the associated archaeological monuments located in the vicinity of each of the church sites under review after having presented an in-depth archaeological study of the extant ecclesiastical remains.

15. ETYMOLOGY

Etymology can be broadly defined as a study of the origins and historical development of particular linguistic forms, and, for the purposes of this study, it has been utilized to examine the placename evidence of the twelve sites under review. Where possible, the placenames of these churches were analyzed in an attempt to determine their earliest known usage, changes in their form and meaning, and also their transmission from one language to another, i.e. Irish to English. In a similar vein, the saints' dedications of these churches, where known, were also investigated as it was found in certain cases that the dedications were relevant to the etymology of the placenames.

16. CHRONOLOGY

The study of each individual site will be concluded with a summary of the relevant chronological evidence, including historical, cartographic and archaeological sources.

II. ALTERNATIVE AVENUES OF RESEARCH

It would be worthwhile to momentarily consider alternative avenues of research which could expand upon the remit of this thesis and place the study of ecclesiastical settlement of Lower Dundalk within a broader archaeological framework. Considering the inclusion of Carlingford within the remit of this study it would perhaps be advisable to determine the exact level of Viking activity in the Carlingford Lough region pre-1000 and whether or not this later medieval urban centre was preceded by some sort of a Hiberno-Norse community which could have provided a basis for the development of urbanization subsequent to the Anglo-Norman settlements of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.[50] Indeed, Evans, in his archaeological study of the Mourne region of Co. Down, has speculated that there was probably more than one Viking settlement on Carlingford Lough.[51]

Following on from this, it could also prove valuable to conduct a comparative study of medieval ecclesiastical settlements in north Co. Louth and Co. Down. Tentative comparisons have already been made by McNeill between the quayside urban centres of Carlingford and Ardglass, Co. Down, focusing specifically upon the medieval tower houses located within each town which display archaeological signs of having been adapted purposely to 'an urban life of commerce.' [52] In 1622, when several of the churches on the Cooley Peninsula were described as being in a dilapidated state,[53]six churches located on the Ards Peninsula were also recorded as being ruinous.[54] However, what is most remarkable about this is that in 1622 Roland Savage constructed a tower house and bawn at Kirkistown in the same area of the Ards Peninsula as the ruinous

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[50] BRADLEY, J., *Walled Towns in Ireland,* (Dublin, 1995), p. 14; GRAHAM, B., 'Urbanisation in Ireland During the High Middle Ages, *c.* 1100 to *c.* 1350', in *A History of Settlement in Ireland,* ed. by T.B. BARRY, (New York, 2000), pp. 124 & 129.

[51] EVANS, E.E., *Mourne Country,* (1967), pp. 106-7.

[52] MCNEILL, T.E., 'County Down in the Later Middle Ages', in *Down History and Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County*, ed. by L. PROUDFOOT, (Dublin, 1997), pp. 104-5; MCNEILL, T. E., *Castles in Ireland: Feudal Power in a Gaelic World*, (London, 2000), p. 223; MCNEILL, T.E., 'Three Medieval Buildings in the Port of Ardglass, Co. Down', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Volume 105, Section C, Number 1, (2005), p. 17.

[53] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,*(T.C.D. MS. E.36), transc.& ed. by T. FITZPATRICK, 'The Royal Visitation of 1622', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VI, Number 1, (1925), pp. 4-11.

[54] BARRY, J.P.O., 'The Heritage of the "Church of St. Nicholai de Phelpeston in le Ardes", *Journal of the Upper Ards Historical Society,* Number 6, (1982), pp. 12-13.

churches[55] and, from an economic and political viewpoint, it would therefore be interesting to discover if this apparent investment in fortification and neglect of local churches was due to the political climate of the time, and indeed, if it was a trend which was mirrored with all tower house construction on the Cooley Peninsula for the same period.

Furthermore, in 1941 Davies commented that in Co. Down small manorial churches were to be found in what he described as the 'refuge areas' of Ards and Lecale.[56] It would therefore be interesting to make a comparison of the medieval ecclesiastical patterns on the three peninsulas of Cooley, Ards and Lecale. This is a potential comparison which was also briefly alluded to by Hughes in 1961 when he commented that 'the colonisation of the barony of Lower Dundalk from late twelfth century onwards can also be compared with the settlement of several other physically favoured peninsulas in the north-east of Ireland, for example those located at Ards, Lecale and Mourne, where colonisation developed along quite different lines than that in the surrounding territories.'[57] Mourne is a particularly interesting area, because as in the case of Lower Dundalk, arable farming was mainly restricted to the low elevation land classes, while urban land was mainly coastal.[58] The value of this type of territorial study, as opposed to one conducted within the constraints of the 'artificial administrative unit of the county',[59] has been recently attested to by Gillespie and O'Sullivan in their study of the borderlands of south Down, north Louth, south Armagh and south-east Monaghan. They have emphasized the cohesiveness of this borderland area as a unit of local study mainly due to the fact that, even in the early medieval period, it had developed into a distinct regional society, the characteristics of which endured long past the Anglo-Norman invasion of the twelfth century. [60] Indeed, another pivotal link between north Louth and south Down revolves around the fact that Cooley, in the early and later

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[55] JOPE, E.M., (ed), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down,* Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Belfast, 1966), pp. 124 & 238; LYTTLE, E.J.C., 'Kirkistown Castle', *Journal of the Upper Ards Historical Society,* Number 7, (1983), p. 18; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Down&id=5830, BRANNON, N.F., Excavation Report, Kirkistown Castle, 1980-84:0085.

[56] DAVIES, (1941a), p. 6.

[57] HUGHES, T.J., 'Land Holding and Settlement in the Cooley Peninsula of Louth', *Irish Geography,* Volume IV, Number 3, (1961), p. 151.

[58] COOPER, A. & MURRAY, R., *A Landscape Ecological Study of the Mourne AONB,* Department of Environmental Studies, University of Ulster, (1987), pp. 20 & 27.

[59] GILLESPIE, R. & O'SULLIVAN, H. 'Introduction', to *The Borderlands. Essays on the History of the Ulster-Leinster Border,* ed. by R. GILLESPIE & H. O'SULLIVAN, The Institute of Irish Studies, (Belfast, 1989), p. 3.

[60] GILLESPIE & O'SULLIVAN, (1989), p. 3.

medieval period, was traditionally regarded as being part of Ulster.[61] Moreover, Co. Down, in common with north Co. Louth, has also been divided into modern baronies based on Gaelic-Irish tuatha; Lecale is based upon the kingdom of Leth Cathail, Ards is largely coextensive with the kingdom of Uí Echach Arda, while Mourne is coterminous with the kingdom of Boirche.[62] One significant disparity in the study of the archaeology of ecclesiastical settlement in these two counties is that while excavations of churches in Louth have only taken place on a very small scale at a handful of sites, the study of the medieval church in Down has been advanced significantly by a series of church excavations, for example at St. John's Point, Movilla, Tullyish, Downpatrick, Derry, Raholp, Nendrum and Inch.[63] Like the situation with the early medieval foundations in Lower Dundalk, the Down examples have proved difficult to accurately date and in many instances are plain and featureless.[64]

It would also be archaeologically challenging to conduct a comparative study of the medieval ecclesiastical patterns of the Carlingford Lough region with, for example, the Strangford Lough area which borders the northern fringe of the barony of Lecale. Jope has highlighted the importance of these inlets to early navigators in the Irish Sea on the grounds that seafarers who found themselves in the pool of still water in the open sea would have made good use of the powerful tidal races which flow into both of these sea-

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[61] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 33; BASSETT, G.H., *Bassett's County Louth 1886: Guide and Directory,* (Dundalk, 1998); pp. 5-7; COONEY, BRADY, & BROGAN, (2001), COONEY, G., BRADY, C. & BROGAN, C., *The Cooley Peninsula: An Archaeological Landscape in County Louth,* Archaeology Ireland Heritage Guide Number 15, (2001), p. 1.

[62] CANAVAN, T., *Frontier Town: An Illustrated History of Newry,* (Belfast, 1989), p. 13; REEVES, W., Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor and Dromore Consisting of a Taxation of Those Dioceses Compiled in the Year MCCCVI, (Ballymena, 1992); BASSETT, G.H., *Bassett's County Down 1886: Guide and Directory,* (Bangor, 2002), p. 11; MCERLEAN, T., 'The Coastal Archaeology and History of Strangford Lough: Early Medieval Period, *c.* 400-1177', in *Strangford Lough: An Archaeological Survey of the Maritime Cultural Landscape,* ed. by T. MCERLEAN, R. MCCONKEY & W. FORSYTHE, Environment and Heritage Service, (Belfast, 2002), p. 60.

[63] JOPE, (1966), pp. 128-30; WATERMAN, D.M., 'The Early Christian Churches and Cemetery at Derry, Co. Down', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* Volume 30, (1967), pp. 53-75; BRANNON, N.F., 'A Trial Excavation at St. John's Point Church, County Down', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* Volume 43, (1980), pp. 59-64; BRANNON, N.F., 'The Leaning Wall: St. John's Point Church, Co. Down', in HAMLIN, A. & LYNN, C., (eds), *Pieces of the Past: Archaeological Excavations by the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland 1970-1986,* (Belfast, 1988), p. 29; HAMLIN, A. & LYNN, C., (eds), *Pieces of the Past: Archaeological Excavations by the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland 1970-1986,* (Belfast, 1988), p. xxi; WILSON, A.M., *Saint Patrick's Town: A History of Downpatrick and the Barony of Lecale,* (Belfast, 1995), p. 37; DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND, *Historic Monuments of Northern Ireland, An Introduction and Guide,* Sixth Edition, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Belfast, 1983), pp. 91-92 & 96; HAMLIN, A., 'The Early Church in County Down to the Twelfth Century', in *Down History and Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by L. PROUDFOOT, (Dublin, 1997), p. 65.

[64] JOPE, E.M., (1966), pp. 129-30; MCNEILL, T.E., *Anglo-Norman Ulster: The History and Archaeology of an Irish Barony, 1177-1400,* (Edinburgh, 1980), p. 52. MALLORY, J.P. & MCNEILL, T.E., *The Archaeology of Ulster: From Colonization to Plantation,* (Belfast, 1991), p. 280.

loughs.[65] In addition to this, the Strangford Lough region is renowned as being the location where Christianity was initially introduced to Ireland by St. Patrick and also for the concentration of prominent monasteries, like Movilla and Nendrum, which are scattered throughout the area.[66] Despite the numerous ecclesiastical excavations which have taken place in Co. Down there are still a number of important archaeological questions which have not yet been resolved and a number of important comparisons which could be made with ecclesiastical settlement in north Co. Louth. To take just one example, the early medieval landscape of Lecale is characterised by a large number of church sites and a relatively small number of ringforts[67] and the determining factors responsible for this settlement trend have never been studied in any great detail.

Finally, it was suggested to the author, by Dr. Brian Lacey of the Discovery Programme, that one other possible avenue of research would involve the study of specific religious foundations which were established in the early medieval period in north Co. Louth, south Co. Down and south Co. Armagh and which had female founders. The ultimate aim of such a study would be to attempt to trace the archaeological development of these churches through a detailed study of the hagiographical material relevant to each individual.[68] So, for example, it would be intended that an in-depth study of the various texts of the *Life of Saint Monenna*, who is credited with the foundation of Faughart and Roosky in Co. Louth and Killeavy in Co. Armagh, coupled with a study of the relevant archaeological remains, could provide a more accurate chronology for the foundation and development of these sites than is currently available. This is also a field of study which is historically relevant as women were undoubtedly key contributors to ecclesiastical institutions of medieval Ireland: they worshipped in churches, financially supported parishes and monasteries, while others took religious vows and became nuns.[69] In recent times, considerable attention has been drawn to the fact that studies of medieval female religious communities in Ireland have been woefully neglected in historical studies[70] and in many respects the same problem persists with medieval archaeological studies.

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[65] JOPE, (1966), p. ix.
[66] MCERLEAN, (2002), p. 73.
[67] MCNEILL, (1980), pp. 89-90; MCCORMICK, F., 'Farming and Food in Medieval Lecale', in *Down History and Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by L. PROUDFOOT, (Dublin, 1997), pp.34-36 & 43; MCERLEAN, (2002), p. 73.
[68] LACEY, B., pers. comm., (September, 2008).
[69] HALL, D., *Women and the Church in Medieval Ireland, c. 1140-1540,* (Dublin, 2003), p. 15.
[70]HARRINGTON, C., *Women in a Celtic Church: Ireland 450-1150,* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 3-4; HALL, (2003), p. 16; LACEY, B., pers. comm. (September, 2008).

CHAPTER III: PRE-NORMAN ECCLESIASTICAL SETTLEMENT

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

The famous missionary saints went forth from monasteries like these; within these crude and now ruined enclosures, and others like them which have vanished, religion and learning flourished and scribes and illuminators worked to the greater glory of God.[1]

(H.G. Leask, 1955)

The above quotation could very well have been written with the early medieval monasteries of Lower Dundalk in mind; Faughart and Proleek have been reduced to ruined enclosures, the masonry remains surviving at Faughart and Roosky are, in many respects, quite crude in design, and all trace of the monastery at Cornamucklagh has now vanished. The basic aim of this chapter is to analyse the pattern of pre-Norman ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk. The methodology employed in this research includes a comparative archaeological study of the four early medieval monastic sites which were located at Faughart, Proleek, Roosky and Cornamucklagh in the early medieval period.[2] To this end, the archaeology of each of the sites has been assessed and discussed individually throughout the course of the chapter, which then culminates in a more general concluding dialogue dealing with the broader ramifications of pre-Norman ecclesiastical settlement in Lower Dundalk. It should be noted at this point, however, that there is a manifest discrepancy in the length of each of the individual site discussions, with the archaeology of the early medieval church settlement at Faughart being afforded the most lengthy treatment. However, when the dearth of early medieval archaeological remains extant at Proleek, Roosky and Cornamucklagh is taken into consideration, it soon becomes apparent that this discrepancy is unfortunately an unavoidable one.

For the purposes of this investigation the 'pre-Norman' phase of settlement has been roughly equated with the period 1000-1189, as no physical archaeological remains pre-dating this era have survived at any of the three sites, even though documentary evidence has confirmed that each one must have been founded at a date prior to 1000.

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[1] LEASK, H.G., *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings, Volume I, The First Phases and the Romanesque,* (Dundalk, 1955), p. 15.

[2] See Figure 1.

Therefore, the year 1000 has not been stringently adhered to as a strict starting point for this examination as, in some instances, it has been found that, given the paucity of extant physical remains, the inclusion of earlier documentary evidence has greatly supplemented the archaeological discussion. Thus, it is important to acknowledge that this chapter has adopted an interdisciplinary approach insofar as it has incorporated primary documentary evidence pertaining to each site in cases where it has been found to specifically augment the surviving archaeological evidence. Ultimately, it is intended that this chapter will offer an insight into the pattern of ecclesiastical settlement in Lower Dundalk as it existed immediately prior to the Anglo-Norman incursion into north Co. Louth in the 1180s, and therefore allow the extent of the subsequent changes in the archaeology of church settlement to be fully appreciated and coherently examined in the next chapter.

In 1908 Ua Muireadaig remarked that at the beginning of the ninth century, before the onslaught of the destructive Viking raids, there were 'almost a score' of monasteries thriving in Co. Louth. [3] Although the analysis of early medieval ecclesiastical sites in the whole of Co. Louth falls outside the remit of this study, it is worth making a few brief observations upon their number and distribution in order to place the sites in the barony of Lower Dundalk within a tighter context. By 1945, Davies, who had just had the last section of his archaeological survey of the churches of Louth published in the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* had narrowed Ua Muireadaig's figure down to nineteen, and he listed them on a barony by barony basis as follows: Faughart[4] and Roosky[5] in the barony of Lower Dundalk; Dungooley[6] in the barony of Upper Dundalk, Dromiskin[7] and Louth[8] in the barony of Louth;

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[3] UA MUIREADAIG, L.P., 'Danish Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume II, Number 1, (1908), p. 72. However, it should be noted at this point that Ua Muireadaig did not cite any references, primary or otherwise, in this article. Therefore, his information should be analyzed with this in mind.

[4] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), p. 7; BUCKLEY, V.M., *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin 1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991), pp. 230-31.

[5] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72; DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 10-1; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76; BUCKEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 236-37.

[6] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 22; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 228-29.

[7] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72; DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in the County of Louth: Barony of Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume X., Number 2, (1942), pp. 101-3; GWYNN, A. & HADCOCK, R., *Medieval Religious Houses,* (London, 1970), p. 34; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 73; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 225-7.

[8] DAVIES, (1942), pp. 103-6; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 40; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 252-53.

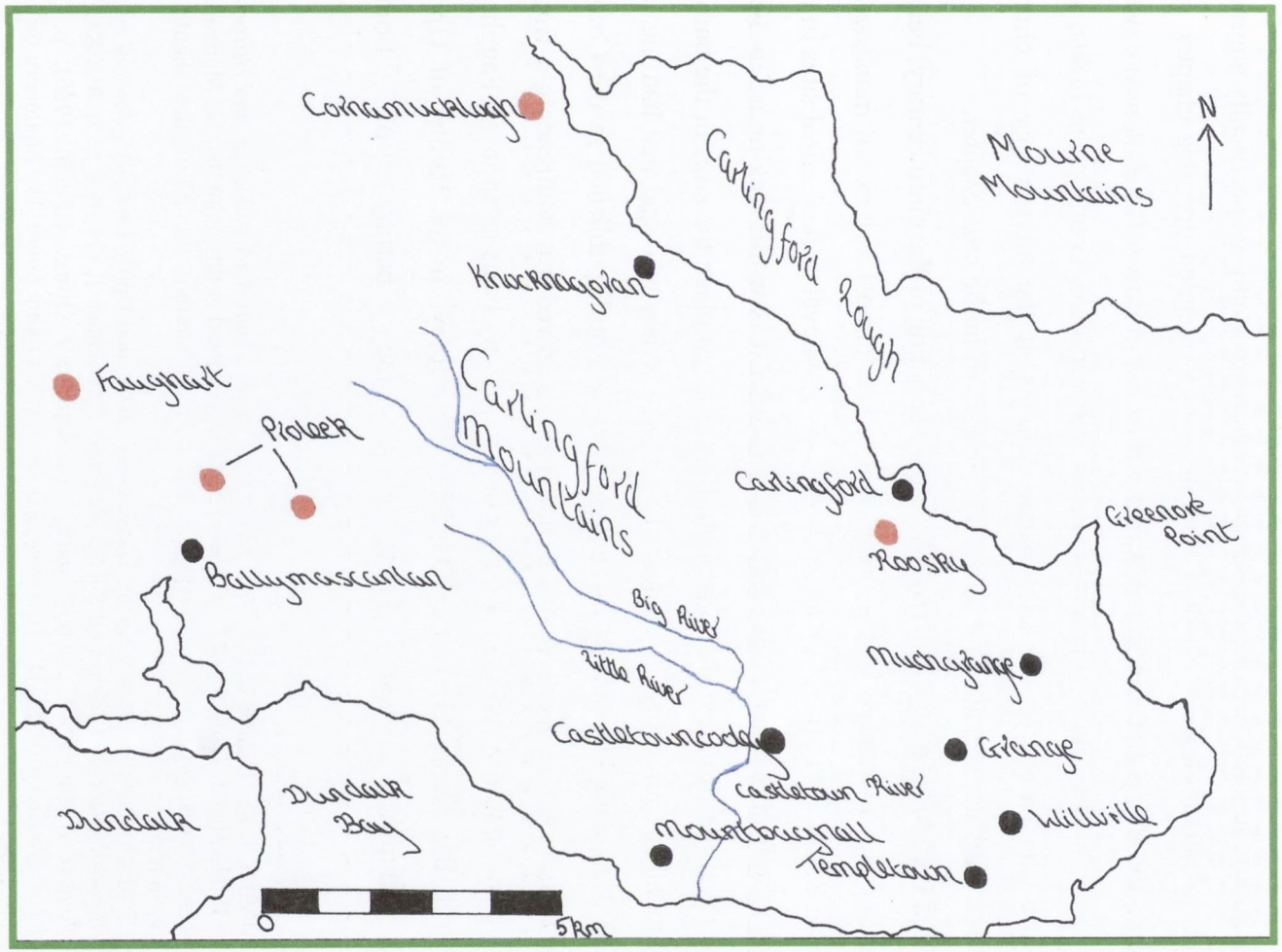


Figure 1: Rough distribution map of the ecclesiastical sites in the barony of Lower Dundalk. The pre-Norman sites are indicated in red, the Anglo-Norman sites in black.

Ardee,[9]Clonkeen,[10]Dromin,[11]Drumcar,[12]Linns,[13] and Kildemock,[14]in the barony of Ardee; Clogher,[15]Clonmore,[16]Dunleer,[17]Dysart,[18] Marlay[19] Monasterboice,[20] and Termonfeckin[21] in the barony of Ferrard and finally, one unnamed Patrician foundation[22] in the barony of Drogheda.[23]

As a perusal of the preceding footnotes will demonstrate, some, but not all, of the nineteen foundations acknowledged by Davies had already been listed by Ua Muireadaig in 1908, while in 1970 Gwynn and Hadcock recognized only five of the sites in their *Medieval Religious Houses.* In 1986 Buckley included eleven early medieval sites in the *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* while by 1991, when he co-edited the *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* with Sweetman, the number had been narrowed down to just nine. Moreover, to add to the confusion, the monastic site at Cornamucklagh[24] was listed by Ua Muireadaig, Buckley and Buckley and Sweetman, but not by Davies or Gwynn and Hadcock. Furthermore Ua Muireadaig included four additional sites at Clonkeehan, Killany, Killanche and Tullyallen[25] which have not been recognised by the other researchers, while Buckley and Sweetman have also listed three other sites at Churchtown,[26]Proleek,[27]and Smarmore[28] in the *Inventory* and the *Survey* which had not been noted in the previous listings.

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[9] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Barony of Ardee', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume X, Number, 3, (1943), p. 200.
[10] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72; DAVIES, (1943), p. 204.
[11] DAVIES, (1943), pp. 204-5.
[12] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72; DAVIES, (1943), p. 206.
[13] DAVIES, (1943), p. 206; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 237.
[14] DAVIES, (1943), pp. 206-7.
[15] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Barony of Ferrard', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume X, (1944), p. 278-79.
[16] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72; DAVIES, (1944), pp. 279-80; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 72.
[17] DAVIES, (1944), pp. 282-83; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 35; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 230.
[18] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72; DAVIES, (1944), pp. 283-84; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74.
[19] DAVIES, (1944), p. 284.
[20] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72; DAVIES, (1944), pp. 287-89; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 41; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 241-45.
[21] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72; DAVIES, (1944), pp. 292-93; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 45; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 80; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 261.
[22] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Barony of Drogheda', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XI, Number 4, (1945), p. 21.
[23] See Figure 2.
[24] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 83; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268.
[25] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72.
[26] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 72; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 223.
[27] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78. BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[28]BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 79. BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 257.

This uncertainty over the number of ecclesiastical foundations to have existed in Co. Louth in the early medieval period appears to stem from the fact that many of the sites have no extant archaeological remains, and while Ua Muireadaig and Davies included such sites in their listings where the existence of the site was confirmed in the documentary record, Gwynn, Hadcock, Buckley and Sweetman appear to have listed only those sites where there are some physical remains still intact. Even so, however, their findings are not uniform and, to date, there is no conclusive survey or listing of the early medieval foundations of Co. Louth available.

Although it is therefore impossible to make any exact observations upon the number and chronology of these sites, a brief examination of their locations reveals an interesting pattern of distribution for the county.[29] It becomes immediately apparent that the densest concentration of early medieval monastic sites in Louth occurs in the more southerly regions of the county, in the baronies of Ferrard, and Ardee, while the more northerly baronies of Louth, Upper Dundalk, and Lower Dundalk show evidence for only each having had two, one and four monastic foundations respectively. The reason for this disparity in the baronies of Louth and Upper Dundalk is not clear, and was perhaps due to political determinants, although the possibility that there were additional foundations in these two baronies for which evidence, either archaeological or documentary, has not survived cannot be discounted either. The situation in the barony of Lower Dundalk however was certainly a unique one. Although political factors would most definitely have had an impact upon the patterns of pre-Norman ecclesiastical settlement in this barony, the most dominant influencing factor would appear to have been geographical, as a brief consideration of the topography and geology of the four monastic sites at Faughart, Proleek, Roosky and Cornamucklagh will demonstrate.

Simply looking at photographs of Faughart Church will not convey to the onlooker the degree to which this site commands the ultimate strategic views of the surrounding countryside. Indeed, neither the church site, nor the Anglo-Norman motte, as they stand today, appear particularly impressive from a strategic viewpoint, that is, however, until the vista of the surrounding landscape is viewed from the summit of either site, as has been aptly described by Buckley:

> *A few miles to the northwest of Dundalk, a small hill rises to a height of 376 feet – Faughart Hill. Though the hill is not significant when viewed today from the nearby main Belfast-Dublin road, this hilltop encapsulates the development of the*

[29] See Figure 2.

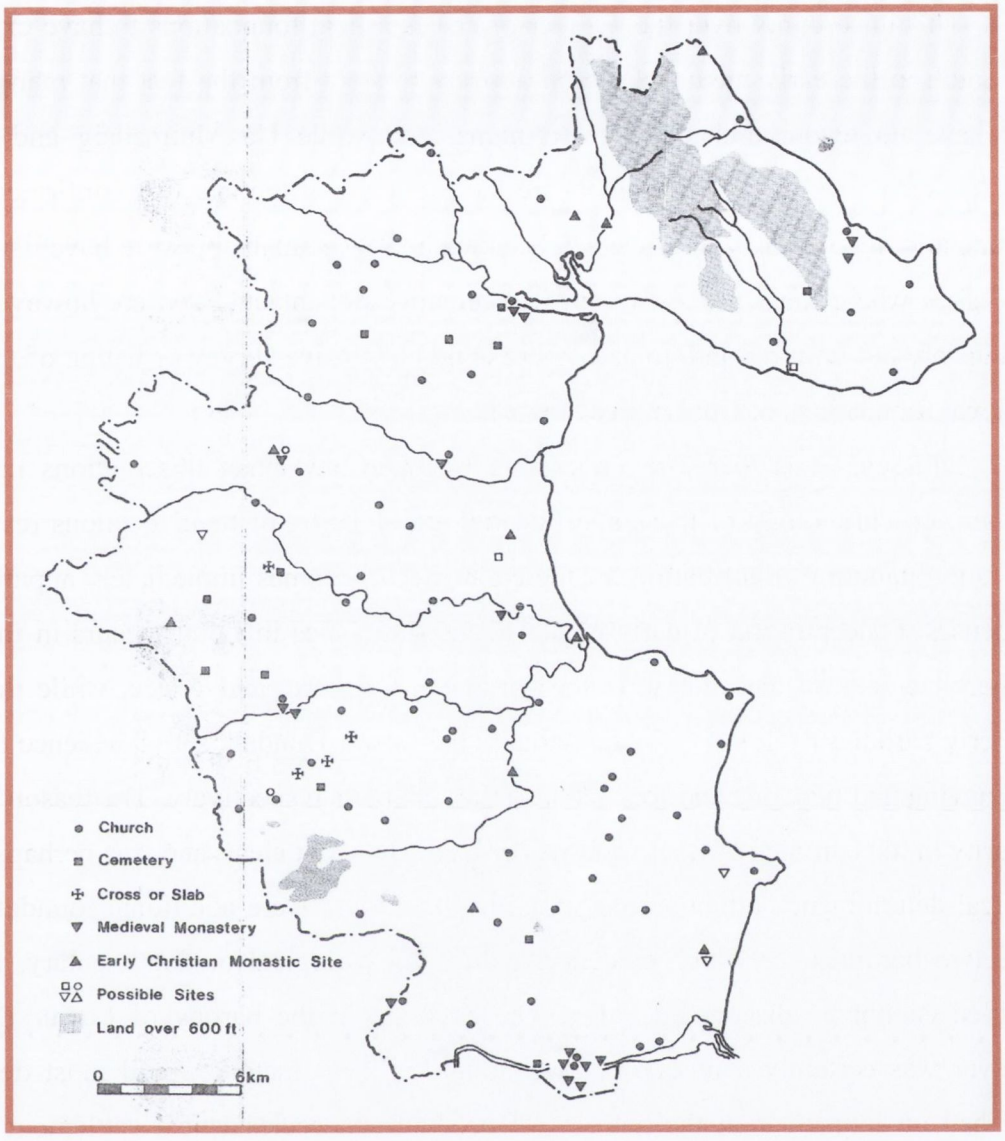


Figure 2: Distribution of Ecclesiastical Remains in County Louth with early Christian monastic sites indicated with upright triangles.
(BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991)).

north Louth borderland from the early Iron Age through to the seventeenth century AD.[30]

From the highest point of the church site it is possible to view the waters of Dundalk Bay, nestled between the Cooley Mountains on the north side[31] and a vast expanse of countryside which extends all the way to Dunany Point on the south, while to the south-west is a great plain of fertile farmland which continues all the way to the uplands of counties Monaghan, Cavan and Meath. Looking to the north it is possible to discern the ancient routeway known today as the Gap of the North, or the Moyry Pass, the valley which incises Slieve Gullion and which once joined north Louth and south Armagh. The strategic importance of the early medieval site at Faughart, located as it was in such close proximity to the Moyry Pass should not be underestimated, as right up until the seventeenth century, routeways into Ulster could only really be accessed by two principle ways; the Fords of Erne in the west and the Moyry Pass in the east.[32]

Indeed, these strategic advantages did not dissipate with the culmination of the medieval period, for as the development of land communication and the expansion of industrial activity in north-east Ulster developed from the late eighteenth century onwards, Faughart, located at the southern end of the Moyry Pass came to be on the main routeway between the two leading centres of population in early modern Ireland, Belfast and Dublin.[33]To the visitor the strategic advantages of this site are obvious; the views are panoramic, and from its inherent topography alone it serves as a formidable naturally occurring frontier. Significantly, Faughart motte is designated on the Ordnance Survey six-inch to the mile map of 1837 as 'Site of battles',[34] which it undoubtedly was.[35] This chequered political history can be partly explained by the fact that in the medieval period, even before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans, territorial control by administrations was

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[30] BUCKLEY, V.M., 'From the Darkness to the Dawn: The Later Prehistoric and Early Christian Borderlands', in *The Borderlands. Essays on the History of the Ulster-Leinster Border,* ed. by R. GILLESPIE & H. O'SULLIVAN, The Institute of Irish Studies, (Belfast, 1989), p. 30.

[31] See Plate 1.

[32] BARDON, J., *A History of Ulster,* Second Edition, (Belfast, 2005), p. 4.

[33] HUGHES, T.J., 'Land Holding and Settlement in the Cooley Peninsula of Louth', *Irish Geography,* Volume IV, Number 3, (1961), p. 150.

[34] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 30.

[35] For example the battle between the Cenél Eoghain and the Ulaid *c.* 735 AD and the Battle of Faughart which terminated the Bruce invasion of Ireland in 1318.

seldom uniform or complete. It was always strongest at the centre and weakest at the edges, [36]and Faughart was permanently located on a political periphery.

In contrast to Faughart, the early medieval sites at Proleek were not situated in overtly strategic locations, although one of the sites in particular, Proleek II,[37] was positioned on a raised enclosure which, although not as spectacular as Faughart Hill, did offer quite an expansive view of the surrounding landscape. It is also notable that both Proleek I and Proleek II were located in an agriculturally fertile pocket of land which later encompassed part of the Anglo-Norman lordship of Ballymascanlan.[38] Indeed, in common with the sites at Faughart and Roosky; there is some evidence to suggest that the ecclesiastical enclosure at Proleek II may have been re-used by the Anglo-Normans in the period after 1180.

Following on from Proleek, the archaeological remains of Roosky Priory are situated on the eastern portion of the Cooley Peninsula, on the lower slopes of the Carlingford Mountains, and in the midst of an agriculturally rich portion of the barony of Lower Dundalk. In common with the church site at Faughart, it is not difficult to understand why this particular spot would have been chosen as the location for an early medieval monastic foundation. From a strategic point of view, the benefits of this site are glaringly obvious; it offers a breath-taking view of the medieval town of Carlingford to the north with an extended view of Carlingford Lough to the north-east. Of course, when the first ecclesiastical settlement was established at Roosky, possibly as early as the sixth century, there was no town in existence at Carlingford, thus reinforcing the fact that this site must have been chosen for its communication and trading advantages, situated as it was so conveniently close to Carlingford Lough. Indeed, it seems certain that strategic factors would have been important to the survival of both of the ecclesiastical sites at Roosky and at Faughart, where not only did they survive the pillaging of the Vikings, but they also endured in varying capacities as parish churches throughout the later medieval period.

It is in this fundamental respect that they differ significantly from the fourth early medieval monastic site which was founded in the barony of Lower Dundalk, at

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[36] DUFFY, P.J., 'Geographical Perspectives on the Borderlands', in *The Borderlands. Essays on the History of the Ulster-Leinster Border,* ed. by R. GILLESPIE & H. O'SULLLIVAN, The Institute of Irish Studies, (Belfast, 1989), p. 5.

[37] The first early medieval monastic enclosure at Proleek is listed in both the *Inventory* and the *Survey* as site number 971, while the second is listed as site number 972, however they will be referred to throughout this study as Proleek I and Proleek II respectively.

[38] See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Ballymascanlan Church.



Plate 1: A view from Faughart graveyard looking to the north-east showing the Cooley Mountains located to the north, and the Irish Sea to the east of the site.

Cornamucklagh, in the mountainous uplands of Omeath, and which does not appear to have survived the Viking onslaughts of the ninth and tenth centuries. Compared to the strategic advantages of the first three sites, the reasoning behind the location of this monastery is somewhat of a mystery. Difficult to access, this site was located in mountainous, rocky uplands with poor agricultural potential and limited communication routes. The explanation for this choice of remote location may be linked to the tendency of some of the more austere monastic founders striving to build their monasteries in 'relatively inaccessible and often inhospitable places...in the marginal lands.'[39]

In 1837 Lewis remarked upon the widespread availability of limestone in Faughart when he noted that 'limestone of good quality abounds and there are several limekilns'.[40] The availability of building stone locally in the barony of Lower Dundalk is noteworthy as it has been proven that the existence of local quarries and the nature of the geological environment can affect the style of masonry at an ecclesiastical site in a particular region.[41] When this is considered in tandem with the research conducted by Waterman which indicates that beyond Monasterboice, northwards into Louth and Ulster no Dundry or any other type of imported stone seems to have been used in medieval building,[42] it becomes apparent that the stone used in both the earlier and later phases of the construction of the Faughart and Roosky churches was likely to have been sourced locally.[43] Indeed, the uplands of the Cooley Peninsula form a part of the high mountainous Tertiary Igneous Complex of east Ulster,[44] and, to summarize, the Carlingford portion of this Igneous Complex is composed of granitic and basic rocks which were intruded into the Silurian greywackes and Carboniferous limestones at the beginning of the Tertiary period. Interestingly, similar Tertiary volcanic rocks to those

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[39] LEASK, (1955), p. 11.

[40] LEWIS, S., *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland,* Volume I, (London, 1837), p. 614.

[41] WEIR, A. & JERMAN, J., *Images of Lust: Sexual Carvings on Medieval Churches,* (London & New York, 1993); p. 38; STALLEY, R.A., *Irish Round Towers,* (Dublin, 2000), p. 7.

[42] WATERMAN, D.M., 'Somersetshire and Other Foreign Building Stone in Medieval Ireland *c.* 1175-1400', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* Volume 33, (1970), p.72.

[43] This also seems to have been the case at other ecclesiastical sites in the county, for example at the medieval church at Smarmore, in south Co. Louth, where Bliss has speculated that all the specimens of slate at this site could have been sourced from an abandoned quarry just south of Smarmore tower house, less than half a mile from the church. See BLISS, A.J., 'The Inscribed Slates at Smarmore', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 64, Section C, (1965), p. 34 and BLISS, A.J., 'Smarmore Inscribed Slates, Note', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume, XV, Number 1, (1961), pp. 21-22.

[44] HUGHES, (1961), p. 149; AALEN, F.H.A., 'Some Historical Aspects of Landscape and Rural Life in Omeath, Co. Louth', *Irish Geography,* Volume IV, Number 4, (1962a), p. 256; VAUGHAN, A., 'The Geological Background', in *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* ed. by V.M. BUCKLEY & P.D. SWEETMAN, The Stationary Office, Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1991), p. 10.

located in the uplands of the Carlingford peninsula have survived in Antrim, the Scottish Hebrides and also in Iceland.[45] Therefore, it stands to reason that medieval masons working in the barony of Lower Dundalk would have had access to belts of Silurian greywackes which extend as far as Carlingford, as well as an abundance of tertiary granites and carboniferous limestone,[46]and this is well in evidence at both Faughart and Roosky where the medieval churches were primarily composed of greywacke and granite. Unfortunately the scarcity of archaeological remains at Cornamucklagh and Proleek has rendered it impossible to establish which type of building stone was employed in the construction of the churches at these sites; however, it is possible that a combination of local limestone, granite and greywackes would have been utilized.

II. FAUGHART CHURCH

1. INTRODUCTION

Faughart Church is positioned upon a prominent hill in the extreme north-west of the barony of Lower Dundalk.[47] The closest pre-Norman ecclesiastical sites are two enclosures which are located approximately 1.5km and 1.3km to the southeast of Faughart at Proleek, while the closest Anglo-Norman church is situated approximately 2.8km to the south-east at Ballymascanlan.[48] Today, any mention of Faughart Church is immediately synonymous with the legendary figure of Edward Bruce, his untimely demise at the Battle of Faughart in 1318, and the enduring tradition that his body lies buried beneath the soil of Faughart Graveyard. However, for hundreds of years before the arrival of Bruce, Faughart had been developing into a prominent monastic centre, with a rich archaeological history.

The first attempts at an archaeological description of Faughart Church were published in 1744 and 1748, by Butler[49] and Wright[50] respectively, and contain valuable descriptions of the site and its associated monuments as they survived in the mid-

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[45]VAUGHAN, A., 'The Geological Background', in *Archaeological Survey of County Louth*, ed. by V.M. BUCKLEY & P.D. SWEETMAN, The Stationery Office, Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1991), p. 10.
[46] IBID, p. 8.
[47] See Figure 1.
[48] See Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, III. Proleek & Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Ballymascanlan.
[49] DEANE, J. (ed), 'Extracts from Isaac Butler's Journal, 1744', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume V, Number 2, (1922), pp. 93-106.
[50] WRIGHT, T., *Louthiana: or, An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland*, Book III, Plate XX, Millennium Reprint of the First 1748 London Edition, (Dundalk, 2000), p. 19.

eighteenth century. The next detailed report on the archaeology of this site was made in 1906 by Howard and was published in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.*[51] Following on from this, an archaeological survey of Faughart Church, which was carried out by Davies, was published in the *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* in 1941,[52] and, while it does provide some valuable information about the state of the ruin almost seventy years ago, it is brief in content and fails to identify the importance of this church as an early medieval monastic site.[53]

The subsequent archaeological accounts of Faughart Church which were published in the *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth*[54] and the *Archaeological Survey of County Louth*[55], in 1986 and 1991 respectively, were similarly disappointing, and resulted primarily from a survey of the site which had been undertaken on 27th July 1966.[56] The last two publications which are pertinent to the archaeology of Faughart church are primarily historical in nature but are nonetheless vital for the study of the archaeology of this church and its associated monuments. The first of these takes the form of a townland survey of Faughart Upper which was compiled by MacIomhair and published in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* in 1966, [57]while the second is an historical account of the Catholic parishes in the barony of

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[51] HOWARD, S., 'Report on Faughart Graveyard', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland,* Volume 36, (1906), pp. 70-73.
[52] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.
[53] IBID, pp. 7-23.
[54] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74.
[55] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 230-31.
[56] The results of this survey are also contained within the *Sites and Monuments Record* for Faughart as follows: RMP LH 004-097: Faughart Upper Ecclesiastical Remains; RMP LH 004-097007: Faughart Upper Holy Well; RMP LH 004-09701: Faughart Upper Ecclesiastical Enclosure; RMP LH 004-09702: Faughart Upper Church; RMP LH 004-09703 : Faughart Upper Graveyard; RMP LH 004-09705: Faughart Upper Mound; RMP LH 004-09706: Faughart Upper Cross.
[57] MACIOMHAIR, D., 'Townland Survey of County Louth: Townland of Faughart Upper', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 111-124. MacIomhair, an historian and former parish priest of the modern parish of Faughart from 1960-81, was dedicated to preserving the history of Faughart and had a series of articles on the history of Faughart and the surrounding area published in *The County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal, Seanchas Ard Mhaca, The Clogher Record, The Irish Genealogist, The Irish Sword,* and *The Journal of the Mullaghbawn Historical and Folklore Society* which have provided an invaluable source of information for this study. See also O'FIAICH, T., 'Father Diarmuid Mac Iomhair', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XX, Number 3, (1983), p. 174 & ROSS, N., 'The Historical Writings of Diarmuid Mac Iomhair', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XX, Number 3, (1983), pp. 175-79.

Lower Dundalk which was written by Harold O' Sullivan and published in *Seanchas Ard Mhaca* in 2005.[58]

Faughart Church has undergone just one partial archaeological excavation and this was conducted in 1966 by O'Connor.[59]Although the remit of this excavation was severely limited, both by time constraints and by manpower,[60] this brief investigation did succeed in identifying three key periods of activity at the site. In her subsequent excavation report O'Connor explained how she had firstly uncovered evidence for a medieval church which had been built at two different times, and secondly, evidence for a period of twelfth century or earlier occupation which overlay a third trench of an unspecified earlier date.[61]

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

According to Smith, the large motte located at Raskeagh, to the north of Dundalk,[62] was probably built by Hugh de Lacy soon after his marriage to Lescelina de Verdun *c.* 1195. An arc of smaller mottes was also built from Crowmartin, in the south of the county, to Faughart, in the north, on land held of these lords by their most important tenants.[63] It is likely that the Anglo-Norman phase of settlement at Faughart dates to this period, and, one hundred and six years later, the settlement of 'Fagard' was mentioned in the 1301 list of amercements, or fines, which were imposed at a Royal Court in Drogheda. [64] Although there is no mention made of the church in this document, it is

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[58] O'SULLIVAN, H., 'The Catholic Parishes in the Barony of Cooley. Part 1: From Earliest Times to the End of the Seventeenth Century', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 20, Number 2, (2005), pp. 34-105.

[59] O'Connor was enlisted by the Fochart Sub-Committee of the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society*, and assisted with the help of a grant from Bord Fáilte Eireann and the co-operation of Louth County Council, to make an archaeological examination of Faughart graveyard and its monuments.

[60] O'Connor was given just twenty days to complete her investigation with the assistance of only two local volunteers, Jimmy Rice, and Paddy MacNamee. See O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), p. 125 & 126.

[61] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 129. Despite the fact that this chapter is solely concerned with pre-Norman ecclesiastical settlement, it has been decided, for the purposes of clarity, not to divide the account of the archaeological remains of Faughart church into two separate chapters, but rather to include a description of both the earlier and later phases of construction together in this chapter. In this way it is hoped to offer a more balanced assessment of the archaeological evidence for pre-Norman activity at this site in this chapter, while an analysis of the later medieval remains at this site will be included in the following chapter.

[62] See Figure 18.

[63] SMITH, B., *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland. The English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 45.

[64] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* ed. by D. MACIOMHAIR, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* , Volume XVI, Number 1, (1965), p. 42.

reasonable to assume that a reasonable degree of Anglo-Norman sub-infeudation of the area had been achieved at this point.[65] In 1326 John Kerdyf granted the manor of Faughart with all of its appurtenances to Robert Dardys and his wife Mabilla,[66] while in 1355 Richard Tanner bequeathed 40 d. 'to the church of Faghard' in his will.[67] In 1385 Robert Kerdyff and his son, Walter, granted the manor of 'Faghard' with all of its rights and appurtenances to Mathew Tanner of Dundalk, and in 1396 Walter Tanner, who was chaplain of the New Town of Dundalk, made a grant to Mathew Tanner, son of Mathew Tanner senior, of '....all messuages, dovecots, lands and tenements, demesne, lordships, rents and services with all their rights and appurtenances in Faghyrd.'[68]

The church of Faughart was mentioned in the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall in 1535 in an Order of Visitation of Churches in *Cleros inter Anglicos* as well as in a list of the Synodals and Procurations payable in respect of religious establishments, *inter Anglicos*.[69] Following on from this, in 1538, James Gernon of Killincoole granted the manor of Faughart to William Manne, the rector of Mansfieldstown, Thomas More of Dublin and Patrick More of Termonfeckin.[70] Two years later, in 1540, following the dissolution of the monasteries, the tithes of Faughart Church belonged to the Priory of St. Mary's of Louth.[71]In 1544 in the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall the lands of Faughart are shown at a rental of 3s. 4d. per annum.[72] In 1622 the church of Faughart was described as vacant and ruinous, with Viscount Moore the impropriator, [73]but by 1627 Roger Briscoe was curate and in 1641 Richard Clarke was rector of the church and had purchased part of the tithes for £50.[74] In 1658 Faughart church was recorded as being

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[65] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 43.
[66] *Dowdall Deeds,* ed. by C. MCNEILL & A.J. OTWAY-RUTHVEN, Stationery Office for the Irish Manuscripts Commission, Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1960).
1326.
[67] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1355.
[68] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1396.
[69] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall, commonly called the "Liber Niger" or "Black Book,"* ed. by L.P. MURRAY, Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society, Volumes VI-VII, (1926-1930), 1535.
[70] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1538.
[71] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions 1540-42,* ed. by N.B. WHITE, Irish Manuscripts Commission, The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1943), p. 231.
[72] *Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1544,
[73] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,(T.C.D. MS. E.36),* transc.& ed. by T. FITZPATRICK, 'The Royal Visitation of 1622', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VI, Number 1, (1925), p. 10; LESLIE, J.B., *Armagh Clergy and Parishes,* (Dundalk, 1911), pp. 300-02.
[74] LESLIE, J.B., *Supplement to "Armagh Clergy and Parishes",* (Dundalk, 1948), p. 112.

once again out of repair and without a minister,[75] although by 1690 one James Cubet had become curate.[76] Finally, an entry recorded in the *Journal of Isaac Butler* in 1744 indicates that at this stage, the archaeological remains of some form of high cross and possibly also a round tower were still extant at Faughart:

The old church of Faugher is upon an hill a mile and a half from Dundalk, it has been considerable, but all in ruins, there has been to the West of the church a large fine Cross which is pulled down and broken, five paces from it there is a small circle of stones edge way in the ground, two larger than the rest compose the entrance, the place is capable of containing half a dozen persons, the entrance faces east.[77]

3. CARTOGRAPHY & AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

The medieval settlement at Faughart was noted in 1599 on Baptista Boazio's *County of Louth and District* as 'Fagart', but unfortunately with no structural detail evident at all.[78] The church at Faughart was subsequently depicted by Richard Bartlett on his *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602* as 'Faghart' where it appears located upon a prominent mound and apparently roofless, with some form of dividing wall evident in the centre of the building.[79]

An aerial photograph of Faughart Hill indicates that it was once part of a much larger pre-Norman ecclesiastical enclosure than the surviving archaeological remains would suggest.[80] The aerial photograph in question was taken by St. Joseph in 1965 and has provided significant evidence for an early medieval enclosure on Faughart Hill. The photograph clearly illustrates crop marks in the fields surrounding the church and it is obvious that at one stage, the boundary of the present graveyard lay along the course of a much larger subsurface enclosure, roughly oval in plan and measuring approximately, 150m by 130m; it is now bisected by the road.[81] There is also evidence for the remains of another ditch in the ploughed field to the north of the graveyard. While only a small section of this can be seen in the photograph, it may have formed another outer enclosure encircling the summit of the hill. Buckley has remarked that although such large

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[75] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, transc. by J.B. LESLIE, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 1, (1929), p. 36/

[76] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,(T.C.D. MS. E.36)*, p. 10; LESLIE, (1911), pp. 300-02.

[77] DEANE, (1922), p. 100.

[78] See Figure 3.

[79] See Figure 4.

[80] See Plate 2.

[81] Notably these measurements are consistent with the larger monastic enclosures of the early Christian period. See O'NEILL, T., 'Parknahown 5: An Extensive Cemetery at the River Goul', *Seanda,* Issue 1, (2006), p. 35.



Figure 3: The settlement of Faughart as illustrated on Baptista Boazio's *Map of Ireland: County Louth and District in 1599.*

(TEMPEST, H.G, 'Boazio's Map of Ireland, 1599', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XII, Number 4, (1952a)).



Figure 4: The church at Faughart as depicted on Richard Bartlett's *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602.*
(O'SULLIVAN, H., *Irish Historic Towns Atlas No. 16, Dundalk,* Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 2006)).



Plate 2: Aerial view of Aerial view of church, enclosures and motte at Faughart.
(CUCAP ALK 22, Courtesy of the Cambridge University Unit for Landscape Modelling)

enclosures would surely have formed part of the early layout of monastic sites in the early medieval period, a purely defensive role for a double-ramparted hilltop enclosure, like that at Faughart, in the pre-Christian period cannot be ruled out, as such multivallate hillforts in Ireland have been increasingly dated to the late Bronze Age, *c.*1000 BC.[82]

This large double-ditched enclosure at Faughart was discussed in 1989 by Buckley,[83] it was mentioned again by Buckley and Sweetman in 1991, it was briefly alluded to by O'Sullivan in 2005,[84]and finally, it was succinctly referred to by Condit and Buckley in 2007.[85] To summarize, Buckley, Sweetman, Condit and O'Sullivan were all of the opinion that it was indicative of a larger early-Christian ecclesiastical settlement at Faughart. [86] However, the most detailed discussion of the crop marks surrounding Faughart Church was that which was published by Buckley in 1989. He noted that the aerial photograph shows the small modern graveyard with traces of a large ditch continuing the line of the enclosure from the north-east around to the motte and across the road on the southern side of the site. He also noticed that beyond the boundaries of the early monastic enclosure showing on the photograph, a second large enclosing ditch could also be discerned.[87] From an examination of the aerial photograph it is obvious that this outer enclosure is not concentric with the inner enclosure, and is located further down the slope of the hill on the relatively steep north side. In this case, Buckley surmised that this black line, the remains of an extensive ditch, was visible from the air because of the susceptibility of crops to underlying features which contained less compacted soil than the surrounding ground and hence retained more moisture which allowed the crops to grow higher.[88]

As previously mentioned, O'Connor briefly referred to this aerial photograph in her 1966 excavation report for Faughart Church. In particular, she emphasized how important a more comprehensive excavation of the whole site would be to achieving a more coherent understanding of the archaeological development of this settlement. She commented that:

> *Further investigation of this feature outside the graveyard and investigation of a second, outer earthwork showing in the air photograph and of the nearby motte*

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[82] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 30; CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 3.
[83]BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 30.
[84]O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 67.
[85] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 3.
[86] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 231.
[87] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 30.
[88] IBID, p. 30.

> *and souterrain west of the graveyard would throw more light on the nature and sequence of activity at Faughart.*[89]

The potential of aerial photography in the pre-excavation stage of a medieval church study has been emphasized by O'Brien, where at some sites in England, these photographs have been utilised to clarify the extent of earlier enclosing features of ecclesiastical settlements. Aerial photography has proved particularly fruitful at those sites where there has been a contraction or change in the configuration of a churchyard area, and where areas which were formerly within the churchyard may now be outside it. For example, at Aylesbury and Shipton-under-Wychwood graves found just outside the medieval churchyard areas have yielded radiocarbon dates between the seventh and tenth centuries. She has further observed that:

> *It is only by studying shrunken churchyards in a way more systematic and determined than hitherto, and obtaining radiocarbon dates from their burials that we can begin to trace the process by which 'manorial' or parish' churchyards wrested control from the minsters.*[90]

This could potentially be a very productive mode of investigation if applied to the study of Faughart church and graveyard, particularly in attempting to chart the transition of the site from early medieval monastic settlement to medieval parish church. The importance of aerial photography to the study of medieval archaeology is probably best summed up by Condit who stressed the importance of utilizing these images to reconstruct the relationships of the various man-made archaeological features which can combine to form a settlement where *"the land below forms a record of the landscape which can be interpreted and annotated like manuscript"*.[91] This is particularly relevant to Faughart, especially when it is considered that without the existence of this aerial photograph, and the scarcity of early medieval remains extant at the church, the extent of this pre-Norman enclosure would be an unknown quantity, as only the church and motte are visible from ground level. The use of aerial photography at other sites in Ireland, for example at Moyne, near Shrule in Co. Mayo, suggests that it was many of the larger, more important early monastic sites which were composed of an inner and an outer enclosure, similar to that in evidence at Faughart. The inner enclosure would seem to have contained the religious core of the monastery while most of the associated

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[89] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 129.
[90] O'BRIEN E., 'Archaeological Study of Church Cemeteries: Past, Present and Future: Part 1: Past Rites, Future Concerns', in *Church Archaeology: Research Directions for the Future*, ed. by J. BLAIR & C. PYRAH, CBA Research Report 104, (York, 1996), p. 162.
[91] CONDIT, T., *Ireland's Archaeology from the Air*, (Dublin, 1997), p. 5.

settlement was generally contained within the outer one. Manning has highlighted the fact that excavation at both Armagh and Clonmacnoise has revealed intense settlement patterns outside the core area of these settlements in the outer enclosure, which indicates that by the ninth century these settlements had become major centres of trade, education and craftsmanship, which would in turn support the classification of them, as well as some other prominent Irish monastic sites, as towns.[92]

4. LOCATION

Faughart Church is located at the summit of a strategically positioned mound, in the midst of an expanse of agriculturally fertile land in the extreme north-west of the barony of Lower Dundalk. Along with the early medieval sites located at Proleek and Roosky, Faughart was re-used by the Anglo-Normans as a religious site.

5. SIZE

Calculations made from a study of Buckley and Sweetman's plan of Faughart church indicate that it would have originally measured approximately 9m x 13m externally and 7m x 12m internally.[93] This means that the church would have had an internal area of 84 square metres which would qualify it as a church of middle size according to O'Carragáin's methodology relating to church size and function.[94]

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[92]HUGHES, K., 'The Church and the World in Early Christian Ireland', *Irish Historical Studies,* Volume XIII, Number 50, (1962), p. 111; THE COMBINED TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION, *Dealga's Legacy, Dundalk's Heritage,* (Dundalk, 1989), p. 11; HARBISON, P., *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland,* Third Edition, (Dublin, 1992a), p. 15; BRADLEY, J., *Walled Towns in Ireland,* (Dublin, 1995).
(1995), p. 9; MANNING, C., *Early Irish Monasteries,* (Dublin, 1995), pp. 6 & 44.

[93] See Figure 5.

[94] FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009); Ó CARRAGÁIN, 'Church Buildings and Pastoral Care in Early Medieval Ireland,' in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK, & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), pp. 107-8. It is also worth noting that The dimensions evident at Faughart church do roughly correspond to one of the more widely used ratios of the Middle Ages, the Vitruvian principle, or, one to the square root of two, (1:/2), which, in geometrical terms, represents the ratio of the side of a square to its diagonal, its mathematical equivalent being 1:1.414. These proportions could be achieved by the simple practical method of laying out a square and extending it to a rectangle by using the length of the diagonal of that square. When the dimensions of Faughart church, 9m x 13m, are set to this formula, a result of 1:1.444 is achieved (9:13 = 1:1.444). Although this does not correlate exactly with the proportion of 1:1:414, it is certainly interesting when considered in tandem with research conducted by Fernie, Coldstream, and O' Keeffe which indicates that medieval churches less than 5m long appear not to have ratios of more than 1:1.5, while slightly larger churches with lengths of between 5m and 11m range between 1:1.4 and 1:1.7. See FERNIE, E., 'Historical Metrology and Architectural History', *Art History,* Volume I, (1978), pp. 383-99; FERNIE, E., 'A Beginner's Guide to the Study of Architectural Proportions and Systems of Length', in *Medieval Architecture and its Intellectual Context,* ed. by E. FERNIE & P. CROSSLEY, (London, 1990), pp. 229-

6. MORPHOLOGY

On a visit to Faughart in 1920, Tempest described the 'bare broken walls of the old church,' [95]and indeed, this is a forlorn portrayal which can still be applied to the site today. Faughart church, in its extant form, is a medieval parish church in ruins which has been classified by Buckley, Sweetman and Condit as a divided nave and chancel structure with some portions of the cross-wall surviving. [96] However, one alternative interpretation of this classification is that the church at Faughart may not have been a divided nave and chancel structure, but rather, a unicameral church which had an additional building adjoined to the east end of the church in the later medieval period.[97] In fact, the description and plan of this church can be construed as indicating a solid wall pierced only by a doorway with no evidence of a chancel arch or roodscreen extant on site. Indeed, it is possible that the east end of this church was constructed in the later medieval period as a priest's house. Research conducted by Bermingham has indicated that even with the advent of the detailed inventories and surveys of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, 'some architectural features, pointing directly to priests' residences, have been overlooked or have not been recognized as such.'[98] Bermingham has determined four main forms of priestly accommodation in medieval Ireland and it is possible that Faughart may fit into the first, and most common of these types; 'accommodation incorporated into the body of the church, at the west gable...also very occasionally incorporated into the east end of the church, over the chancel.'[99]

7. MASONRY STYLES

The body of the church itself is constructed of a mixture of large granite boulders and thin slabs of greywacke, and, as already mentioned,[100] these building materials were

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238; COLDSTREAM, N., *Medieval Craftsmen: Masons and Sculptors,* (London, 1991), pp. 37-38; STALLEY,R.A., *Early Medieval Architecture,* (Oxford, 1999), p. 116.

[95]TEMPEST, H.G., *Gossiping Guide to Louth and Parts of Surrounding Counties: Descriptive and Historical,* Second Edition, (Dundalk, 1920), p. 96.

[96] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p .230; CONDIT T. & BUCKLEY, V.M., 'Faughart, Co. Louth – the Hill of Heroes, Saints, Battles and Boundaries', *Archaeology Ireland,* Heritage Guide Number 37, (2007), p. 2; see Plates 3 & 4. See Figures 5, 6, 7 & 8.

[97] FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009).

[98] BIRMINGHAM, H., 'Priests' Residences in Later Medieval Ireland', in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), p. 168.

[99] BIRMINGHAM, (2006), pp. 169 & 170-75.

[100] See Chapter I: Introduction, VII. Methodology and Structure, 9. Masonry Styles.



Plate 3: Remains of the cross-wall of Faughart church adjoining the south wall in the foreground and collapsed portion of the south wall to the left.



Plate 4: The cross-wall of Faughart church, viewed from the east and demonstrating the mid-wall collapse.

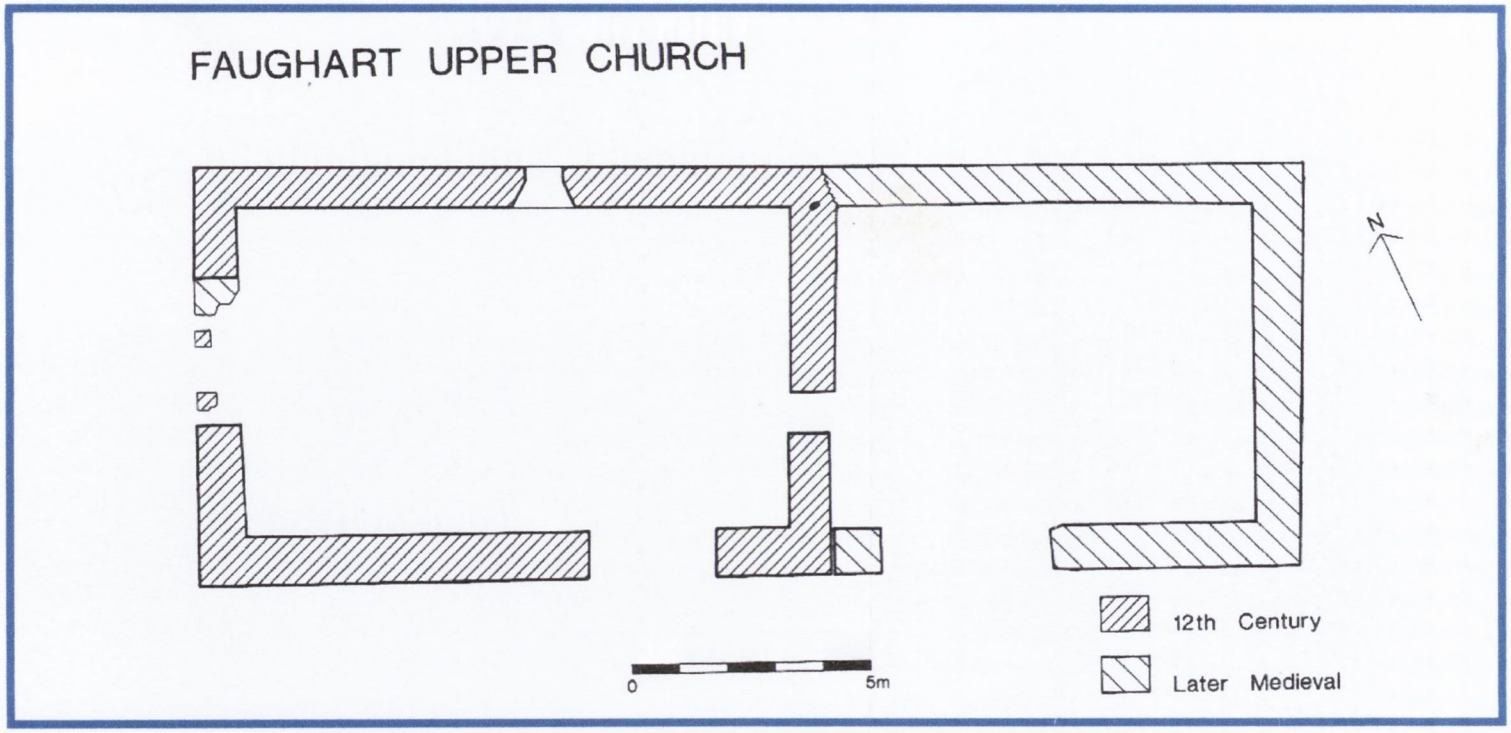


Figure 5: Plan of Faughart Church.
(BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991)).

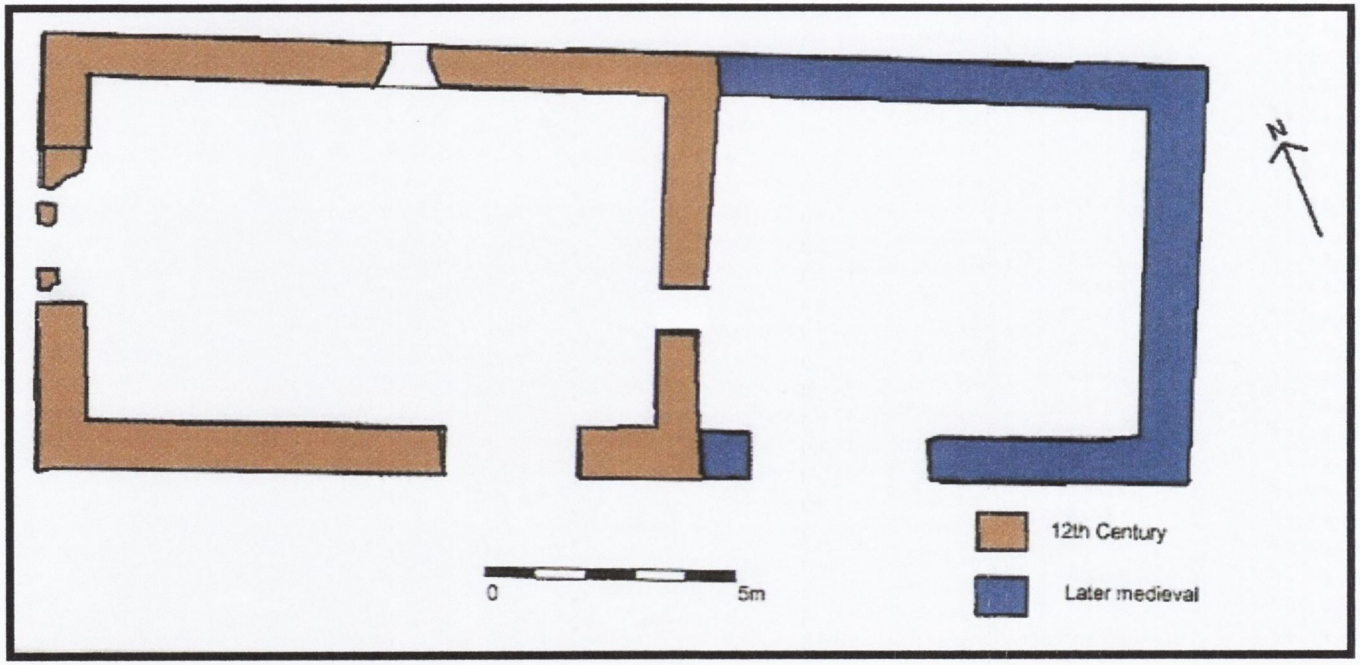


Figure 6: Condit & Buckley's Plan of Faughart Church.
(CONDIT, T. & BUCKLEY V.M., 'Faughart, Co. Louth – the Hill of Heroes, Saints, Battles and Boundaries', Archaeology *Ireland,* Heritage Guide Number 37, (2007)).

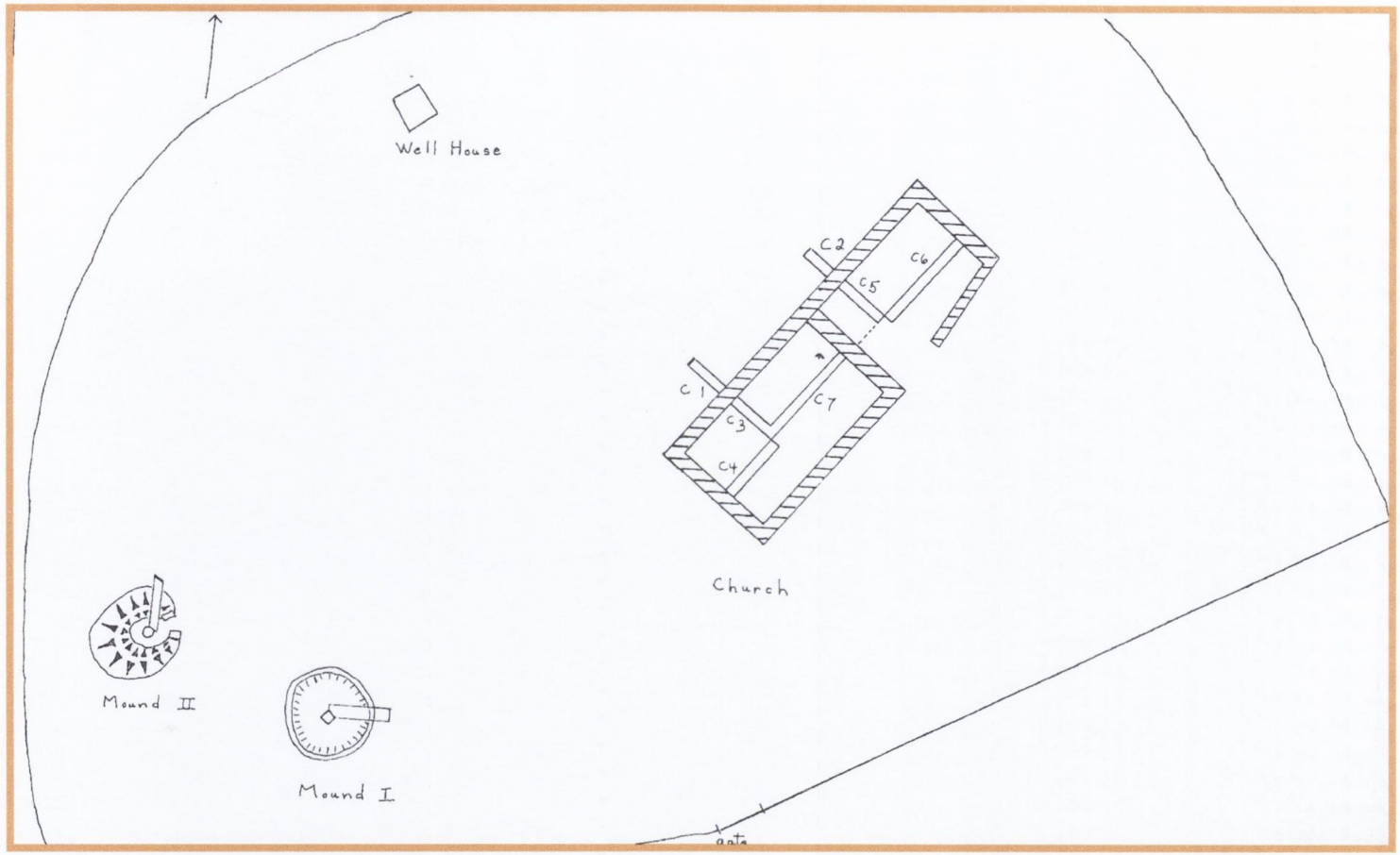


Figure 7: Plan of Faughart Church, graveyard & associated monuments made in 1966 by O'Conor.
(O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-129.)

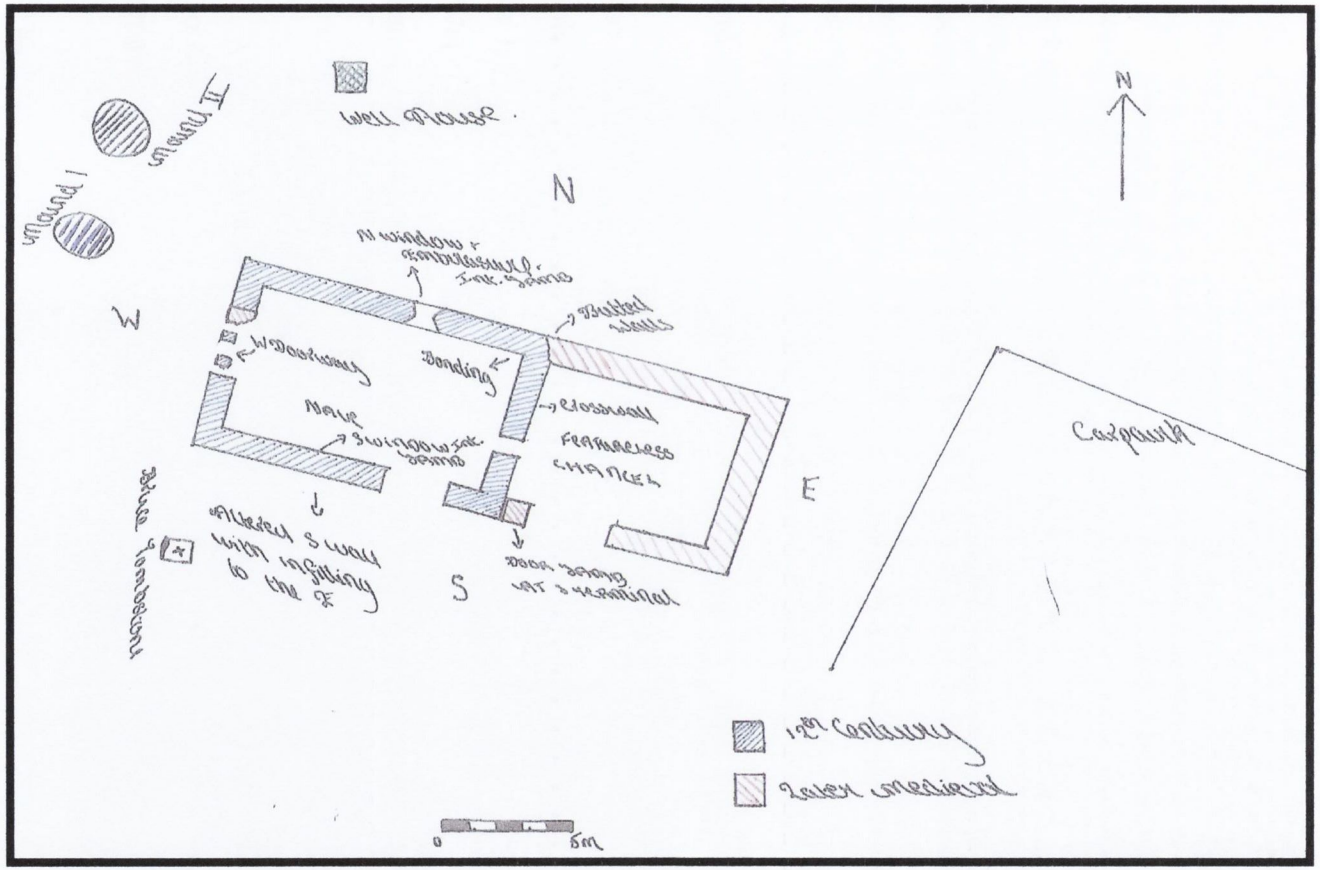


Figure 8: Rough plan of Faughart Church, graveyard and associated monuments.
(The church plan is after BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991).

probably sourced fairly locally. O'Connor observed in her 1966 excavation report that the walls of the church displayed several different types of stonework, indicating different dates of construction. Strangely, she also stated that the colour of the stonework was mainly reddish but changed in different lights.[101] She was possibly referring here to the different types of red and grey granites which were used in the construction of the walls. It is clear however, that the lower courses of stonework consist of large and small stones making a distinctly earlier medieval pattern, while the upper portions are mainly constructed with smaller, flat stones and may have been built up at a later date. The stonework employed in the lower sections of the south and west walls certainly appear to be of a much earlier date than that which is visible on the upper portions of the walls. It is possible that the lower courses of stonework at Faughart could be defined as 'pseudo-cyclopean' in style, as an examination of the masonry indicates that, at least in some portions, it conforms to Ó Carragáin's characterisation of Irish cyclopean masonry which he describes as '...not solely characterized by the use of large blocks. Many examples comprise modest but irregular blocks, individually-shaped and carefully-fitted in rising and dipping courses.'[102]

An examination of the stonework on the exterior of this western gable reveals that the wall has been bonded at some stage by more modern mortar. It is not certain when this repair work was carried out, although it is possible that it could have been conducted in 1966, as O'Connor mentioned that some modern mortar was applied to St. Brigid's Well to repair some fallen stonework.[103] However, sixty years earlier, in 1906, Howard had noted that:

> *At present the whole of the west end is open, except for a few feet on each side, which have been recently done up and pointed, and the angles squared, without any of the old characteristics being retained.*[104]

So it is more probable that it was at this stage, at an unknown date before 1906, that the repair work on the west wall of the church was also carried out.

The remaining portions of both the north and south walls clearly demonstrate evidence of at least two separate phases of building, and Davies noted patching in both

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[101] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 125.
[102] Ó CARRAGÁIN, T., 'Habitual Masonry Styles and the Local Organisation of Church Building in Early Medieval Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 105, Section C, (2005), p. 101. See Plate 5.
[103] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 125.
[104] HOWARD, (1906), pp. 70-73.

walls in 1941.[105] When the church was surveyed in 1966 for the *Inventory* and *Survey* it was noted that the south wall was particularly interesting, because of the fact that the nave had been altered and that straight joints at its east end indicated infilling.[106] As well as this, O'Connor recorded that a portion of the south wall located immediately west of the mid-wall, and which had been concealed below ground level until the excavation, had been carefully blocked at some time with large stones of equal size.[107] Over forty years later, however, none of these features are now visible. The evidence for the reconstruction work which was conducted in the north wall is less extensive and harder to gauge than that which took place in the south wall; however there are some clear indicators of different phases of building here also. It must be noted, however, that the examination of the north wall was even more severely hampered than the south by the growth of ivy, although it was clear to Buckley and Sweetman that the west end of the north wall of the nave was bonded to the north end of the cross-wall, and therefore they had to have been contemporary. The north chancel wall on the other hand was only butted against the cross-wall and was therefore later than the nave.[108]

In her excavation report O'Connor stated that a considerable 'mid-wall collapse' had been completely removed.[109]This is very unfortunate because it means that any portions of dressed stone which could be used to facilitate dating that portion of the church was not on site at the time of Buckley & Sweetman's survey. Furthermore, O'Connor did not state whether or not the fallen segments of stone were examined in detail, or indeed what happened to them. However, according to MacIomhair 'the immense quantity of common stones turned up in the course of the work was disposed of by building them as a wall around the inner perimeter of the graveyard.'[110] It is therefore likely that the stones from the mid-wall collapse were utilized in the same manner. As noted by Buckley & Sweetman,[111] Faughart Church, as it survives today is unfortunately featureless, showing no evidence of an east window, piscina, sedelia or any other architectural feature which could aid the dating process.[112]

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[105] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.
[106]BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p .230.
[107] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 125.
[108] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 231.
[109] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 125.
[110] MACIOMHAIR, (1966), p. 115. See Plate 6.
[111] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p .230.
[112] LEASK, H.G., *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings, Volume II, Gothic Architecture to A.D. 1400,* (Dundalk, 1958), pp. 140-143; see Plate 7.



Plate 5: Interior view of the portion of the south wall of the church which adjoins the cross-wall, and which demonstrates how the lower courses of stonework consist mainly of large granite boulders while the upper sections are mostly made up of thin slabs of greywacke.



Plate 6: The northern portion of the enclosing wall at Faughart graveyard which was constructed from fallen stone which was cleared from the interior of the church after the renovation and excavation of 1965-66.



Plate 7: The interior of the featureless chancel/priest's residence at Faughart Church as viewed from the west. The remains of the cross-wall can also be seen in the foreground of the picture.

In 1941 Davies lamented the fact that he was severely hampered in his endeavours to survey the medieval churches of Louth because many of them were enveloped by ivy.[113] Indeed, it appears that at many of these church sites nothing much has changed in the course of almost seventy years, and at Faughart the church structure is still ivy-clad, a fact which has made it impossible for the present researcher to examine the body of the church in detail, and particularly the windows in the north and south walls which are completely obscured. However, the ivy at Faughart is more than just a nuisance to the surveyor; it poses a real threat to the future survival of the church itself; if ivy is allowed a free reign of growth on a medieval building it can penetrate the mortar and cracks of the masonry until it begins to dislodge sound stonework.[114]

8. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

a. WINDOWS

The remaining portions of both the north and south walls clearly demonstrate evidence of at least two separate phases of building, and Davies noted patching in both walls in 1941.[115] According to him, there were window opes extant in each wall at this point but unfortunately they are no longer visible either internally or externally due to the obstructive organic growth on the church. At the moment it is possible to identify the position of only the window ope in the north wall, while it is impossible to discern where the window in the south wall may have been located. Fortunately, however, Davies recorded that they both appeared to have been constructed with ashlar internal jambs although the external jambs were missing in 1941.[116] Considering the structural evidence recorded by Davies at this point, it is certainly strange that Howard in 1906 wrote that

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[113] DAVIES, (1941), p. 7. See for example, MACIOMHAIR, D., 'Townland Survey of County Louth: Townland of Stickillen', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XIII, Number 4, (1956), p. 400.

[113] IBID, pp. 400-01.

[114] WALSH, A., *A Preliminary Report on Monuments of Archaeological Interest in County Louth,* An Foras Forbartha Teoranta, The National Institute for Physical Planning and Construction Research, (Dublin, 1972), p. 10; DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT, *Conservation Guidelines, No. 4, Mortars, Pointing and Renders,* Conservation Pamphlet Series, (1996), p. 6; Slattery, D., *Stonework in Irish Churches,* (The Heritage Council, 1998), p.1;http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/publications/ecclesiastical/stonework.html; http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/Heritage/ArchitecturalHeritage.

[115] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.

[116] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7. It is presently impossible to photograph these ashlar jambs as they are covered in ivy. However in the event of this ivy being cleared it would be important to determine whether or not this ashlar shows evidence of diagonal tooling which would indicate a twelfth- fourteenth century date of construction. FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009).

there was "no sign of a window in the south wall."[117] Of course, the reason for this statement may possibly lie in the fact that in 1906 the southern window was obscured by organic growth, just as it is today.

According to Davies, the jambs of this window suggested quite an early date of construction to him as they were not dressed and were composed of granite boulders similar to those located in the body of the lower segment of the wall.[118] Like the window in the south wall, that in the north wall is located high up on the wall and was constructed of rough granite boulders. This window was described briefly by Buckley and Sweetman, who were of the opinion that it was an original feature. O'Connor however, thought that there was a possibility that these window stones may have been reset at a later date. [119] Sweetman, however, was of the opinion that the window embrasure in the north wall, which was still visible at the time of his survey, was likely to date to the twelfth century.[120]

b. DOORWAYS

Buckley, Sweetman and Condit have all remarked that the remains of the cross-wall between the nave and chancel appeared to have a jamb at the south terminal indicating a doorway. [121] However, the main doorway of Faughart church as it survives today is located in the west gable and has an opening measuring 2.9m in width. This is obviously too big to be the original entrance, which was probably only c. 0.90m wide[122] as is indicated by two rough granite blocks located in the present entrance. When Buckley and Sweetman surveyed the site they were of the opinion that the position of this doorway in the western wall and the type of wall construction with large rough granite boulders were reminiscent of the twelfth-century buildings at Glendalough, Co. Wicklow, and some other Irish monastic settlements. [123] Further evidence of reconstruction work in the south wall is evident about 4.2m to the west of the cross-wall at the approximate point

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[117] HOWARD, (1906), p. 70.

[118] DAVIES, (1941), p. 7. Although it is presently impossible to photograph these ashlar jambs as they are covered in ivy. However in the event of this ivy being cleared it would be important to determine whether or not this ashlar shows evidence of diagonal tooling which would indicate a twelfth- fourteenth century date of construction. FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009).

[119] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 23; O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 125.

[120] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2.

[121] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p .230; CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2; see Plate 3.

[122] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 231; see Plate 8.

[123] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 231; CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2.



Plate 8: A view of the northern angle of the west wall of Faughart Church which also shows a part of the western doorway.

where the window jamb is estimated to be located. Almost directly under this jamb the wall has been broken out and refaced at the west side, indicating that there was a later doorway inserted at this point. Buckley and Sweetman have surmised that it must have been a "relatively modern doorway". However the documentary evidence indicates that the church was finally abandoned at some date between 1690, when James Cubet was the last recorded curate of the church,[124] and 1744 when Isaac Butler recorded the church as 'all in ruins'.[125] There is no evidence to suggest that the church was ever re-used in any sort of capacity again, except of course for burials. They were, however, correct in the assumption that it cannot have been an original feature of the church since it lies directly under the remains of the early window. [126]

As already discussed, the positioning of the original doorway at Faughart in the western gable of the building would also corroborate a twelfth century date of construction for the nave of this church. In 1906 Howard noted that a local man had informed him that he could remember a time when 'the west end door was still to be seen, and that it was small and arched.'[127] It is known that prior to the twelfth century the rectangular and flat-headed lintelled doorways of many early medieval churches were located in their west walls,[128] however, it has also been established that by the twelfth century the technology existed for these church doorways to be round-arched also, in a similar manner to the rounded doorways which were often to be found in round towers.[129]

c. STONE CARVINGS

In 1912 H. Morris made a description of one particularly interesting stone carving which was published in the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal* for that year along with an accompanying rubbing which he himself had made of the stone.[130] He described it as follows:

A grave length to north-west of the little circular mound on which stands the pedestal of a cross –probably another of the High Crosses of Ireland – there is, in Faughart graveyard, a monumental slab of limestone on which is carved intaglio the figure of a bishop, in full Episcopal panoply, with mitre and crosier, and with his right hand raised in the act of benediction. Underneath the feet of the figure there is a

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[124] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,*, p. 10; LESLIE, (1911), pp. 300-02.
[125] DEANE, (1922), p. 100.
[126] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 231.
[127] HOWARD, (1906), p. 70.
[128] HARBISON, (1992a), p. 20; O'KEEFFE, (2003b), p. 71.
[129] O'KEEFFE, (2003b), p. 83.
[130] See Figure 9 & Plate 9.

representation of a serpent with tongue barbed and protruding in an attitude of fight, from which we may reasonably infer that the figure represents St. Patrick. The details of the dress are executed very finely the lace on the alb and ornamentation on the vestments being clearly seen.[131]

He further explained that the stone was 4ft. 4" long, 7" wide and 2 1/2" deep, perfectly chiseled with rectangular sides like a well-planned timber plank. He stated that the figure itself measured 1 ft. 8 1/2" in length and that it was 7" wide occupying the whole width of the stone. He noted that there was no inscription, not even a word or letter beyond the figure. On the top of the stone he recorded that there was a little groove cut something over an inch long in which he thought that a small metallic cross had at one time been fixed. He was of the opinion that the stone had been used to adorn an unmarked grave, but he did not believe that this had been its primary use. The main reason for this was that had it been primarily designed as a gravestone that the mason who carved the figure would have added a commemorative inscription for which there was ample room, as approximately 2 1/2" feet of the stone was left bare and plain from the serpent downward.[132]

In 1912 Morris was unable to offer an accurate date of construction for this stone other than to say that;

> *Judging by the perfect chiseling of the stone and the fine carving of the dress it looks comparatively modern, but the artist's handling of the feet-which are bare – and the hands is uncouth and reminds one of the sculptors of the Monasterboice and other high crosses.* [133]

By the time that Davies was surveying Faughart Church in 1941 this carving had been removed from the graveyard and was on view in the National Museum of Ireland,[134] where it is still on display.[135] Described in the NMI file as being found 'half way between the west pier of entrance gate and the "wart stone", the stone at the centre of a round mound as mentioned by Butler. This slab, according to Fr.

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[131] MORRIS, H., 'A Faughart Monument', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume III, Number 1, (1912), p. 29.
[132] MORRIS, (1912), p. 29.
[133] IBID, p. 29.
[134] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7; NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, 1935: 167, Faughart Slab.
[135] See Plate 9.



Figure 9: Rubbing of the carving of a bishop/St. Patrick which was found in Faughart Graveyard and is now in the National Museum.



Plate 9: The stone carving which was removed from Faughart graveyard in 1935 and which is now on display in the National Museum of Ireland.

MacIomhair, was part of the altar of the church.'[136] Davies thought that it looked 'comparatively modern' but added that

> *...certain details are clumsy and yet the style is less grotesque than most Irish rustic work of the eighteenth century. The figure may therefore date back to the seventeenth century.* [137]

In 1967 MacIomhair included this carving in his townland survey of Faughart Upper, stating that the National Museum had acquired it in 1935 from one Fr. McKee, who was parish priest of Faughart from 1933-44. He further briefly stated that:

> *It has been attributed to the fifteenth century; but the chasuble on the figure represents an advanced stage in a process of retrenchment of that garment which only began in Italy in the sixteenth century. John Halpenny heard that it this stone was part of the altar of the church* [138]

He did not elaborate any further upon the dating of this stone and so its origin and function remain uncertain. Although Morris was of the opinion that it was probably not originally intended as a gravestone, due to the absence of an inscription, this function still cannot be ruled out completely. Memorial slabs bearing only a mask or face, with a cross in place of a full length effigy are not uncommon in the later medieval period as these types of memorial slab were much cheaper to produce than a full length effigy, and also have called for much less skill on the part of the carver.[139]

9. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERY

Due to the fact that Faughart Graveyard was only closed for public burial in 1955,[140] it is unlikely that it will become a candidate for excavation anytime soon, a problem which reoccurs with many medieval graveyards in Louth.[141] Unfortunately, the number of Irish excavations in cemeteries have been minimal, so it has been necessary here to rely mainly on evidence from English excavations. The foremost reason for this is that many Irish churches fell into ruin and dilapidation during the medieval period, and so

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[136] NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, 1935: 167, Faughart Slab.
[137] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.
[138] MACIOMHAIR, (1966), p. 116.
[139] LEASK, H.G., 'A Cenotaph of "Strongbow's" Daughter at New Ross, Co. Wexford,' *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Volume LXXVIII, Part 1, (1948), p. 67.
[140] Faughart Historical Society, pers. comm., (May, 2007).
[141] WALSH, (1972), p. 12; BARRY, T.B, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland,* (London & New York, 1989), p. 139. For example at Castletown Graveyard which was only closed for public burial in 1956. See ROSS, N. & WILSON, M., (eds), *Tombstone Inscriptions in Castletown Graveyard Dundalk,* The Old Dundalk Society, (Dundalk, 1992), p. 3.

in many cases burials have taken place inside them in post medieval times, [142]a trend which, according to Champneys, was 'not consistent with reverence either for the church or for the dead.'[143] This is certainly the case at Faughart, where the burials which have taken place inside the main body of the church will surely prohibit excavation there for a long time to come.

Furthermore, when it comes to the excavation of medieval churches here in Ireland, there are a number of other related problems thrown into the equation. In the small number of instances where excavations do occur, they are often not research driven, but rather, are a by-product of modern development. This is a trend which has also impacted upon Faughart where the excavation of 1966 was carried out in tandem with the building of a new carpark at the site.[144] In fact this is a problem which has also affected excavation of medieval church sites in England.[145] A third dilemma has been highlighted by Barry, who points out the drawbacks of those ecclesiastical excavations in Ireland which have tended to treat the church site in isolation from contiguous patterns of settlement.[146]In the event of any larger scale excavation ever taking place at Faughart, this is something which would have to be taken into serious consideration, as it is undoubted that the remains of a much more extensive early medieval monastic site lie below ground in the environs of this cemetery, invisible to the naked eye. Therefore, an excavation which only investigated the immediate vicinity of the church itself would not provide an accurate picture of the full extent of medieval ecclesiastical settlement at Faughart. A much more extensive excavation than that which was conducted in 1966 would be preferable and much more suited to providing evidence for the key segments of information which, according to Barker, are crucial to an optimal excavation; periods of occupation, types of structure, burial practices, social units, past environments.[147]

Excavations of medieval graveyards have indicated that they are most often stratigraphically complex, sometimes being stratified both horizontally and vertically, and, considering the fact that Faughart has probably been in use as a burial site for upwards of one thousand years, it is certain that it also is a stratigraphically intricate site. It is likely that if excavated Faughart graveyard would be shown to have contained

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[142] BARRY, (1989), p. 139.
[143] CHAMPNEYS, A., *Irish Ecclesiastical Architecture,* (London, 1910),. p. 204.
[144] See Plate 10.
[145] ROBERTS, C., 'The Biological Evidence, or What the people Say', in *Church Archaeology: Research Directions for the Future*, ed. by J. BLAIR & C. PYRAH, CBA Research Report 104, (York, 1996), p. 166.
[146] BARRY, (1989), p. 139.
[147] BARKER, P., *Techniques of Archaeological Excavation,* Third Edition, (London, 1993), pp. 11-12.



Plate 10: A south-eastern view of Faughart church and graveyard from the carpark which was constructed in 1966.

thousands of intercutting burials, with the later burials having interrupted and damaged the earlier ones.[148]It is also probable that the stratigraphy of different archaeological levels not containing burials will also have been damaged, as was the case at Clontuskert Priory in Co. Galway.[149]

As previously mentioned, it is known that at Faughart burials have taken place within the main body of the church interior, a practice which can cause severe damage to the body of the church itself, while also destroying layers of archaeological deposits and hindering necessary maintenance works.[150] This problem has been further exacerbated at Faughart where eighteenth century graves are located immediately adjacent to the exterior of the east wall, not only making any examination of this portion of the church extremely difficult, but also possibly undermining and damaging the remains of this wall.[151]

a. GRAVE SLABS/STONES

Given the overall scarcity of excavated evidence for burial practices at Faughart graveyard it is necessary to consider the evidence offered by the physical remains above ground in the form of headstones and grave memorials which have survived at this site. Most of the visible graves on the ground at Faughart date to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and reveal little evidence of its long history of burial which spans several centuries. Considering the fact that many of the tombstones at Faughart graveyard are now illegible it is fortunate that MacIomhair made a list of inscriptions as they appeared on 31st of October 1967. This forty year old list is an invaluable tool in the study of Faughart graveyard. MacIomhair noted that in 1967 a few of the inscriptions were partly illegible due to damage to the stones themselves. Others were difficult to decipher because of weathering, or in the case of certain eighteenth-century granite stones, of a granulation of the surface which had severely blurred the outline of the lettering. Interestingly for the purposes of this study, he also recorded the existence in the eastern

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[148] O'BRIEN & ROBERTS, (1996), p. 159.
[149] BARRY, (1989), p. 151.
[150] WALSH, (1972), p. 12; HARBISON, P., *The Archaeology of Ireland,* (London, Sydney & Toronto, 1976), p. 66.
[151] However, it should also be noted at this point that while multi-layered burial in a cemetery enclosed within a confined space can present great difficulties and limitations in interpretation, it can also be turned into a research advantage. This has been the case at some English sites where O'Brien has determined that at Winchester, York Minster, and at also St. Peter's, Barton-on-Humber, sequences of medieval and post-medieval burial can be matched to changes in fashion in the use of coffins, markers and customs.
See O'BRIEN, (1996), p. 162.

end of the graveyard of a number of small and stubby 'penal' type crosses, as well as incised crosses with splayed ends, which he reckoned to be medieval or earlier.[152]

The forty years which have elapsed since MacIomhair's recording of the tombstone inscriptions at Faughart, coupled with the neglect of the site, have taken a severe toll upon the tombstones. For example, in 1967 he recorded 57 eighteenth century gravestones, while the present researcher could locate only one, the McKinley stone, which is inscribed with the dates 1795 and 1797 and which appears to still be maintained by family members. A map of the graves which was drawn up by MacIomhair in 1967 can be viewed on the west wall of the church. The eastern portion of the graveyard, within which MacIomhair found the earlier 'penal'[153] and incised crosses, some of which he believed to be medieval is now completely overgrown.

Although there are some older stones discernible in this part of the graveyard the crosses are nowhere to be seen and if they have survived they must now be completely submerged beneath the undergrowth. There are a number of other small and badly weathered gravestones dotted throughout the cemetery, some of which could possibly date to the later medieval period, but they are impossible to date. There is, however, one interesting stone surviving in the southern segment of the graveyard and which was not mentioned by Davies, O'Connor, Buckley and Sweetman, or MacIomhair. It is almost directly adjacent to the western corner of the southern wall of the church, is flanked by two similar uninscribed stones, while a smaller more modern stone simply inscribed 'RODDY' is located to the front of it. This stone is crudely inscribed with a simple incised cross with four splayed ends, which bears a striking resemblance to the description given by MacIomhair of the splayed incised crosses in the eastern end of the

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[152] Out of a total of 217 gravestones recorded by MacIomhair, 0.45% dated to the fourteenth century, 26.3% dated to the eighteenth century, 41% dated to the nineteenth century, 15.2% dated to the twentieth century, while 17% were undateable. See MACIOMHAIR, D., *Tombstone Inscriptions in Fochart Graveyard, Co. Louth,* (Dundalk, 1967); http://www.faughart.com/inscriptions-page5467.html

[153] Although the name 'penal' has obvious associations with the seventeenth century penal laws against Roman Catholics in Ireland, these crosses are actually thought to date back to before this period. For example, a group of penal crosses ranging in date from 1535 to 1823, the period when Ireland was emerging from penal restriction, are held in the National Museum of Ireland. They are crudely made wooden crucifixes with the symbols of the Passion together with the cock-and-pot motif. This motif is very common and appears on nearly every example of the group. The cross arms are remarkable short in every case, not as was once believed, for concealment during times of Catholic persecution, but rather because they were carved from solid wood and longer arms had a tendency to break off. In any case, the stylistic and symbolic elements of these penal crosses constitute a considerable element of post-medieval Irish religious art, and as such fall outside the remit of this study. See http://www.ntnim.ie/museum/penalx.html ; LUCAS, A.T., ' "Penal Crucifixes"', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XIII, Number 2, (1954), pp. 145 &170; http://www.dublincastle.ie/history9.html; http://www.rosaryworkshop.com/MUSEUM-Hunt-Penal-Rosaries.html#PENAL%20CROSSES.

graveyard.[154] This stone could possibly be of medieval date and it is certainly strange that it was not recorded by MacIomhair in1967.

b. HIGH CROSS

The fact that Faughart Church and its associated archaeological monuments was one of only three medieval parish churches of Louth to have been included in Wright's *Louthiana* attests to the fact that it must still have been regarded as an important ecclesiastical site as late as the eighteenth century. In his recording of the archaeological monuments of Faughart, Wright made a drawing of Faughart Church which appears to be taken from the north-eastern side and which includes St. Brigid's Well in the foreground, the church in the background, the motte to the far right with two mounds situated in between the church and the motte. The church appears to be overgrown in this drawing in much the same way as it is today, and, although this picture is obviously not drawn to an accurate scale, it is important in that that it allows us an insight into the state of the round tower and high cross remains in the 1740s.[155] Even more important is a set of five smaller drawings of the two mounds which were made by Wright at the same time, and which were published with an accompanying description in which he described the two monuments as follows:

> *Fig. 1, and 2. represents the Plan and View of St. Bridget's Stone, having a rais'd work about it, in the Form of an Horse-shoe; at A upon a rough rocky Flint, those who were enjoyn'd Penance, as I was inform'd by one of their Priests, used to pray upon their bare Knees till the Blood run around about them. Fig. 3. and 4. is St. Bridget's Pillar, rais'd upon two circular and concentrick Steps, around which the Nuns of the Convent used to go upon their Knees upon particular Occasions; sometimes around the lesser, and sometimes around the larger Circles, as their Penitence required."* [156]

Figures 1 and 2 of Wright's Plate XX, in which he depicts the horse-shoe shaped Mound II, the possible site of a round tower, are very informative because they give an indication of the degree to which the ground level of soil in the graveyard has risen since the 1740s. When Wright's illustrations of the two large stones which stand at the entrance to Mound II are compared with a photograph of how they look today,[157] it seems that they were at once time much taller and that their true height has been obscured by a rise in ground

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[154] See Plate 11.
[155] See Figure 10.
[156] WRIGHT, Book III, Plate XX, (2000), p. 19; see Figure 11.
[157] See Plate 12.

level at the site. Furthermore, it would appear that these stones are definitely not in their original position and they are likely to have also formed part of the high cross as they are quite similar in form to the high cross base which is located upon Mound I. Figures 3 and 4 of Wright's Plate XX which illustrate Mound I, offer very remarkable views of this monument, because they clearly show two stone perimeters encircling the mound, only one of which can now be partially viewed, due to the build up of soil and organic growth at the site.

It is interesting that even in the 1740s the two mounds in the graveyard were known locally as *St. Bridget's Stone* and *St. Bridget's Pillar,* a fact which testifies to the deep association of this site with the cult and relics of St. Brigid, whose pilgrimage probably dates back to the early medieval period and which has endured to this day. It is obvious that Wright was completely unaware of the true significance of these two mounds as the possible sites of a high cross and round tower, as was the unidentified priest who informed him that their function was solely connected to the cult of St. Brigid, requiring repentant sinners to make continuous penitential rounds of the site until their bare knees bled from excessive kneeling on the stones.

In 1966 O'Connor excavated one of the mounds at Faughart Church, known locally as *St. Brigid's Pillar,* which she referred to as Mound I in her excavation report. She described it as follows:

> *...a nearly round flattened dome-shape mound edged by curved flat surface Newry granite curb-stones. Slightly off the centre of the mound is a socketed base stone of roughly truncated pyramid shape, with a modern cross set in the inner of the two sockets. The boulders of the shoulder of the mound were visible through the new grass.*[158]

As previously mentioned, there were no photographs of this excavation published with the excavation report, except for the two photographs of the cist burial located in Cutting 2. However, it seems likely that it is this mound, and not Mound II that Lalor pinpointed as the possible site of the base of the round tower at Faughart.[159] Mound I as it stands today appears exactly as O'Connor described it in 1966, with the fragments of the high cross located just off the centre of the mound with some fragments of a more

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[158] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 126.

[159] LALOR, B., *The Irish Round Tower. Origins and Architecture Explored,* (Dublin, 1999), pp. 184-85. A comparison of Lalor's photograph, with that of this author demonstrate that they are very alike, apart from the fact that there is no additional cross fragment placed on top of the high cross base in Lalor's shot. He could however be using a photograph which was taken before 1966.



Plate 11: An unidentified gravestone located directly adjacent to the western corner of the south wall of Faughart Church and which is inscribed with a basic cross with splayed ends.



Figure 10: 'The Faughard' as depicted by Thomas Wright in 1748.
(WRIGHT, T., *Louthiana: or, An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland*, Books I, II & III, Millennium Reprint of the First 1748 London Edition, (Dundalk, 2000)).



Plate 12: The two stones positioned on Mound II in Faughart graveyard.

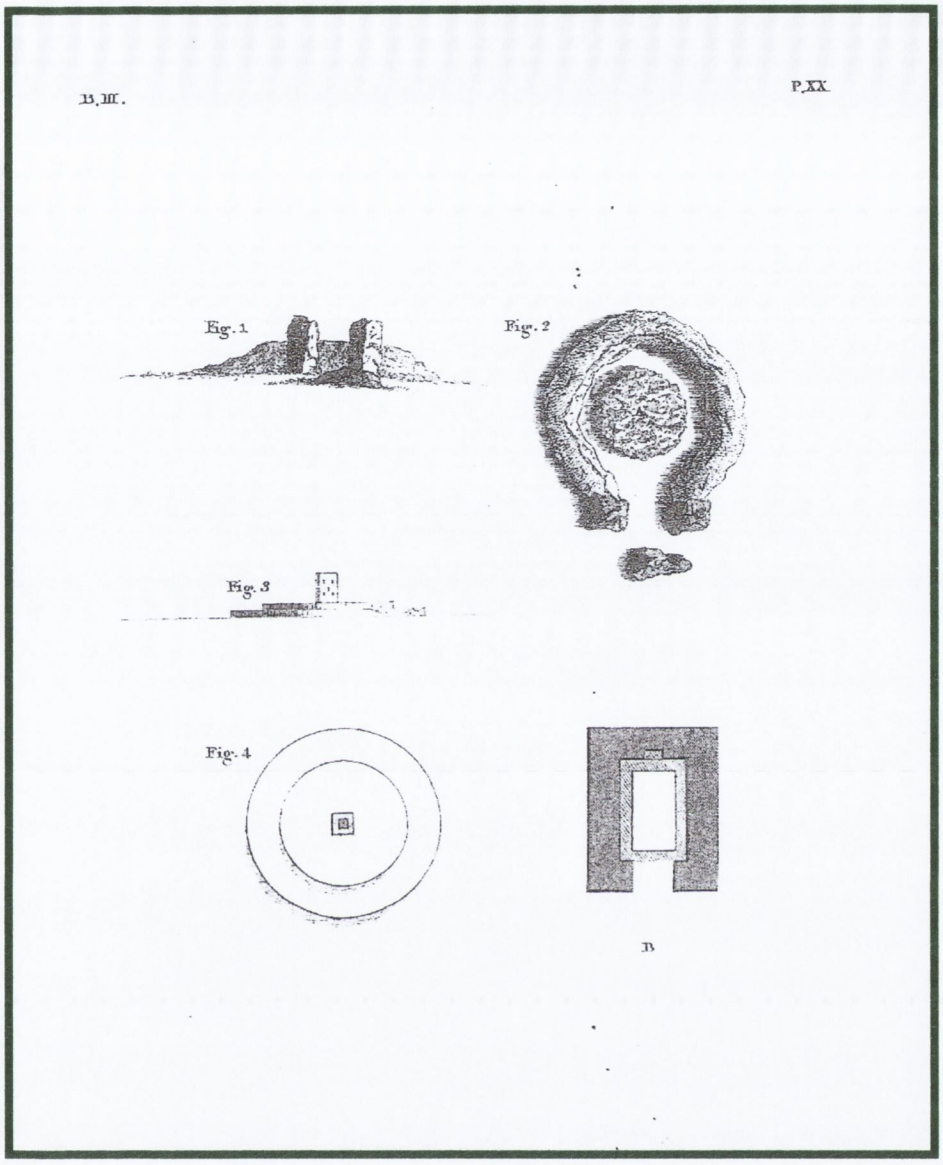


Figure 11: Mound I and Mound II at Faughart Graveyard as depicted by Thomas Wright in 1748.

(WRIGHT, T., *Louthiana: or, An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland*, Books I, II & III, Millennium Reprint of the First 1748 London Edition, (Dundalk, 2000)).

modern cross perched on top.[160] In fact, the 'modern' cross described by O'Connor in her excavation report is interesting in itself, and it is possible that it is medieval or post medieval in date. There are two pieces of stone inserted into the high cross base, and while the featureless fragment slotted in at the north side of the base appears to be relatively modern, and can be compared to similar cross fragments located within the church itself, the cross-shaped stone located to the south side of the base appears to be much older.[161]

Indeed, it would appear that this particular cross fragment may have been one of the "stubby 'penal' type crosses" recorded in 1967 by MacIomhair in the eastern end of Faughart graveyard, and which he believed dated to the medieval period.[162] It would be interesting to discover if indeed this cross fragment was taken from the eastern portion of the graveyard, but unfortunately there is no way of determining this. Although, if it was known when Lalor's photograph was taken, then perhaps a date for the re-positioning of the fragments upon the high cross base could be given. It would seem, however, that Lalor must have used a photograph which was taken some time before the excavation of 1966 in his 1999 publication, because O'Connor clearly describes these cross fragments positioned upon the cross base at this date.[163]

In the late 1990s an interesting fragment of what may have been part of the original high cross was recovered during the restoration of a small portion of the graveyard wall at Faughart.[164] The fragment, which measures 34cm by 31cm, consists of a portion of carved granite, representing the central part of a small high cross. On one side there is a prominent boss, 10cm in diameter, extending *c.* 6cm proud of the granite surface. The decoration on the other side consists of a circular area, 14cm in diameter, defined by a ring 2cm wide, with a central 'cupmark'. [165] This fragment is now held in the Louth County Museum in Dundalk.

In 1941, Davies noted the presence of "St. Brigid's Stone", and, "the rough socketed base of a high cross." [166] He was seemingly referring to Mound II when he mentions St. Brigid's Stone, and although he does not elaborate upon the location of high

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[160] See Plates 13 & 14.
[161] See Plates 15, 16, 17 & 18.
[162] MACIOMHAIR, (1967), in http://www.faughart.com/inscriptions-page5467.html.
[163] The fact that the south-facing cross-shaped fragment is too small to stand alone in the high cross base and appears to be propped up by the north-facing fragment would also indicate that this segment is a more modern piece of stone solely used to secure the positioning of the penal cross.
[164] See Plate 19.
[165] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 3.
[166] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.

cross base, it can only be presumed that it was at located at Mound I at this point. Over thirty years later, in a 1972 *Preliminary Report on Monuments of Archaeological Interest in County Louth,* Walsh briefly described the high cross base as follows:

> *Faughart Upper – Map Name: Cross; 4:10:6. Description: A plain cross-base. In graveyard to west of ruined church. Grade C, miscellaneous medieval monument.*[167]

In 1912 and 1920, Morris and Tempest respectively, had also noted the presence of the high cross site at Faughart. Morris commented that 'the little circular mound on which stands the pedestal of a cross-probably another of the high crosses of Ireland,'[168] while Tempest noted the presence of 'a curious low mound, in shape like a horse-shoe, whose use or significance is lost to us. Nearer the centre stands the circular base of an old cross.'[169] As neither of them mentioned the presence of the high cross fragments which were located during the restoration of part of the graveyard wall in the 1990s, it can only be presumed that they had already been moved from the high cross site at an unknown date prior to 1912, although the fact that Wright had also made no mention whatsoever of these fragments in 1748 would seem indicate that that they had already been moved by then. However, just four years earlier, in his 1744 description of Faughart church, Butler had noted that 'there has been to the West of the church a large fine Cross which is pulled down and broken'.[170]In light of this description it is possible that the broken fragments of the high cross at Faughart were removed and relocated at some stage between 1744 and 1748, which would also explain why Howard made no mention of the cross in his 1906 report.

Throughout the course of her 1966 excavation at Faughart, O'Connor cut a trench ranging east to west to provide a cross-section of Mound I. She found that the feature she described as a "standing stone" rather than a high cross base, along with the large curved kerbstone of the mound, rested upon a depth of soil disturbed by modern burial which continued down to boulder clay. Resting on the kerbstone and heaped up to form the mound profile she discovered round boulders covered by old turf, while larger roughly shaped boulders formed an inner ring at the shoulder of the mound. Within this inner ring, over a layer of fine leaf mould, lay a fill of dark earthy soil with sharp flat building rubble stones containing a fragment of modern crockery, under the base-stone of the

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[167]WALSH, (1972), p. 35.
[168] MORRIS, (1912), p. 29.
[169] TEMPEST, (1920), p. 96.
[170] DEANE, (1922), p. 100.



Plate 13: Mound I at Faughart Graveyard and the underlying curved curbstones.



Plate 14: A close-up of the curbstones surrounding Mound I.



Plate 15: South side of high cross base base.



Plate 16: East side of high cross

Plate 17: West side of high cross base.



Plate 18: North side of high cross base.



cross. Unfortunately she noted that "time did not permit the removal of the large kerb and the inner ring stones to examine the ground surface upon which the mound rests."[171] Even so however there are some conclusions to be drawn from this brief excavation. The impression in the flat top of the granite base into which the later cross fragments have been inserted, appears to be a tenon joint that most likely served as the socket for the original high cross. Furthermore, the fragment of modern pottery which was recovered from directly underneath the pillar stone, indicates that the pillar must have been relocated to this position within the graveyard in modern times,[172]and so it must therefore be presumed that the original high cross may not have been positioned at this precise location.

The remains of the high cross base at Faughart have not been discussed or even acknowledged by Henry, Scarry and Richardson, Harbison or Stalley, all of whom have only recognised the sites at Dromiskin, Monasterboice and Termonfeckin for Co. Louth.[173] Although there is no absolute dating for many of the high crosses in Ireland, it has been found that the type of site on which they occur often indicates an early date, [174] and this is certainly the case at Faughart. It has also been determined that they frequently occur at the sites of early monasteries where no structural remains have survived[175], and again, this is the case at Faughart where the main evidence for the existence of the early monastic enclosure survives in the form of crop marks which can only be viewed in aerial photographs of the site. The plain cupped ornamentation which has survived upon the cross fragments which were uncovered at Faughart may indicate that the stone cross at this site was of a relatively simple unornamented design,[176] and the typological evidence offered by the surviving fragments of this cross, particularly the 14cm circular area defined by ring ornamentation and a central cupmark, indicate that it was possibly an early ninth century cross with no iconography.

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[171] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 127.
[172] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2.
[173]HENRY, F., *Irish High Crosses,* (Dublin, 1964); RICHARDSON, H. & SCARRY, J., *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses,* (Cork, 1990); HARBISON, P., *Irish High Crosses with the Figure Sculptures Explained,* (Drogheda, 1994); STALLEY, R.A., *Irish High Crosses,* (Dublin, 1996). It should be noted however that Richardson and Scarry, do acknowledge in their Introduction, p. 9, that their study is not intended as a complete catalogue.
[174] RICHARDSON & SCARRY, (1990), p. 14.
[175] IBID, p. 14.
[176] See Plate 19.

c. ROUND TOWER

The possible site of the round tower has been known locally for many decades as *St. Brigid's Bed,* obviously due to the deep-rooted myth that St. Brigid once lived at Faughart church. In O'Connor's excavation report of 1966 this site (Mound II) was described as a horseshoe shaped mound with a roughly shaped rectangular stone tapering up to a point at each foot of the shoe.[177] In the round central loop of the shoe was a large flat round black stone with the pock marked surface characteristic of underwater erosion. The inner facing stones of the mound were visible in places on the north side of the mound.[178] For the purposes of the excavation a trench, orientated north-south was laid out to provide a radial cross-section of Mound II.[179]

Although the excavation of Mound II was only a partial one and cannot therefore be considered to be conclusive, it is very informative nonetheless and it is important that the results of this examination now be taken into consideration. O'Connor found that the body of the mound consisted of sterile clay soil with stones through it, resting on the boulder clay. Over the body of the mound lay a considerable layer of old humus, and over this lay a thick layer of old turf. She also discovered a few bits of charcoal scattered over the surface of the clay mound, as well as a few bits of charcoal and an animal tooth immediately over the boulder clay. In the mound body O'Connor discovered what appeared to be the curving edge of a pit dug into the boulder clay, with flat stones at intervals resting partly on the boulder clay and partly on the fill of the pit, a very loose dark layer of humus. Regrettably this feature was not investigated fully, and O'Connor was of the opinion that it seemed best to leave it to be approached as a full unit at a later date. [180] Unfortunately however, a more comprehensive excavation of Mound II has never taken place, although there were some significant finds made which can assist with the chronological dating of the site as a whole.

It was discovered that the upright stones which formed the inner face of the mound circle rested in the layer of mound clay. The stones on the crest of the mound rested against each other starting from the facing stones and lay completely in the old turf layer, and it was among these stones that O'Connor discovered a crude stone spindle

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[177] See Figure 6.
[178] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 126.
[179] See Figure 12.
[180] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 127. See also Figures 12a, 12b & 12c.

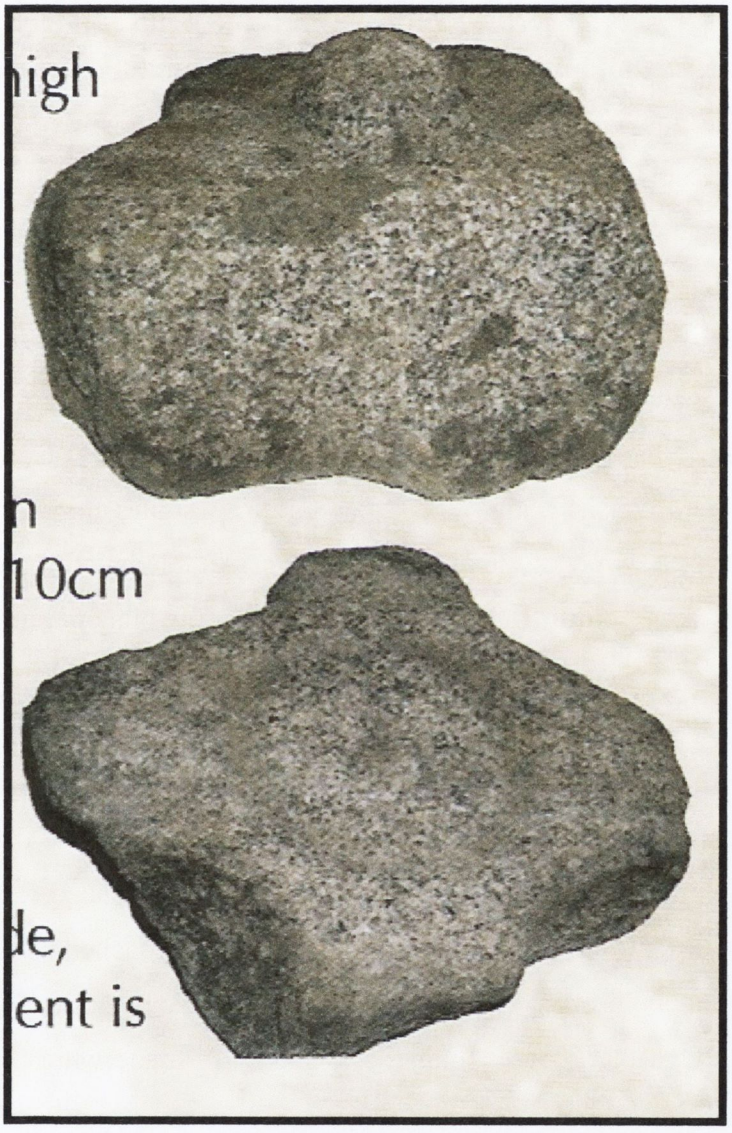


Plate 19: Views of both sides of the cross fragment from Faughart graveyard which is now held in the Louth County Museum. The fragment measures 34cm by 31cm. On one side there is a prominent boss, 10cm in diameter, extending *c.* 6cm proud of the granite surface. The decoration on the other side consists of a circular area, 14cm in diameter, defined by a ring 2cm wide, with a central 'cupmark'

(CONDIT, T. & BUCKLEY V.M., 'Faughart, Co. Louth – the Hill of Heroes, Saints, Battles and Boundaries', Archaeology *Ireland,* Heritage Guide Number 37, (2007)).

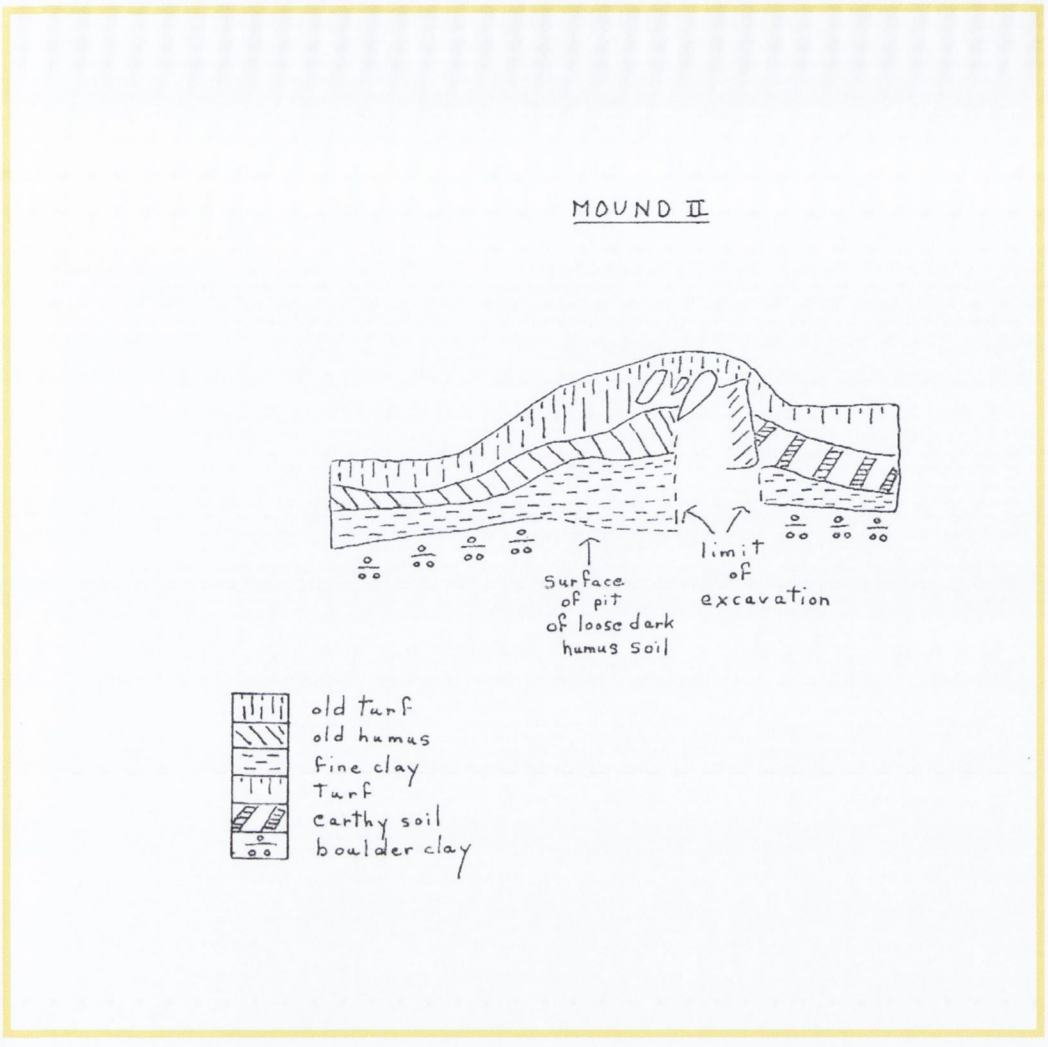


Figure 12: Cross-section of the 1966 excavation of Mound II in Faughart Graveyard.

(O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-129.)

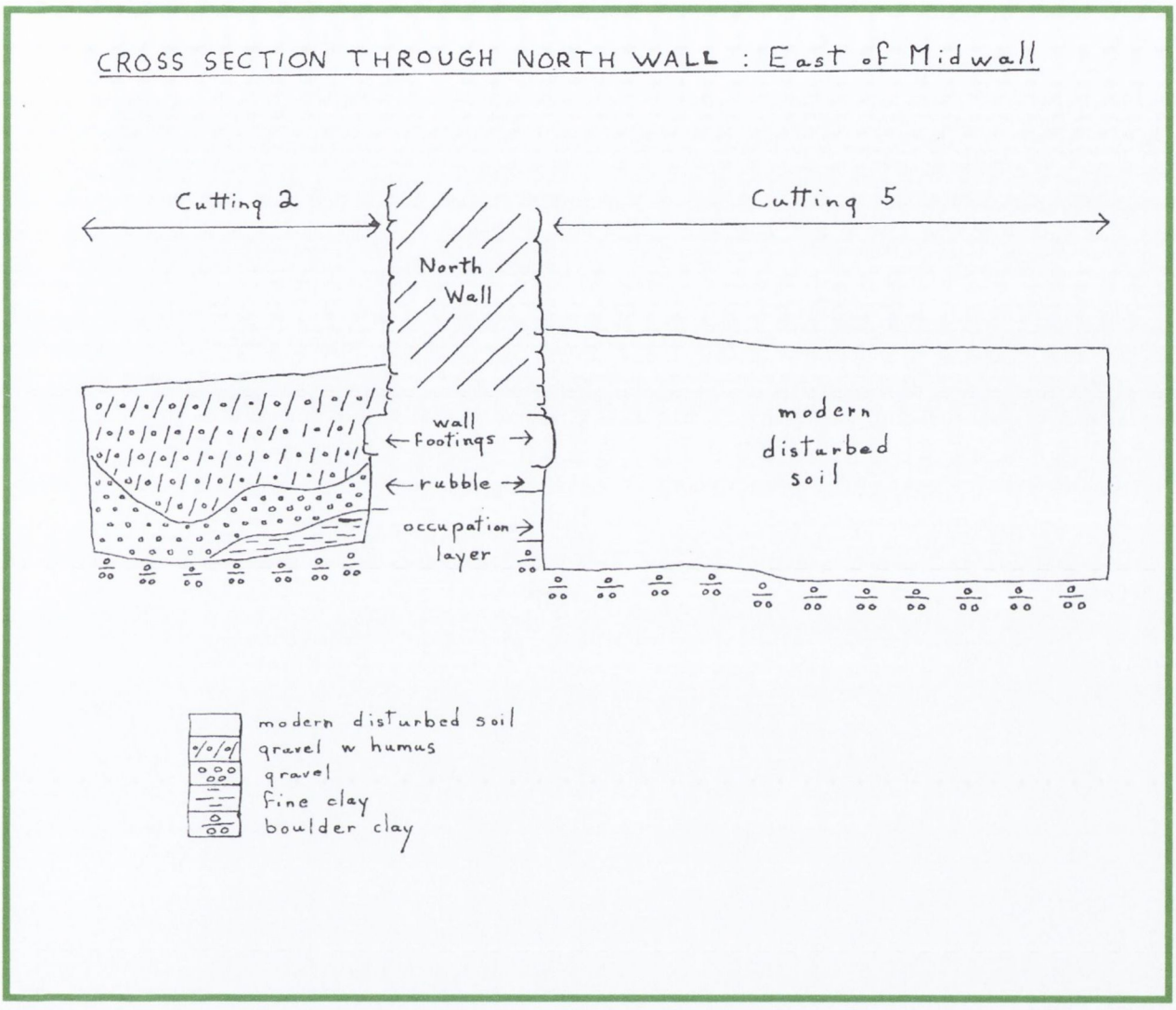


Figure 12a: Cross-section of the excavation through the north wall of Faughart Church.

(O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-129.)

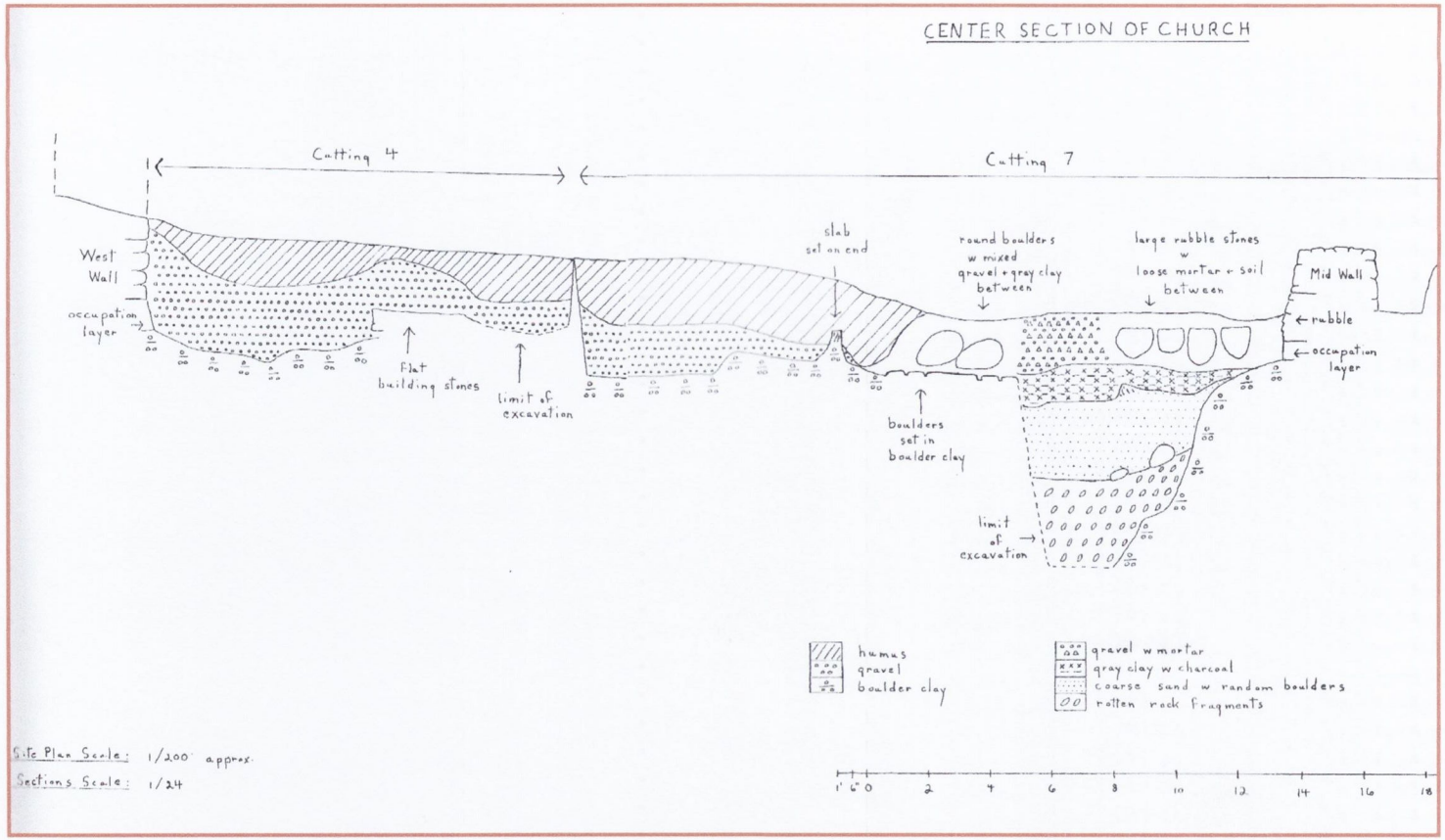


Figure 12b: Cross-section of the excavation of Cuttings 4 & 7 of the centre section of Faughart Church.
(O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-129).

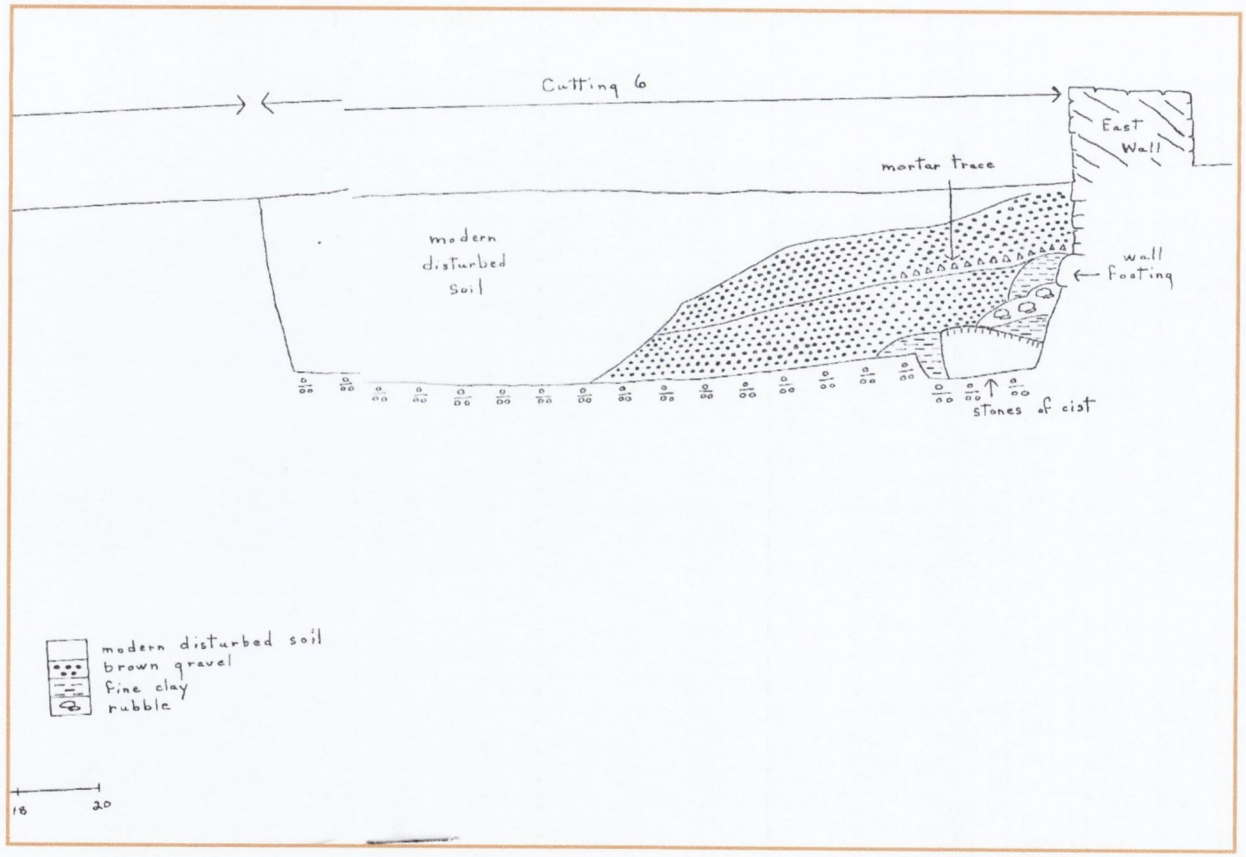


Figure 12c: Cross-section of the excavation of Cutting 6 of Faughart Church.

(O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-129.)

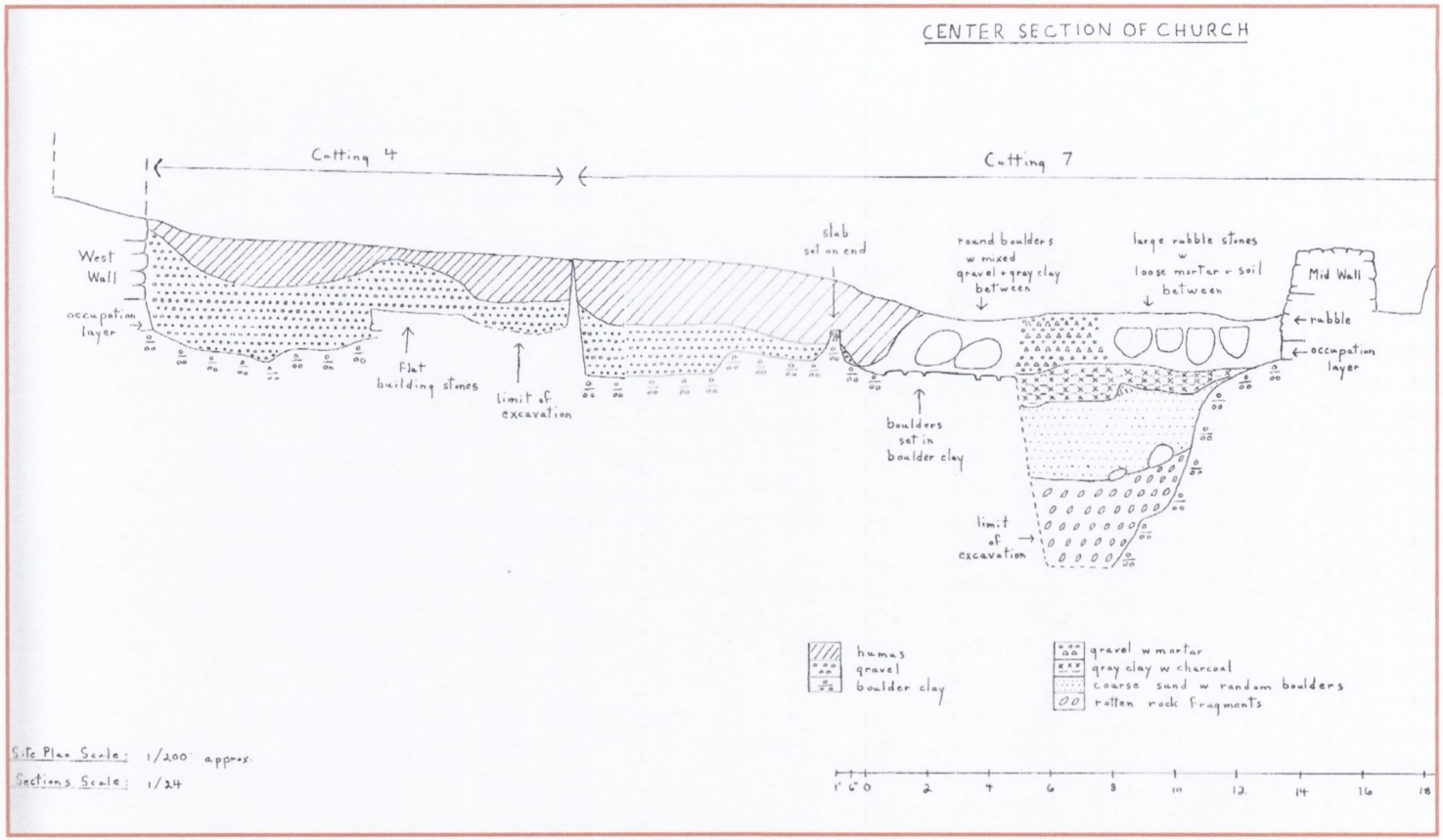


Figure 12b: Cross-section of the excavation of Cuttings 4 & 7 of the centre section of Faughart Church.
(O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-129).

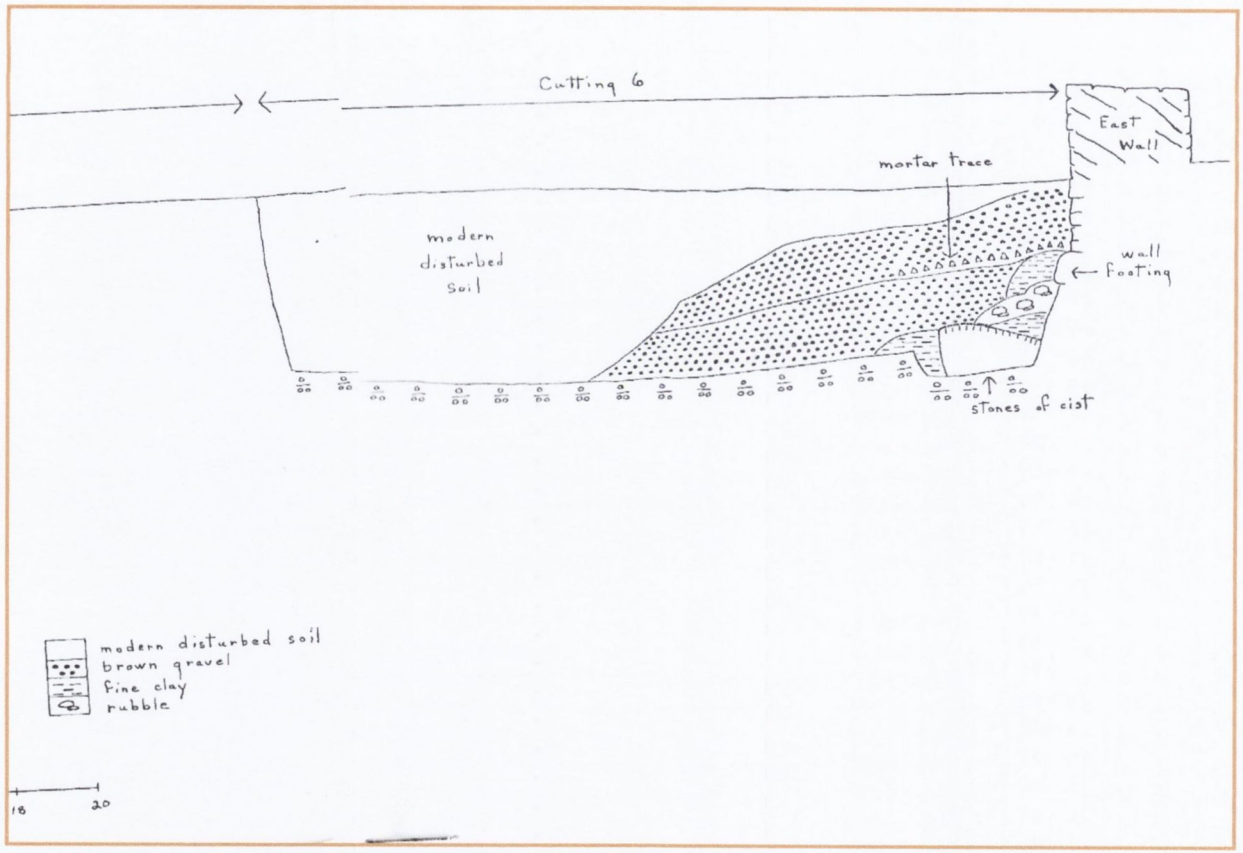


Figure 12c: Cross-section of the excavation of Cutting 6 of Faughart Church.

(O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-129.)

whorl. Within the mound circle itself, the large black central stone previously mentioned was found to lie on a layer of earthy soil containing a body-sherd of pottery which O'Connor thought to be of a probable fifteenth century date.[181] She described it as a body sherd of thin red ware with a greenish-brown glaze,[182]but unfortunately there were no photographs of any of the artefacts uncovered published with the excavation report.[183] Thus, in the absence of any definite proof for the construction of a round tower at Mound II from the excavation of 1966, and considering the lack of primary references to any such structure at this site, it has also been necessary to examine the circumstantial evidence for the existence of a round tower at Faughart.

Barrow was the first to argue in 1977 that there may have been a round tower at Faughart, and he based his theory upon the physical remains of Mound II and the results of O'Connor's excavation of 1966,[184] although O'Connor herself had never ever speculated upon the possibility that Mound II was the base of a round tower. In the 1991 *Survey,* Buckley and Sweetman briefly mentioned Barrow's hypothesis that one of the mounds at Faughart may have been a round tower, but disappointingly they did not comment upon his theory in any way.[185] Although Barrow has been criticized for his opinion that that most of the round towers of Ireland date to the seventh century,[186] his belief that there was once a round tower located at Faughart cannot be entirely dismissed, even though it is a view which has apparently not been universally accepted in some recent authoritative publications on round towers.

As far as it can be discerned, the only publication to include and discuss Faughart as the site of a round tower is Lalor's *The Irish Round Tower. Origins and Architecture Explored,* which was published in 1999, although it should also be noted that Lalor is not considered to be an authoritative source for round towers. Lalor not only included Faughart in his inventory of Irish round towers,[187] but also in his distribution map as an

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[181] IBID, p. 127.
[182]O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 128.
[183] There is no copy of O'Connor's archival report lodged in the National Museum of Ireland or the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, although the excavation is referred to in both the Topographical File and the *Sites and Monuments Record* File for Faughart.
[184] BARROW, G.L., *Irish Round Towers,* (Dublin, 1977), p. 154.
[185] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 231.
[186] HARE, M. & HAMLIN, A., 'The Study of Early Church Architecture in Ireland: An Anglo-Saxon Viewpoint with an Appendix on documentary Evidence for Round Towers', in *The Anglo-Saxon Church: Papers on History, Architecture and Archaeology in Honour of Dr. H.M. Taylor,* ed. by L.A.S. BUTLER & R.K. ROBERTS, CBA Research Report Number 60, (London, 1986), p. 136.
[187] LALOR, (1999), Chapter 7: *Inventory*, pp. 97-235.

existing round tower site.[188] This is in direct contrast to the distribution map of round towers published in 2000 by Stalley, which only includes the sites at Dromiskin and Monasterboice for Co. Louth.[189]

According to Lalor, Faughart is among the slightest of remains, and its identity as a round tower is only 'possible' rather than 'proven'. He summarizes the positive indicators for the existence of a round tower at this site as follows:

The evidence consists of a single course of large stones forming a circle, consistent with the base course of a substantial tower, and located to the north-west of the church. The large dimensions of the individual stones and the fact that they are worked to the curve make them plausible as representing those of a round tower, although they are probably disturbed rather than in situ. One of the stones, to the west of the circle appears to be a fragment of a stepped offset stone, (similar to that at Balla) while the other sections of the circumference seem to be inverted fragments of the offset course. It can be assumed that a tower was at least begun on this site, as there is no reason to suppose that they were brought to Faughart from another site. The interior of the circle of stones is covered by an earthen mound on which is positioned the base of a high cross. Date: not known. Dimensions: diameter at base 5.75 metres; height 50cm. Unique features: none.[190]

Nonetheless, these conclusions are far from being straightforward and prompt several important questions. Firstly, Lalor states that the mound in question is covered with earth, on top of which there is positioned the base of a high cross and he includes an accompanying photograph of this mound.[191] This is problematic, because there are two mounds located to the west of the church and this photograph initially appears to be of Mound I, which is located to the south-west of the church and which has the base of the high cross on it, while it is actually Mound II, located to the north-west of the church which is traditionally believed to have been the site of the round tower. However, when Lalor's photograph is compared to two modern photographs of both mounds taken by this researcher, his image does not match either one, and so it appears that at some stage the base fragments of the high cross were moved from one mound to the other causing this confusion.[192] Indeed, at one point it is possible that there were different fragments of the

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[188] LALOR, (1999), p. 12.

[189] STALLEY, R.A., *Irish Round Towers,* (Dublin, 2000), p. 4. Interestingly, the possible round tower site at Louth is not included on either distribution map which is strange, as Bradley has speculated that there probably was a round tower incorporated into the grounds of the early medieval monastery at this site based upon primary source evidence. See BRADLEY, J., 'The Medieval Borough of Louth: An Archaeological Study', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XXI, Number 1, (1985), pp. 8-22.

[190] LALOR, (1999), p. 185.

[191] IBID, p. 184; see Plate 20.

[192] See Plates 21 & 22.



Plate 20: Lalor's Photograph of the site of the Faughart Round Tower.



Plate 21: Mound I as it stands today with the fragments of the high cross located at the centre.



Plate 22: Mound II as it stands today.

high cross positioned on both mounds at the same time, although as they stand today, Mound I has several fragments of stone positioned on top of it while Mound II has none.

The confusion does not end here. Lalor's hypothesis for Mound I being the base of a high tower is very convincing and has led the present researcher to conclude that Barrow, in the 1970s presumed that Mound I was the site of the high cross, while Mound II was the site of the round tower, because at that time the high cross fragments were located on top of Mound I. While in fact, it is possible that neither mound was the original site of the high cross and it is also feasible that both mounds at one time were the sites, or intended sites of round towers as happened at Devenish in Co. Fermanagh, where excavations only a few feet from the surviving Romanesque tower have revealed the foundations of its predecessor, a practice which is thought by both Lalor and Stalley to have occurred at several more round tower sites and which have yet to be discovered through excavation.[193] The documented structures represent quite a small proportion of the sixty-odd complete or fragmentary towers which are still extant and the twenty or so examples which are known to have been destroyed before the age of modern recording.[194]

Finally, it is also worth commenting upon the fact that it has been discovered that the standard location of a round tower at an ecclesiastical site was almost always to the south-west or the north-west of the main church. [195] At Faughart both Mound I and Mound II are located to the north-west of the main church,[196] while Mound I in particular is located to the south-west portion of the graveyard, in line with the standard arrangement discovered at numerous other Irish sites. Another feature of round tower construction in evidence at many sites in Ireland is that the doorway of the tower is often found to be pointing towards the main entrance of the church. [197] If this was the case at Faughart, then it is possible that the position of an earlier pre-twelfth century church, possibly contemporary with the round tower located at Mound II would have been located to the north of the present structure. This arrangement is clearly in evidence at Glendalough and Clonmacnoise, indicating that there was a definite association between the tower and the major church of these monasteries. There is also a precedent for this arrangement in Co. Louth where at Monasterboice the doorway of the round tower,

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[193] LALOR, (1999), p. 145; STALLEY, (2000), p. 9.
[194] O'KEEFFE, (2003b), p. 72.
[195] BARROW, (1977), p. 154; HARE & HAMLIN, (1986), p. 137; STALLEY, (2000), p. 14.
[196] See Figures 7 & 8.
[197] HARE & HAMLIN, (1986), p. 143; STALLEY, (2000), p. 15.

which is thought to date to the tenth or eleventh century,[198] faces the main entrance of the church. Nonetheless, it should be acknowledged that in the absence of a more extensive archaeological excavation at Faughart that the evidence for a round tower at Faughart is mostly circumstantial. Indeed, it is possible that neither Mound I nor Mound II was originally the site of a round tower, and that they were related to an alternative pattern of small enclosures at Faughart.

d. HOLY WELL

St. Brigid's Well, which is located in Faughart approximately 20m to the north-west of the north wall of the church,[199] is undoubtedly the most neglected of the monuments at the site. Indeed, it was not even mentioned by Buckley and Sweetman in the *Survey.*[200] The following quotation, with the description of the well house as given by Isaac Butler in 1744, does not accurately match a description of it as it stands today, so it is certain that this monument has undergone repairs, and indeed this view is supported by the documentary record:

> *At a small distance from the church Northward there is a well of good spring of water which lathers very well, it is covered with a stone arch in bad repair.*[201]

In 1905 Morris made a description of Faughart Churchyard and its monuments but unfortunately he did not describe the physical state of the well-house in any great detail, except to briefly mention that it was still there.[202]

As previously discussed, in 1906 Howard stated that the well-house had been repaired with a modern mortar, and even though he did not know in what year these renovations had taken place, his conclusions on the original construction of the well itself appear to be fairly incisive:

...in recent years the whole of the outside has been freshly plastered and also any open spaces which appeared in the walls, and it is consequently hard to say whether any material was used for joining the work or not; but I am inclined to think from a small piece of very hard-looking substance which was found below the outside covering of plaster, that mortar was used, and from its appearance that it was composed of sea-shells. For the same reason it is hard to know what the size of the stones which face the building were, but they seem to be small and well-fitted. Some years ago, too, a branch of one of the old ash trees which grow on each side of the door fell down on the roof,

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[198] LALOR, (1999), p. 187.
[199] See Figures 7 & 8; see Plate 23.
[200] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 230-31.
[201] DEANE, (1922), p. 100.
[202] MORRIS, H., 'Louthiana: Ancient and Modern', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume I, Number 2, (1905), p. 20.

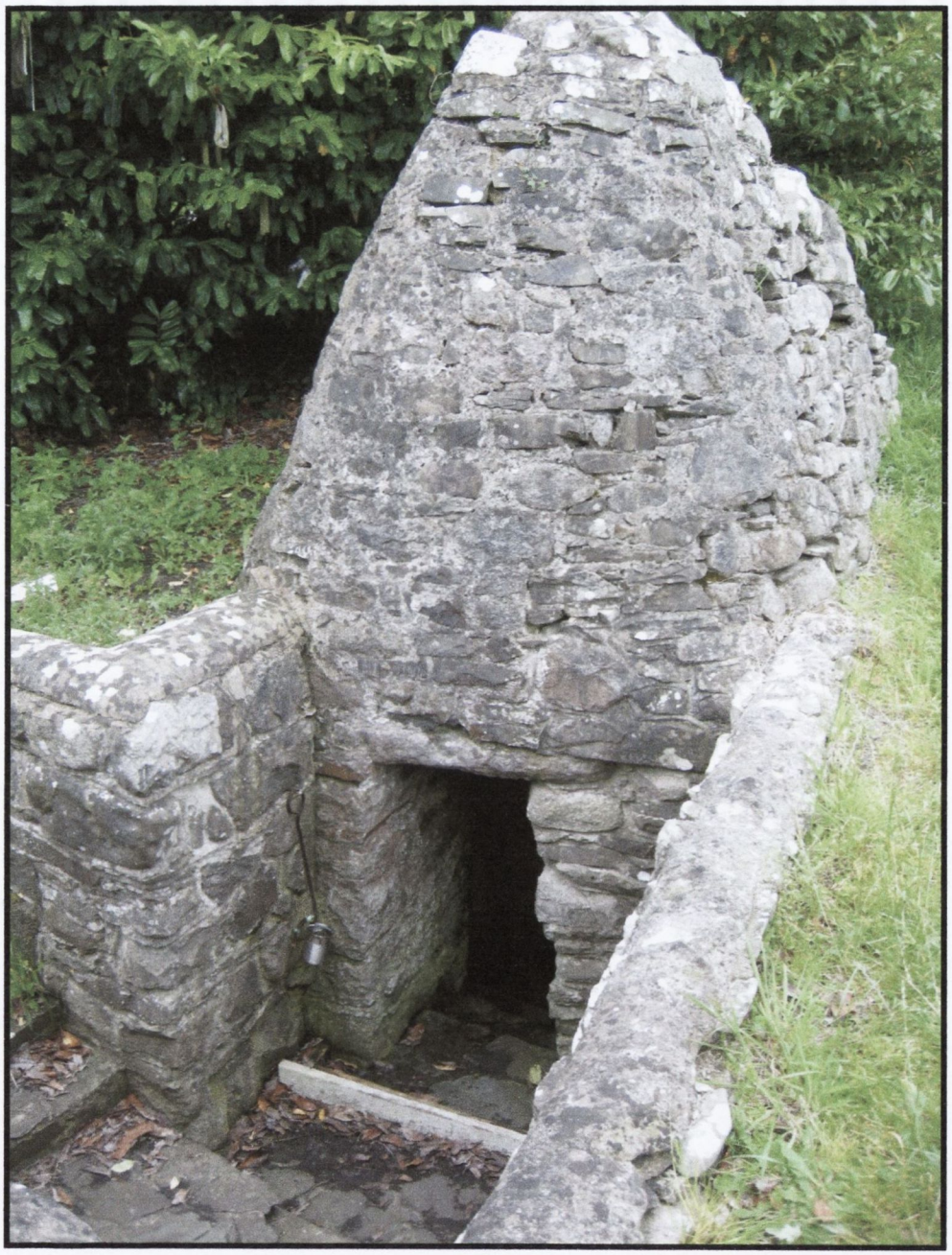


Plate 23: St. Brigid's well house located in Faughart graveyard, to the north of the church.

which had to be repaired on the top, and it is probable that the whole was touched up at this time...Dr. Petrie instances this well as one of the few cases in which the building covering it is of the same shape as the stone-roofed oratories.[203]

In 1908 Stubbs included the well in his survey of the holy wells of Co. Louth, but apart from noting the location of the well, and that 'a very ancient building covers it', [204] he made no other allusions to its construction or appearance at this point. In 1920 Tempest briefly touched upon the well in his discussion of Faughart church, but unfortunately he did not offer any insightful comments regarding its general appearance:

> *On the crest above, in the old graveyard where Bruce's body was buried, is her holy well under the shadow of a gnarled ash-tree.*[205]

In 1941 Davies made a further fleeting reference to the well-house in his survey of Faughart church stating that:

> *In the graveyard are St. Brigid's well-house apparently an early building, St. Brigid's stone and the rough socketed base of a high cross.*[206]

Regrettably however he also neglected to comment upon the state of preservation of the well-house at this stage.

Twenty-five years later, in 1966, O'Connor briefly detailed, in just one sentence, the repair work which had taken place on this monument before her excavation at the church began:

> *The well-house was thickly tuckpointed and an area dug out before the entrance into which stone steps and a retaining wall were built.* [207]

Disappointingly however, this description was not accompanied by any photographs of the well house before the work was carried out. Nevertheless, she was the only one of the twentieth century researchers who published archaeological surveys and descriptions of the site who attempted any sort of an archaeological analysis of this well-house. She assessed it as follows:

> *The well-house is a small, wide, nearly rectangular stone building with a stone roof tapering to a ridge which dips from front to back. The roof appears to have been rebuilt several times: it is partly of corbel construction; mortar is used in some areas and not in others. The lower portions of the walls are unmortared.*

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[203] HOWARD, (1906), p. 72.
[204] STUBBS, F.W, 'Holy Wells in County Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume II, Number 1, (1908), p. 40.
[205] TEMPEST, (1920), p. 96.
[206] DAVIES, (1941), p. 7.
[207] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 125.

> *The well appears to contain run-off water rather than a flowing spring as the water levels vary with rainfall.* [208]

This comment upon the water source for the well is interesting as Davies was of the opinion that many of the monastic churches in Louth, both pre-Norman and Anglo-Norman lay beside springs or rivers as 'a water supply would be essential for a community'.[209]It is likely however that O'Connor was correct in her assumption as the water level was quite low and seemed to be stagnant on a recent visit made to the well-house by this researcher.[210] In addition to this, Morris had also noticed in 1905 that 'in the summer time...this well is dry.'[211] More recently, Buckley and Condit have also speculated that the well is probably filled with water that runs off the surrounding churchyard, rather than representing an underground spring. [212] Nonetheless, the drinking of water from this well is obviously an important part of the devotional ritual for the faithful of St. Brigid who still frequent the site, as is evidenced by the drinking vessels which are still to be found here.[213]

There is no surviving documentary evidence which details the construction of the well-house at Faughart. However, it is clear that this is an early structure, especially considering the fact that the lower portions of the walls are unmortared. The rectangular, flat-headed doorway[214] would also appear to be an early feature and is typical of, and bears some stylistic resemblance to doorways in evidence at other early medieval ecclesiastical sites in Ireland,[215] for example at Kilcanonagh, on the Aran Islands, Co. Galway which is believed to date to the late eighth or ninth century, [216]and more locally,

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[208] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 125.
[209] DAVIES, (1941a), pp. 5-6.
[210] See Plate 24.
[211] MORRIS, (1905), p. 20.
[212] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2.
[213] This is certainly not an occurrence which is peculiar to the well at Faughart, as when O'Danachair conducted a survey of the holy wells of Co. Limerick in 1955, he found that cups and other drinking vessels are to be found at most wells where devotions are still carried out. He also found that in Limerick, many of the holy wells lay in close proximity to church sites and he was of the opinion that they 'were without a doubt used to provide water for the church or the house of the clergy'. However, if the well at Faughart did not derive from a perennial underground spring, but was rather filled with run-off water from the graveyard, then it would have been unlikely to have provided a sufficient water supply for a monastic community. See O'DANACHAIR, C., 'The Holy Wells of Co. Limerick', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland,* Volume 85, (1955), pp. 194 &199. See Plate 25.
[214] See Plate 25.
[215] HARBISON, (1992a), p. 20.
[216] Ó CARRAGÁIN, (2005), pp. 106, 112, & 127; see Plate 26.



Plate 24: The interior of the well-house at Faughart graveyard demonstrating the low water level.

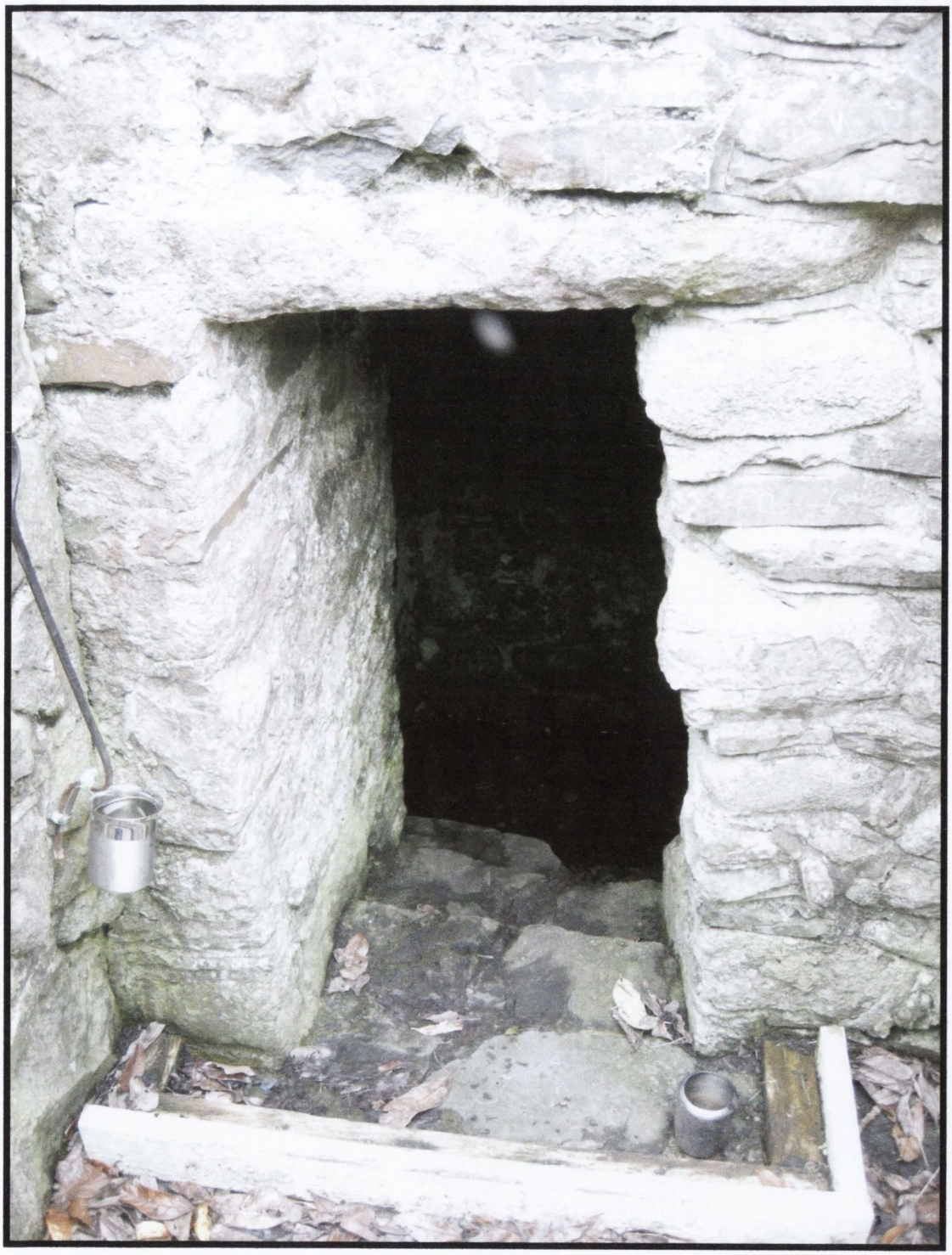


Plate 25: The plain doorway and stairs of St. Brigid's well.

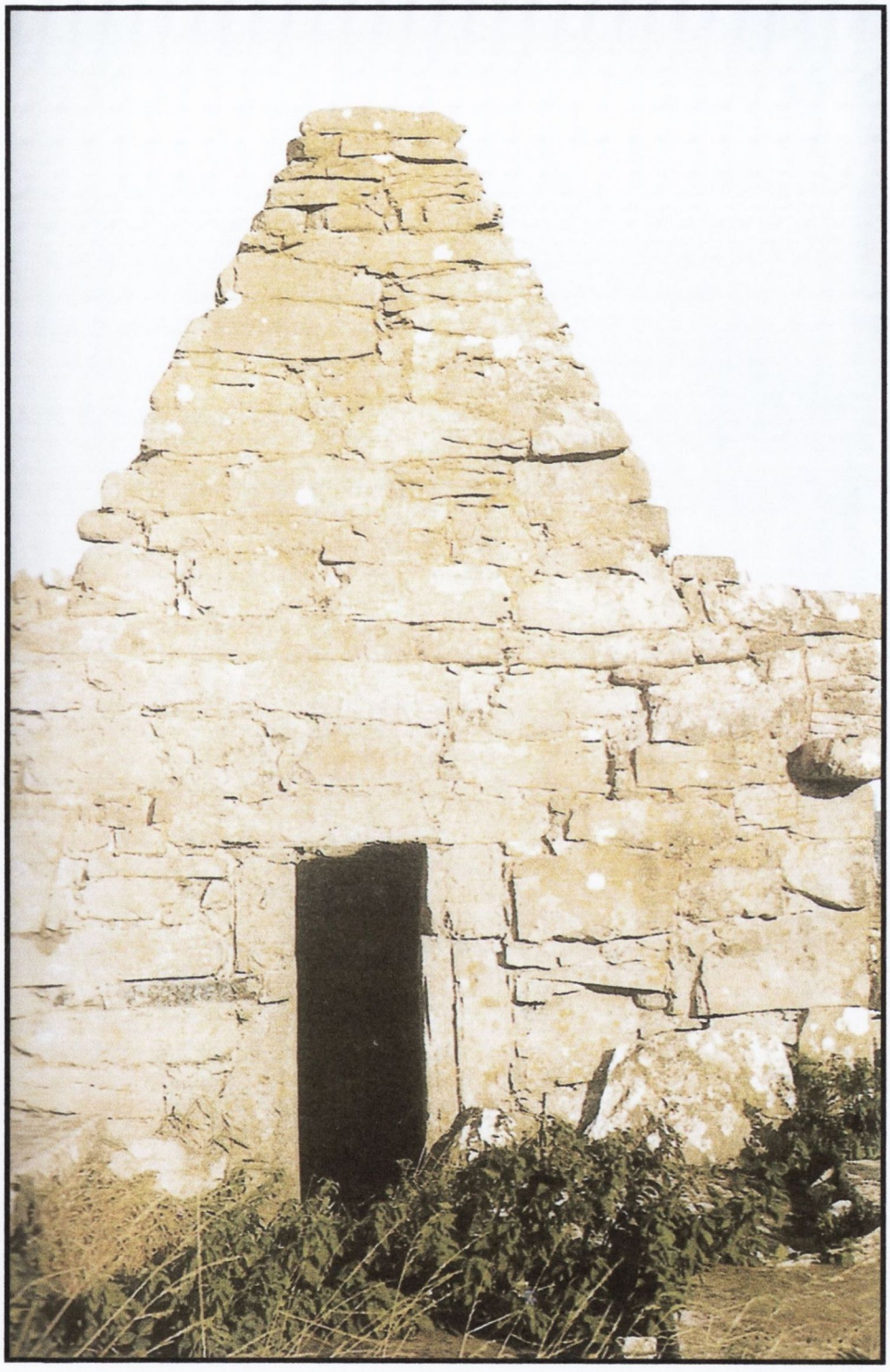


Plate 26: The plain lintelled doorway at the west end of the small church of Kilcanonagh, on the Aran Islands, Co. Galway.
(MANNING, C., *Early Irish Monasteries,* (Dublin, 1995)).

at Killeavy church in Co. Armagh.[217] The fact that the well house is partially corbelled on the inside would also suggest an early date of construction for this structure. [218]

It is obvious that the well at Faughart is still venerated today by followers of St. Brigid, as is evidenced by the rags and other personal effects which have been attached to the surrounding trees.[219] In fact this was a practice which O'Danachair found to be widespread at the holy wells of Limerick where the commonest form of offering was a piece of cloth or ribbon which was tied to a tree or bush near the well.[220] The dedications of holy wells are an indication of the extent and the limits of popular devotion in a given locality, and that they can also be of some value in the study of the ecclesiastical history of the area.[221] O'Danachair has made the point that, although it is impossible to say with certainty when the devotion to any particular saint became popular, it is possible to make a distinction between those holy wells whose dedications date to the early medieval period and those which are of medieval origin.[222] Considering this hypothesis, and also the extant archaeological evidence at Faughart, it would seem reasonable to surmise that the holy well at this site dates to the early medieval period.

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[217] See Plate 27.

[218] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2. In Limerick, O'Danachair observed that many of the holy wells which he surveyed were enclosed or lined with walls of dry or mortared masonry which he found impossible to accurately date as only three of them were embellished with inscriptions which dated prior to 1800; 1750, 1760 and 1791. See O'DANACHAIR, (1955), p. 200.

[219] See Plate 28.

[220] O'DANACHAIR, (1955), p. 195. Faughart is not the only place in Co. Louth where a holy well in honour of St. Brigid has survived. There is a well at Tullyallen dedicated to the saint, locally known as Toberdoney, or the Sunday Well, which is alleged to hold the cure for sore eyes and there is also another well revering Brigid in Marlestown. However, perhaps the most interesting example of these Brigitine wells, with regard to the study of the site at Faughart, is that of St. Brigid's well in Dunleer. Locally it has long been believed among the faithful that St. Brigid blinded herself in order to appear ugly and thus be spared the attentions of men, and that her sight was miraculously restored when she bathed her eyes at this well in Dunleer. Although there are now no visible archaeological remains extant at this site, the modern church at Dunleer is thought to located upon the original site of the early medieval monastery, which is referred to locally as *Lann Leire*. Although the site at Dunleer has had a strong local tradition of association with St. Brigid, it is more likely that a monastery was founded here by SS Forodran and Baithren in the sixth or seventh century. In common with Faughart, the ecclesiastical site at Dunleer was re-used as a manorial church following the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in the twelfth century. See DAVIES, (1944), pp. 282-83; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 35; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 230; COYLE, M., 'St. Brigid's Well, Dunleer', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XIII, Number 2, (1954), p. 175; TUITE, B., 'Local Folklore', *Mellifont Parish : A Magazine to Mark the Opening of Mellifont Parish Centre,* (1979), pp. 52-55; CONLON, L., 'The Holy Wells of County Louth, Part 2', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XXIV, Number 4, (2000), pp. 471-72. STUBBS, (1908), p. 40; CONLON, (2000), pp. 459-60.

[220] STUBBS, (1908), p. 40; CONLON, (2000), pp. 459-60.

[221] O'DANACHAIR, (1955), p. 196.

[222] IBID, p. 198.

e. EXCAVATED BURIALS

In her investigation of Cutting 2 at Faughart church, which extended outward from the north wall in the cross section east of the mid-wall,[223] O'Connor discovered the remains of a human burial. Below the level of the fine-clay layer and over the boulder clay she discovered a layer of fine loose powdery sterile clay soil. In this layer of soft soil she uncovered the end portion of a slate cist burial, which projected from the west side of the section trench and which was aligned east to west. The revealed portion consisted of three slates set edgewise to form a box shape tapering in width eastward with a single flat slate lid.[224] When the cover stone was removed this portion was found to contain the undisturbed foot-bones of a single human burial.[225] Looking into the unexplored portion with the aid of a torch O'Connor recorded that she could see the cist continuing and containing the undisturbed leg bones of a single burial as far as the pelvis, beyond which soil had collapsed, although there were no grave goods visible.[226] Unfortunately the position of this burial is not marked precisely on O'Connor's plan of Faughart Church and the excavated trenches, nor is it mentioned whether or not this burial undercut the wall of the surviving church structure, a detail which could further assist with the dating of the church. There were however two photographs of this burial published with the excavation report, one showing the cover stone intact, the other taken after it had been removed.

In Cutting 6, located at the east wall,[227] in a similar layer of powdery clay soil, under the apparent occupation layer and over the boulder clay, another partial burial cist was found by O'Connor in 1966. A single burial, aligned east-west and consisting of a crushed pelvis and complete leg bones lay in the soft soil just above the edging stones of the cist. It was also found that this burial was separated from two lower burials by a layer of fine grey film. The first of the lower burials consisted of leg bones from the knee down only. The second and lowest burial had all leg bones present. The edging stones of the north side of the cist, some slate, and some other thicker and less regular stones were visible in the section face of the trench and were present only as far west as the end of the

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[223] See Figure 7. It should be noted that in O'Connor's plan of the church, the north-east end of the east wall of the later addition to the church is off-line and thinner than the other walls of that end of the church. FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009). This is something which is not represented on either Buckley & Sweetman's or Buckley & Condit's plan of the same site. See Figures 5 & 6.
[224] See Plate 29.
[225] See Plate 30.
[226] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 126.
[227] See Figure 7.



Plate 27: Killeavy church, Co. Armagh.
(http://www.cregganhistory.co.uk/ofiaichcentre/killeavy.htm).



Plate 28: Personal effects left on the ash tree at St. Brigid's well.



Plate 29: A view of the slate cist burial in Cutting 2 with the cover stone intact looking east.

(O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-129.)

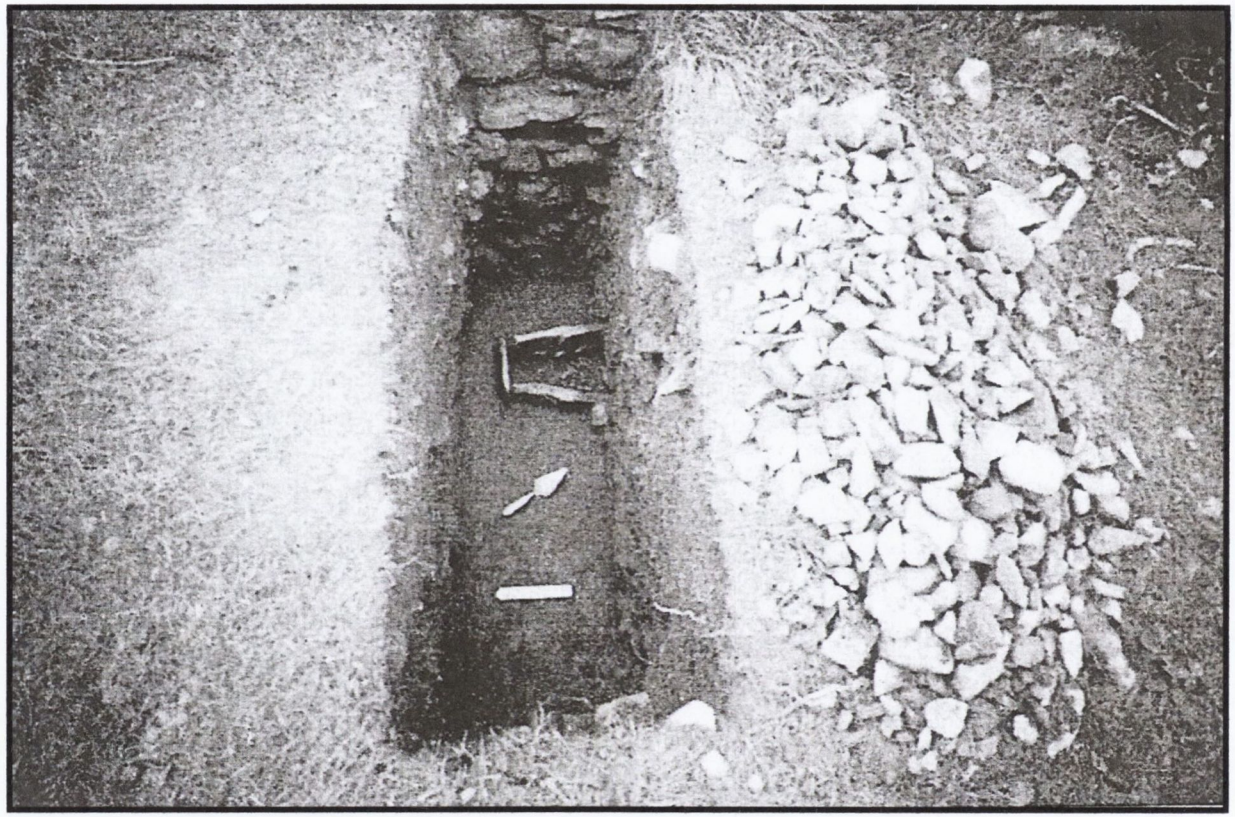


Plate 30: A view of the cover stone of the slate cist burial in Cutting 2 removed looking north.
(O'CONNOR, L., 'Faughart Investigation, 1966', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1966), pp. 125-129.)

leg bones. One slate edging stone of the south side of the cist was visible, opposite the most westerly of the northern stones.[228] Unlike the burial discovered in Cutting 2, there is unfortunately no photographic record of the partial excavation of the three burials which were uncovered in Cutting 6.[229] However, the fact that the burial in Cutting 2 was found at a level that appeared to predate the foundation courses of the church itself is extremely significant. [230] As previously discussed, the chancel of Faughart church, where Cutting 2 was located, was considered by O'Connor, Buckley and Sweetman, primarily on structural evidence, to be a later medieval addition to the earlier twelfth century nave, and the location of this cist burial, which was found to undercut the northern wall of the church, would certainly appear to support this theory.

10. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

The pottery which was uncovered at Faughart by O'Connor is extremely important as pottery has often been found to be the only dateable artefact that generally occurs on medieval sites, mainly due to the fact it seems to survive much better in comparison to other artefacts, and can often be used to assist with defining the status and function of a site.[231] Pottery was discovered in two locations during O'Connor's excavation. During the excavation of Mound II she discovered a body sherd of pottery which she thought was of a probable fifteenth century date.[232] She described it as a body

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[228] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 126.

[229] None of the *Sites and Monuments* files relating to Faughart held any of the original excavation reports, details about the whereabouts of the artefacts uncovered in 1966, or even any additional information about the excavation itself, and as previously mentioned there is no archival report for this excavation lodged in either the National Museum of Ireland or the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. See SMR LH 004-097 Faughart Upper Ecclesiastical Remains; SMR LH 004-097007 Faughart Upper Holy Well; SMR LH 004-09701 Faughart Upper Ecclesiastical Enclosure; SMR LH 004-09702 Faughart Upper Church SMR LH 004-09703 Faughart Upper Graveyard; SMR LH 004-09705 Faughart Upper Mound; SMR LH 004-09706 Faughart Upper Cross. Prof. Terry Barry suggested trying to contact Lil O'Connor herself to see if she still had the original excavation reports so the author contacted the Honorary Editor of the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Mr. Noel Ross, and he advised that Lil O'Connor had recently died and that the Society had no record of any contact details for her or her family. BARRY, T.B., pers. comm., (August, 2008) & ROSS, N., pers. comm., (September, 2008).

[230] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2.

[231] O'CONOR, K.D., *The Archaeology of Medieval Rural Settlement in Ireland,* Discovery Programme Monograph Number 3, Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 1998), pp. 140-41. See also POTTERTON, M., Medieval Trim: History and Archaeology, (Dublin, 2005), pp. 160-61. See also HALPIN, A., *The Port of Medieval Dublin. Archaeological Excavations at the Civic Offices, Winetavern Street, Dublin, 1993,* (Dublin, 2000); MCCUTCHEON, C., 'Medieval Pottery in Dublin: New Names and Some Dates', in *Medieval Dublin I: Proceedings of the Friends of Medieval Dublin Symposium 1999,* ed. by S. DUFFY, (Dublin, 2000), 117-125; MCCUTCHEON, C., *Medieval pottery from Wood Quay, Dublin: The 1974-6 Waterfront Excavations,* The Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 2006).

[232] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 127.

sherd of thin red ware with a greenish-brown glaze.[233] This fragment of pottery is currently located in the National Museum of Ireland where it was examined and found to measure 4cm x 1.9cm. It has been described as a body sherd of thin fired red ware, with a mottled greenish brown glaze. It has been dated to the later medieval period. [234] The second fragment was a sherd of coarse pottery which was located in the vicinity of the church and which O'Connor dated to the twelfth century, or earlier. [235] This piece of pottery is also currently located in the National Museum of Ireland. It measures 5.9 x 3.1cm and has been classified as a rim sherd of coarse mica tempered ware, with a flat rim bearing diagonal impressions. It was found to be of uniform colour with a black exterior.[236]

During the course of her excavation O'Connor also discovered evidence to suggest burning in the south-west corner of the mid-wall and also in the blocked portion of the south wall. [237] A fire in the church could possibly have been a valid reason for some reconstruction work to take place on site long after the original structure had been completed. And, it is interesting that burning seems to have occurred in the south-west portion of the church where the stonework shows evidence of at least two different phases of building. Unfortunately however, there is no documentary evidence available which recorded any definite date of a fire in the church, which could, in turn, offer a fairly reasonable date for one phase of reconstruction. Similarly there is no way of determining how extensive this fire may have been.

11. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

The preliminary archaeological survey of County Louth listed four ringforts, one motte, one enclosure site and one earthwork site for Faughart.[238] The *Inventory* of 1986 and the *Survey* of 1991 both listed one souterrain, four ringforts, one enclosure site, one church and one motte.[239] The souterrain is located on or near the motte while the church

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[233]IBID, p. 128.
[234] NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, E77:1-30
[235]O'CONNOR, (1966), pp. 127-28.
[236] NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, E77:1-30
[237] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 125.
[238] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth: A Preliminary Description of Field Antiquities in the County from the Mesolithic Period to the 17th Century AD*, The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1984), pp. 4-5.
[239] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 106; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 397. See Figure 15.

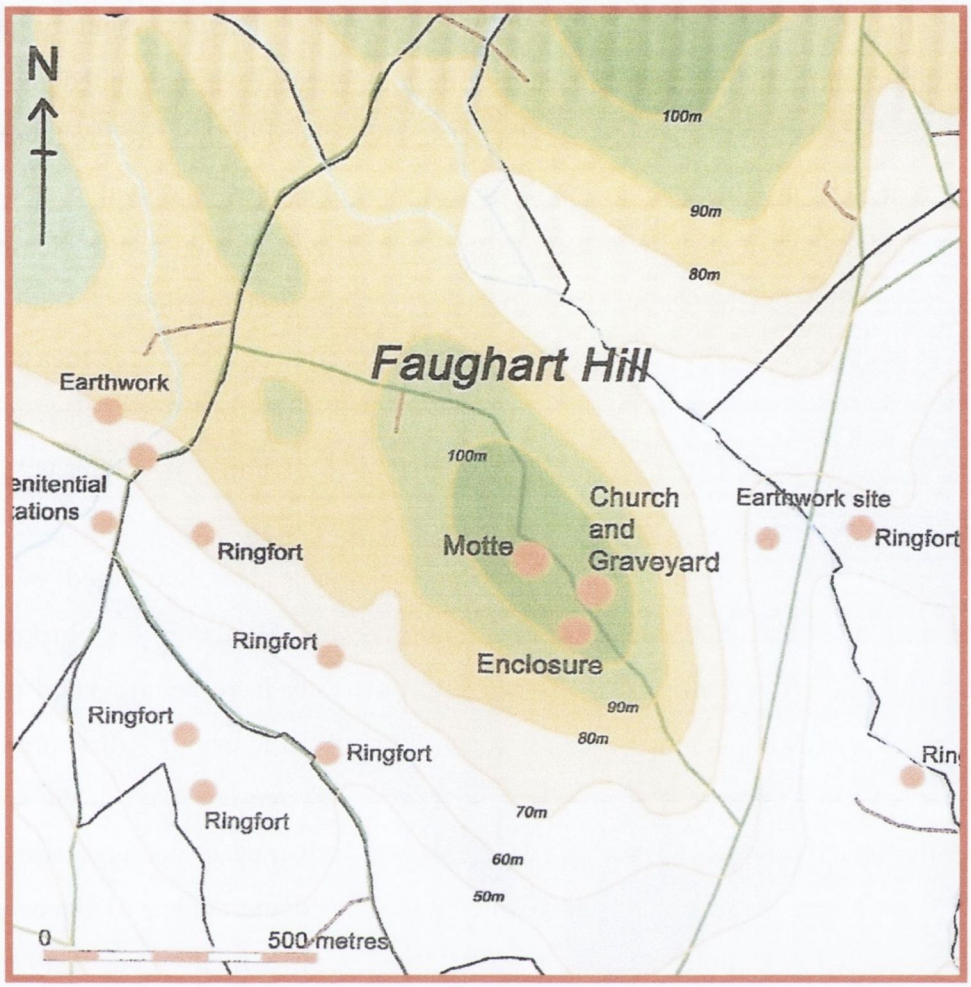


Figure 15: A map of the archaeological sites located on and around Faughart Hill.

(CONDIT, T. & BUCKLEY V.M., 'Faughart, Co. Louth – the Hill of Heroes, Saints, Battles and Boundaries', Archaeology *Ireland,* Heritage Guide Number 37, (2007)).

is located approximately 50m to the east of the motte. [240] In addition to these sites, aerial photography has provided evidence for significant sites on Faughart Hill which are no longer visible at ground level; as well as the large enclosure which is evident around the church and graveyard, there is a second significant cropmark of a large subcircular enclosure located approximately 150m to the south-east of the church in the field on the opposite side of the road. This subcircular enclosure is positioned upon terrain which slopes to the south and on the aerial photographs of the site it can be identified as a relatively thin band of differential crop growth, most likely indicating that the site has been significantly truncated by ploughing over many centuries.[241] For the most part the enclosure is circular, c. 46m in diameter although there is clear evidence that it formed a straight side on the north-eastern perimeter, with indications of an inner concentric ditch visible on the eastern perimeter. [242] This cropmark was also listed by Buckley and Sweetman in the *Survey* and they categorised it as an 'enclosure site'. In this publication it is briefly described as a cropmark ring defining a circular enclosure, with a maximum diameter of approximately 46m.[243] In the introduction to the chapter of the *Survey* entitled *Earthworks and Enclosures*, Buckley and Sweetman elucidated upon their categorization of those site types which they have termed 'enclosures' as follows:

> *The second type of site is that of 'Enclosure'. This category covers enclosed areas which are still extant but which do not fall easily within the classification of other known monument types, such as ringforts. It also includes sites covered by aerial photography. The highest concentration of sites discovered from aerial photographic sources is in the middle of the county between the Castletown and Dee Rivers. This is an area of intensive agriculture and has soils susceptible to cropmark differentiation.*[244]

The original function of this cropmark enclosure must therefore be classified as unknown at this juncture, although it is possible that it did once function as a ringfort. Indeed, there are a number of surviving ringforts located around the periphery of Faughart Hill at lower contours.[245]Condit and Buckley have included seven ringforts on their 2007 map of the archaeological sites located on and around Faughart Hill,[246] although, as previously mentioned, in 1991 Buckley and Sweetman only recorded four of

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[240] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 86; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 286-87; See Plate 31 & Figures 16, 17, 18 & 19.
[241] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 4.
[242] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 4; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 196.
[243] BUCLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 196.
[244] IBID, p. 188.
[245] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 1.
[246] See Figure 15.

these sites in the *Survey*.[247] This blatant discrepancy in ringfort distribution numbers is apparently not unique to the area surrounding Faughart Hill. According to Barrett, it is vital to remember that evidence from aerial photography has drastically altered our perception of the 'norm' in settlement types of the early medieval period. [248] For example, in Co. Louth alone, some 160 ringforts have been recorded as being extant, but a further 160 enclosures have been identified from limited aerial surveys conducted by St. Joseph in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and also by the Air Corps in the late 1960s. Most of these sites have logically enough been discovered in the high-tillage areas in the middle and southern regions of the county, areas which have been intensively farmed over many centuries. In addition to this, the evidence from aerial photographs suggests that it is only the smaller enclosures/ringforts which have survived to the present day, while the bigger examples have been largely obliterated from the landscape. In view of these trends, it is evident that the four surviving ringforts in and around Faughart Hill do not represent an accurate pattern of settlement for this area in the early medieval period, and although an archaeological discussion of these ringforts clearly falls outside the remit of this study, it is certainly worth briefly considering what their relationship to the monastic enclosure at Faughart may have been in the pre-Norman period.

In many respects it can be stated that the settlement trends of the early medieval period were characterised to a large extent by the development of the ringfort; a settlement type which can be loosely defined as an earthen bank and ditch enclosing a circular area of varying diameter. It is probable that the functionality of medieval ringforts was manifold including defensive, agricultural and industrial uses. These sites are undoubtedly the most common field monument to be found in Ireland, with between 30,000-45,000 examples now officially recorded.[249] It has been widely held that building and occupation of ringforts extended over a very long period which spanned from at least the early Iron Age throughout the whole early medieval period and possibly also into medieval times as well.[250] Nevertheless, the chronological span of the ring-fort as a settlement form has also generated considerable controversy. It has long been argued that

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[247] See BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 174 for a detailed account of the archaeological features of these four ringforts.

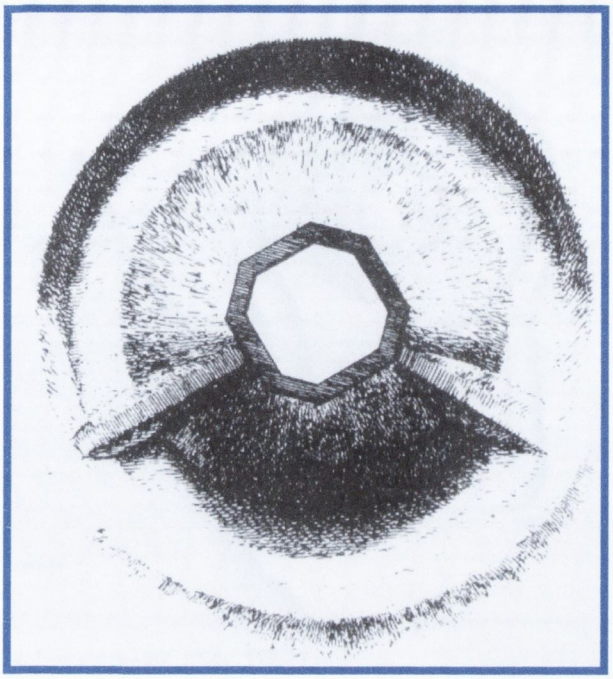
[248] BARRETT, G.F., 'The Reconstruction of Proto-Historic Landscapes Using Aerial Photographs: Case Studies in County Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal* , Volume XX, Number 3, (1983), p. 215.

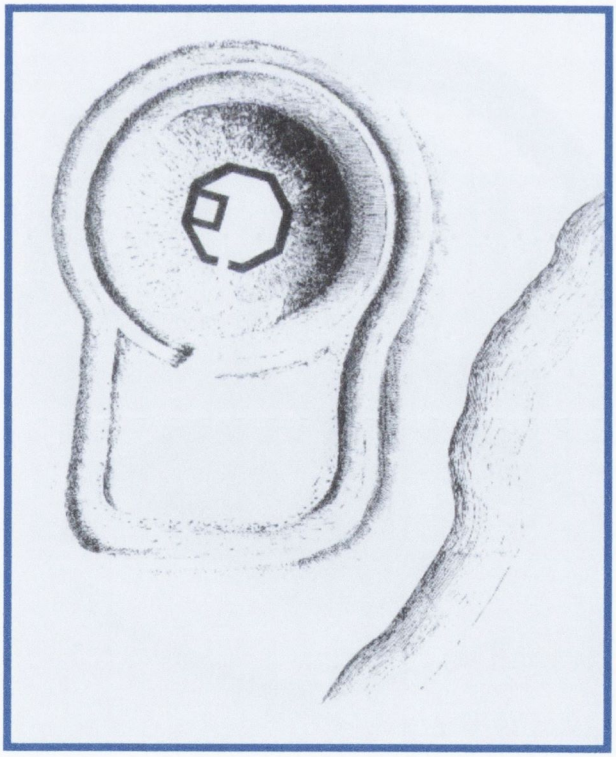
[249] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 33; STOUT, M., *The Irish Ringfort,* (Dublin, 1997), p. 131.

[250] HARBISON, P., *The Archaeology of Ireland,* (London, Sydney & Toronto, 1976), p. 69; Ó RIORDÁIN, S.P. *Antiquities of the Irish Countryside*, Fifth Edition, Revised with Preface by R. DE VALERA, (London, 1979), p. 31; HUGHES, (1972), p. 20



Plate 31: Faughart motte as it stands today viewed from the north-west side.





Figures 16 & 17: Two plans of Faughart Motte recorded by T. Wright in 1748.

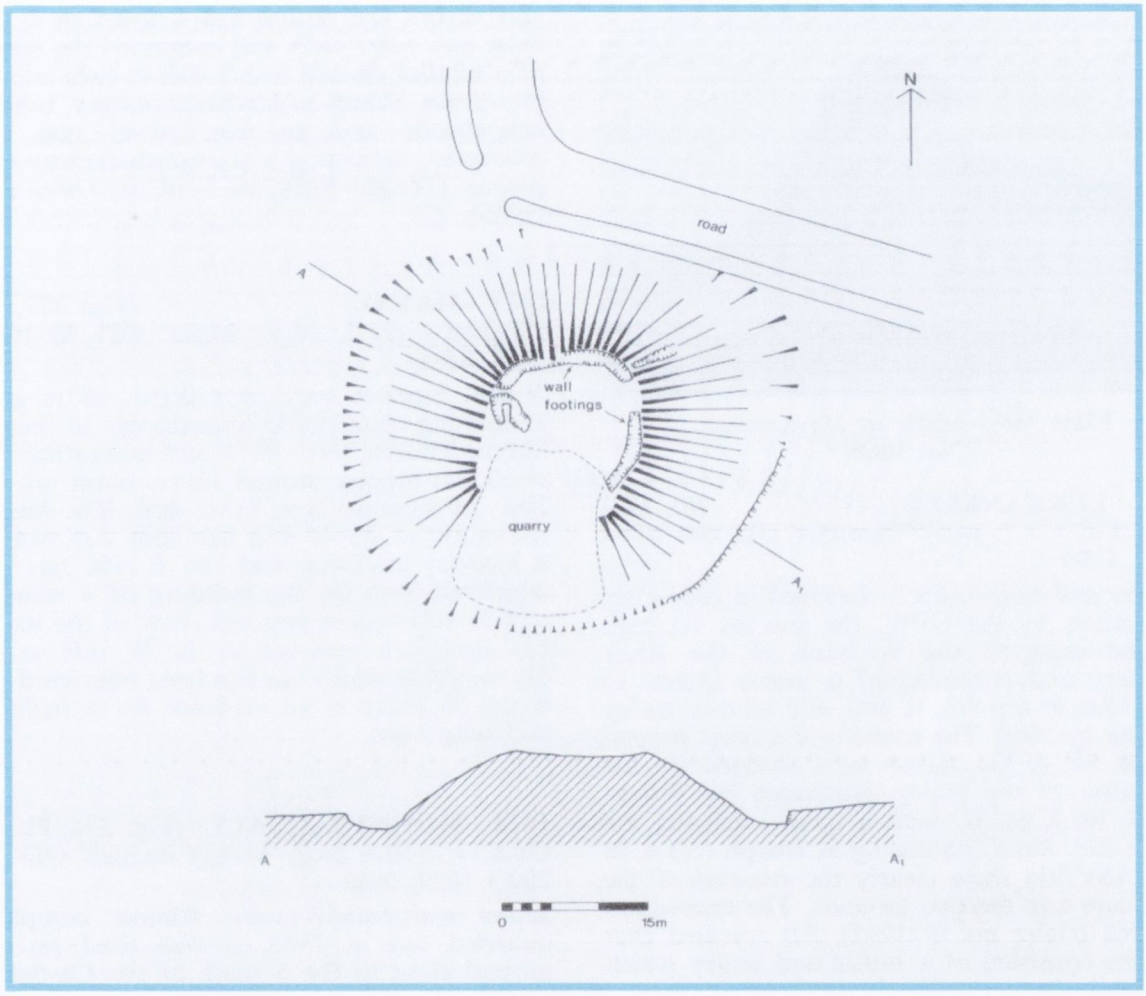


Figure 18: Plan of Faughart Motte.
(BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991)).

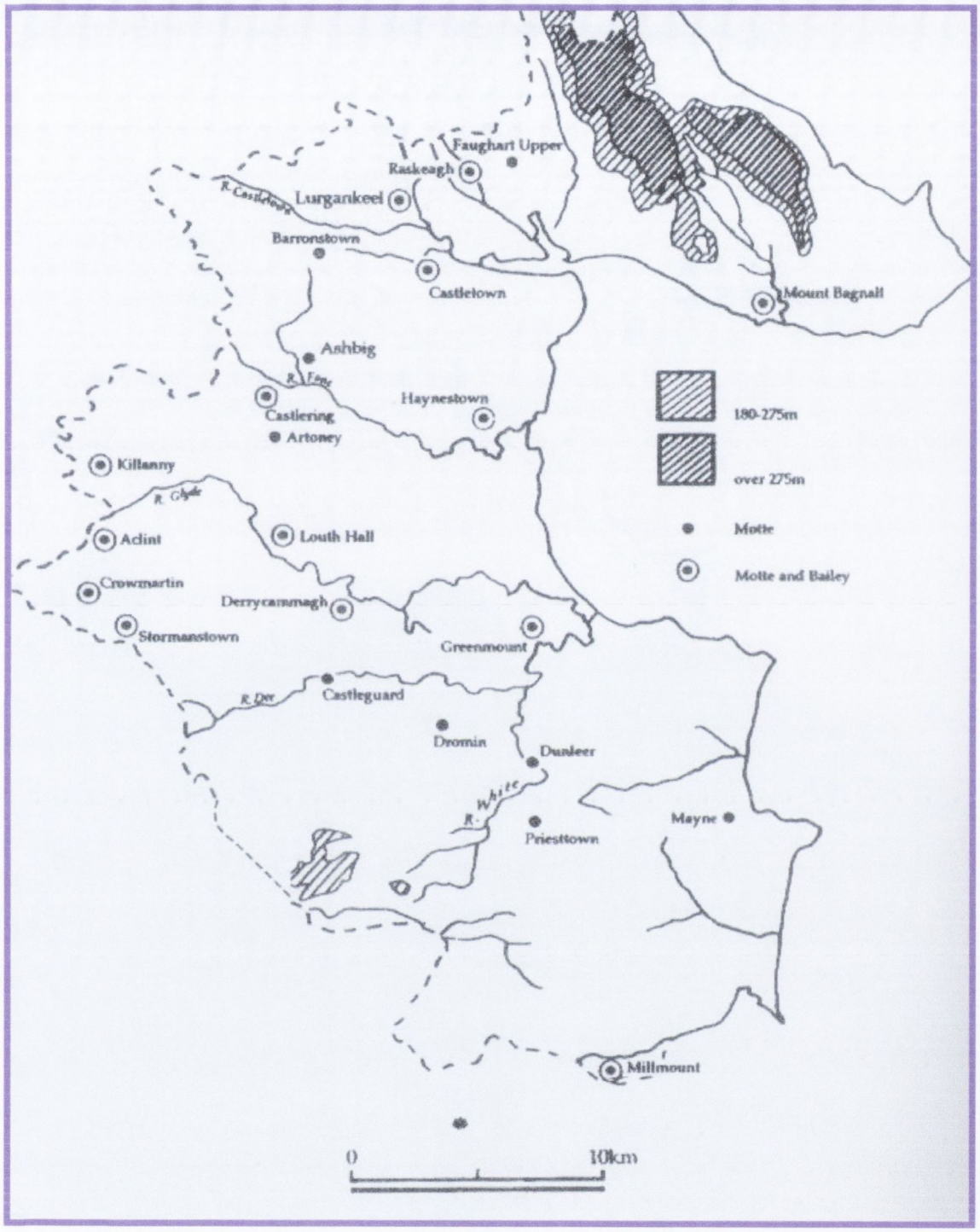


Figure 19: Distribution of Mottes in County Louth
(After Buckley & Sweetman, 1991).

this settlement form originated in the Bronze Age and constituted an important element from Early Iron Age right up until the later medieval period. Barrett, however, has maintained that the majority of excavated sites have been assigned to the period 400-1000 AD, although she does admit to the possibility that occupation and perhaps construction continued in the medieval period,[251] while Stout has stated his belief that a number of ringforts were constructed over a relatively short period, perhaps over only three centuries.[252]

In any case, there has been some research conducted in recent years which has directly focused upon the relationship between ringforts and ecclesiastical sites in the early medieval period,[253] although unfortunately for the purposes of this study, it is not yet possible to compare both distributions at a national level as there are a number of problems inherent with the study of early medieval ecclesiastical sites. Firstly, while ringforts can be identified with a high degree of certainty from cartographic and aerial photographic sources, early ecclesiastical sites are extremely more difficult to recognize, as the presence of a church on a map provides no indication whatsoever of its date. Secondly, historical sources, which might be expected to present a fairly authentic impression of overall distribution patterns, have been found to greatly underestimate the number of early medieval Irish foundations.[254]

Studies conducted by Swan in Co. Westmeath have indicated that intense fieldwork can as much as treble the number of known early medieval ecclesiastical sites,[255] and notably, he has also found that approximately half of the existing parishes in his study areas have at least one early church site, which would indicate that origins of parish boundaries in these localities can be traced back to the early medieval period. [256] Both Swan and Stout have highlighted the differences between the types of location favoured by both types of settlement, pointing out that ecclesiastical sites tend to have low-lying riverine distribution, seldom occurring above 120m and almost never above 180m, a trend which is in direct contrast to the distribution of ringforts, which are

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[251] BARRETT, G. F., 'Ring-Fort Settlement in County Louth: Sources, Patterns and Landscapes', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XX, Number 2, (1982), p. 77.
[252] STOUT, (1997), p. 131.
[253] See STOUT, (1997), p. 100 for a summary of these studies.
[254] IBID, p. 100. See Figures 13 & 14.
[255] SWAN, L., 'The Early Christian Ecclesiastical Sites of County Westmeath', in *Settlement and Society in Medieval Ireland: Studies Presented to F.X. Martin,* ed. J. Bradley, (Kilkenny, 1988), pp. 3-32; STOUT, (1997), p. 100.
[256] SWAN, L., 'Enclosed Ecclesiastical Sites and their Relevance to Settlement Patterns of the First Millennium A.D.', in *Landscape Archaeology,* ed. by T. REEVES-SMYTH & F. HAMMOND, (Oxford, 1983), p. 273; STOUT, (1997), p. 100.

generally to found at higher points in the landscape.[257]Although this hypothesis certainly corresponds with the positioning of the early medieval monastic enclosure at Faughart, which is located on a contour of 100m, it is definitely at odds with the distribution of the seven surrounding ringforts which are all located on lower contours of between 50-90m OD.[258]It has also long been acknowledged that ringforts are not generally found in areas which cannot support farming communities, [259]and indeed, this is certainly relevant to the settlement enclosures at Faughart, where both the monastery and the ringforts were located upon agriculturally fertile land.

Thus, it is very unfortunate that in his 1983 map of the distribution of early medieval churches and ecclesiastical enclosures in Ireland, Swan did not include any of the three sites in Lower Dundalk (Faughart, Cornamucklagh and Roosky). [260]However, it is worth commenting that although there are no ringforts listed in the *Survey* for either of the townlands of Roosky or Cornamucklagh, a perusal of the distribution map of ringforts for Co. Louth will reveal that there are in fact a number of ringforts and unidentified enclosure sites located in the general vicinity of both sites.[261] Interestingly, a fairly recent study which was conducted by Mathew and Geraldine Stout and which concentrated on Co. Dublin has established a tentative link between such religious establishments and the secular population within ringforts that would have patronised the ecclesiastical sites.[262] Further studies in the Brosna Valley, Cruachain, Morgallion and in areas to the north of Lough Neagh have indicated that early medieval church sites in these regions are commonly located at the margins of ringfort groupings, [263] as would also appear to have been the case at Faughart. However, as these studies are extremely localized, they cannot be considered as accurate templates for early medieval ecclesiastical and secular settlement patterns for the whole country. Therefore, in the absence of such a specialized study for the barony of Lower Dundalk, it is possible to make only the most tentative of judgements pertaining to the relationship between early medieval monastic and ringfort

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[257] SWAN, (1983), p. 273; STOUT, (1997), p. 100.
[258] See Figure 15.
[259] WESTROPP, T., 'The Ancient Forts of Ireland: Being a Contribution Towards Our Knowledge of their Types, Affinities and Structural Features', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume XXXI, (1902), pp. 579-730; STOUT, (1997), p. 106.
[260] STOUT, (1997), p. 101.
[261] See Figure 15 & BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 152-188 for individual archaeological descriptions of these sites. See Figures 13 & 14.
[262] STOUT, G. & STOUT, M., 'Patterns in the Past: County Dublin 5000 BC-1000 AD' in *Dublin from Prehistory to Present: Studies in Honour of J.H. Andrews,* ed. by F.H.A. AALEN & K. WHELAN, (Dublin, 1992), pp. 5-25; STOUT, (1997), p. 100.
[263] STOUT, (1997), p. 108.

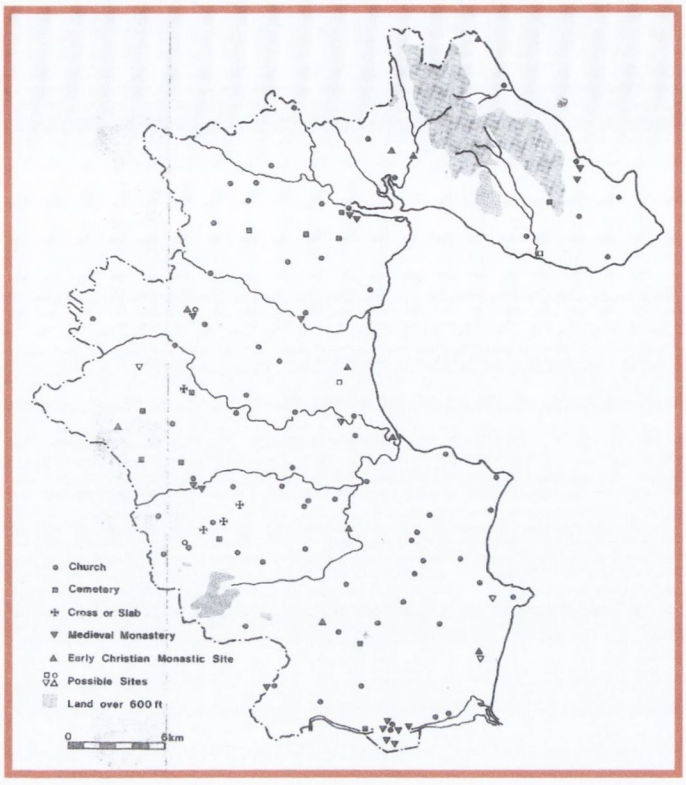


Figure 13: Distribution of Ecclesiastical Remains in County Louth.
(BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991)).

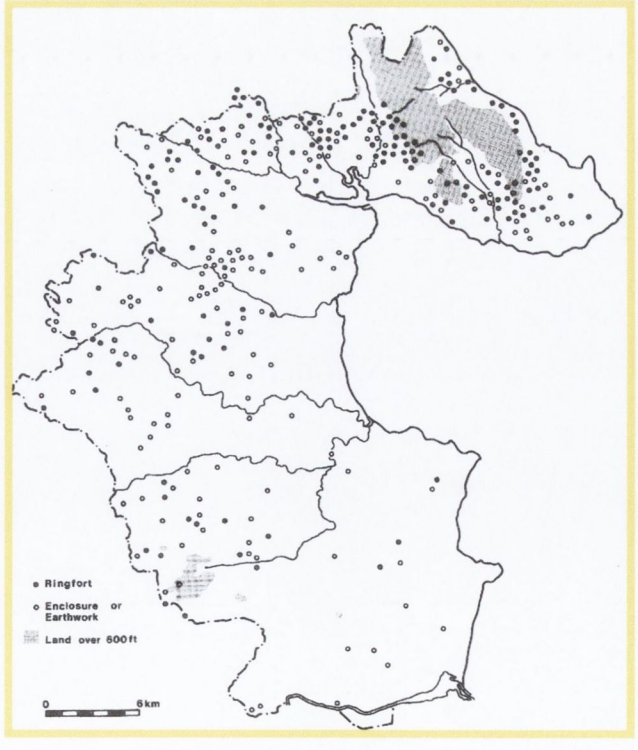


Figure 14: Distribution of Ringforts in County Louth.
(BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991)).

settlement patterns in this area. Indeed, it must also be remembered that while the densest concentration of early medieval monastic sites in Louth occurs in the more southerly regions of the county, in the baronies of Ferrard, and Ardee, ringfort settlement in Co. Louth displays a diametrically reversed distribution pattern which has been cogently described by Barrett:

> *The intermediate hill slopes of the Cooley Peninsula and the areas north and north-west of Dundalk exhibit high densities of ringfort enclosures surviving in the landscape, whilst in the centre and south of the county such features are comparatively few and scattered.*[264]

It is also worth considering the possibility that the enclosures at Faughart Hill were already in existence before the advent of Christianity and that they were later to be re-used hundreds of years later in two differing capacities; firstly as an early medieval monastic settlement in the sixth century, and secondly as an Anglo-Norman manorial parish church in the late twelfth century. Although it can now be stated with certainty that the hill-top church and surrounding enclosures at Faughart once formed part of an early-Christian monastic community, it is impossible to determine, without a detailed excavation, the exact settlement status of this site in the period before the introduction of Christianity to Ireland. However, Buckley has proposed that the outer enclosing ditch at Faughart possibly represents the remains of an earlier hilltop enclosure, which probably dates to the early Iron Age.[265] Moreover, he has compared the site at Faughart to such other hill-top enclosures as Freestone Hill in Co. Kilkenny, Rathgall in Co. Wicklow, and Dun Ailinne in Co. Kildare and is convinced that these sites 'can be seen not only as defensive structures but also as ceremonial and gathering points for the community.'[266]

12. ETYMOLOGY

Although the earliest Christian settlement at Faughart can be tentatively dated to the late fifth-early sixth century, the fact that Faughart is featured prominently in the *Táin Bó Cuailgne* indicates that it also encompassed an important Iron Age settlement before the arrival of Christianity to Ireland. This is a hypothesis which, as previously discussed, has been explored by Buckley, who maintains that the north Louth area, where Faughart is located, formed part of a physical frontier throughout the proto-historic period, which

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[264] BARRETT, (1983), p. 215; see figure 14.
[265] BUCKLEY, (1989), pp. 30-32; COONEY, G., 'The Cooley Peninsula: An Archaeological Landscape in County Louth', *Archaeology Ireland,* Heritage Guide Number 15, (2001), p. 3.
[266] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 32.

he states spanned from the third century BC until the eleventh century AD.[267]Lauded as the oldest vernacular epic in western European literature, the *Táin,*[268] the longest and arguably most important of the Ulster sagas, relates the story of how the armies of Queen Maeve of Connaught tried to capture the King of Ulster's proudest possession, the brown bull of Cooley. Of course the script of the *Táin* as it has survived today is not a primary document which can be relied upon to accurately supply archaeological and historical detail. Even so, it is a source which cannot be ignored for the study of the archaeological settlement at Faughart, although two key questions must be addressed. Firstly, how far back can the text of the *Táin Bó Cuailgne* be accurately dated? And secondly, how reliable is the information contained within this text in relation to a study of the archaeology of Faughart?

The earliest surviving manuscripts containing the story of the *Táin* date to the eleventh century. However, it has been acknowledged that the origins of this epic saga can be traced to a much earlier period.[269] The language of the earliest form of the story is dated to the eighth century but, according to Kinsella, some of the verse passages may be as much as two centuries older. Furthermore, it has long been recognised that the Ulster Cycle, with the rest of early Irish literature, must have had a long oral existence before they were morphed into literary shape.[270] So, although the earliest versions of the *Táin* are believed to have been first committed to vellum in the monasteries of Bangor in Co. Down and Dromsnat in Co. Monaghan in the eighth century, some verses sections are thought to be as much as two centuries earlier.[271]Despite this speculation however, the oldest manuscript containing the *Tain* which has survived to the present day is generally referred to as *Lebor na hUidre*, and was written entirely in old Irish.[272] The origins and authorship of this eleventh century manuscript have been studied in detail by Oskamp who discovered that it was written by three individual scribes whom he refers to as *A*, *M*, and *H* respectively.[273]

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[267] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 23.

[268] GREENWOOD, E.M., 'The Ulster Cycle and the Place of Armagh in the Tradition', in *Armagh History & Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by A.J. HUGHES & W. NOLAN, (Dublin, 2001), p. 99; BARDON, (2005), p. 12.

[269] OSKAMP, H.P.A., 'Notes on the History of *Lebor na hUidre', PRIA,* Vol. 65, Section C, (1967), pp. 117-37; KINSELLA, T., (trans), *The Tain: From the Irish Epic Tain Bo Cuailgne,* (Oxford, 1969), p. ix; BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 23

[270] KINSELLA, (1969), p. ix; BARDON, (2005), p. 12.

[271] BARDON, (2005), p. 12.

[272] GREENWOOD, (2001), p. 101.

[273] Although *A* and *H* have remained anonymous, Oskamp believes that *M* can be positively identified as one Mael Muire who was slain by intruders in the stone church of Clonmacnoise in 1106. A wrote one and

So, having established that the earliest surviving text of the *Táin* dates to the eleventh century, therefore the story itself probably originated in an oral tradition at a much earlier period, how does this information contribute to an archaeological analysis of the medieval church settlement at Faughart? Faughart is referred to as *'Focherd'* throughout the *Táin* [274] and indeed it is notable that many of the Louth placenames included in the *Táin* refer to topographic features such as rivers, hills, and passes – all of which are important landmarks in the county. Faughart is not the only pre-Christian hill-top enclosure to feature in the *Táin:* other notable settlement areas such as *Smirommair* are included and this name is thought by Buckley to refer to the large hilltop enclosure of Lismore fort at Smarmore townland near Ardee. [275] It is certainly interesting that this site also features prominently in the *Táin* as Smarmore, like Faughart, was also to later develop into a monastic site in the early medieval period.[276]Therefore, it appears that while the veracity of the *Táin* as an historical source is certainly far from reliable, the inclusion of such important medieval sites as Faughart and Smarmore raises the possibility that they were also prominent settlement sites in the pre-Christian period at a time when the exploits of the *Táin* were being initially formulated and remembered through oral tradition, something which is borne out by the archaeological evidence.[277] It is likely that at this point natural landscape features such as lakes, hillocks and especially rivers were regarded as parts of the territorial boundaries. Indeed it has even been postulated that the meaning of placenames or onomastic lore in Old Irish tradition served as a mental map for warriors and herders alike.[278] The advantages and disadvantages of

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a half pages of the *Tain,* Mael Muire finished it at a subsequent date, while *H*, working at a later date again, possibly in the fourteenth century, added some leaves to the original text containing paragraphs which did not occur in the original manuscript as written by *A* and Mael Muire. Thus it is probable that most of this surviving manuscript was compiled at Clonmacnoise in the eleventh century, and then possibly moved at a later date to Donegal where *H* made his final interpolations. See OSKAMP, (1967), pp. 119-20, 124 & 135.

[274] KINSELLA, (1969), p. xviii; BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 23. See also Kinsella's map of various places in the baronies of Upper and Lower Dundalk which are mentioned in the *Táin,* including *Focherd,* (Faughart) and the map of Leinster, Ulster and Connacht which depicts the route of the *Táin,* with the baronies of Upper and Lower Dundalk, including Faughart, located within the black box. See also the map of placenames listed in the *Táin* in MUHR, K., 'The East Ulster Perspective on the Ulster Cycle Tales', *Emania: Bulletin of the Navan Research Group,* Volume 14, (1996), p. 52.

[275]See BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 24. It is certainly interesting that this site also features prominently in the *Táin* as Smarmore, like Faughart, was also to later develop into a monastic site in the early medieval period. See BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 79; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 257.

[276]BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 79. BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 257.

[277] The prominence of certain placenames in the eleventh century recension of the *Táin* is not absolute proof of the prominence of the same places in the pre-Christian period, especially if the place later held a monastic site. SIMMS, K., pers. comm., (March, 2009). See also MUHR, K., 'The East Ulster Perspective on the Ulster Cycle Tales', *Emania: Bulletin of the Navan Research Group,* Volume 14, (1996), pp. 51-63.

[278] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 26. It must also be acknowledged that archaeological evidence for many of the items described in the *Táin*, such as scalloped-edged shields, swords, and finery, chariots and royal houses

attempting to utilize the *Táin* as a primary source have been succinctly summed up by Buckley:

> *Though any interpretation of the saga is fraught with problems in anachronisms, later remodelling and the additional Christianising of earlier oral tradition, the Tain is still a source which has a useful part to play in our analysis of the proto-historic period.*[279]

The alleged origins of the placename itself, Faughart or *Fochert,* are also inextricably woven into the deeds and exploits recorded in the *Táin.* It is still not at all generally understood what exact role Faughart played in the *Táin,* indeed the name itself has many derivations and appears under many aliases throughout the course of this ancient epic tale.[280]However, by the time of the Bruce invasion, in the early fourteenth century, the appellation *Fochart Muirthemne* had clearly been replaced by *Fochart Bhríde,* a clear indication that Christian tradition had supplanted the heroic feats of the *Táin.*[281]Exactly when this change in placename occurred cannot be discerned with any certainty. In 1837 Lewis was of the opinion that the ancient name of *Foghard* derived from the 'very ancient fort of singular construction which occupies an elevated situation in the neighbourhood'. [282]This scenario is unlikely and the fact that Faughart has close associations with two early saints, St. Monenna and St. Brigid, and is recorded as '*Teampull Brighide na hAirde Maire'* in early records,[283] would indicate that this placename originated with the church. It is surprising that Stubbs, in his detailed and authoritative study of the placenames of Co. Louth, does not comment at all upon the origins of this placename. His entry relating to Faughart is in fact regrettably brief. [284]

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is difficult to identify and they have been regarded by archaeologists, as fanciful embellishments of the storytellers' imagination. See MALLORY, J.P., 'The World of Cúchulainn: the Archaeology of *Táin Bó Cúailgne',* in *Aspects of the Táin* ed. by J.P. MALLORY, (Belfast, 1992), pp. 103-59.

[279] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 24.

[280] LAWLESS, N., 'Faughart, Crioch Ross and Smarmore', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume III, Number 1, (1912), p. 47. One original tradition for the name purports that Cuchulainn cast a piece of split holly which hit Ferbaeth, his foster-brother, in the neck and passed out through his mouth, hence the place became known as *Focherd Mhuirthemne* – 'the Good Cast of Muirthemne'. Another proposed etymology for this placename has its origin in the legend that because Cuchulainn killed fourteen men from this area in single combat, it became known as *Focerd* – 'the Good Art' of the killing of fourteen men. See BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 30; MACIOMHAIR, D., *Tombstone Inscriptions in Fochart Graveyard, Co. Louth,* (Dundalk, 1967), in http://www.faughart.com/inscriptions-page5467.html.

[281] MACIOMHAIR, D., *Fochart,* (Dundalk, 1970), in http://www.faughart.com/local-history-page26988.html.

[282] LEWIS, (1837), p. 614.

[283] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 32.

[284] 'Faughart Upper, townland, Ballymascanlan Parish, "Faughart Mount." A fort well marked with double enclosure. St. Bridget's well close to the ruins of the old church and graveyard on the same rising ground and close to the mound. Wright's Louthiana', STUBBS, F.W., 'Place Names in the County of Louth [E-N], *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume II, Number. 3, (1910), p. 285.

It is widely accepted that the use of the term *teampull* or the anglicised version 'temple' in association with a townland name or early church site usually signifies a specifically medieval church, or a Protestant church, or a churchyard.[285] Other terms used to refer to churches in early medieval Irish sources are *oratorium, teampall, cill,*[286] *reiclés,*[287] and *basilicum,* the use of which indicates a church containing corporal relics.[288] However, some scholars believe that the term *teampull* actually represents an early primary monastic foundation, rather than a medieval church at Faughart. Thus Buckley has stated that the combination of *teampull* with Brigid in the placename *Teampull Brighide na hAirde Maire* probably denotes a very early monastic foundation rather than a medieval one.[289]More detailed studies on the origins and use of *teampull* in relation to church sites have done little to settle the argument one way or the other. For example, in 1869 Joyce stated categorically that *teampull* was one of the oldest forms of church name used in Ireland. [290] However, most modern commentators on the question have considered the use of *temple* as a church name to be a much later etymological development and in 1967 Flanagan examined some aspects of ecclesiastical nomenclature and attempted to correlate the terminology of church sites in the documentary sources with onomastic evidence. In light of her research, she has suggested that the terms *eaglais*, *mainistir* and *teampall* are all late and probably post-Norman introductions.[291]

However, a more recent study conducted by Hurley which specifically concentrated upon *teampull* place names in the south-west of Ireland has identified some problems with Flanagan's conclusions. He has found that although no instance has been found of the name *temple* being applied to a church in the pre-Norman period a number of the sites now designated as temple are undoubtedly much older than the twelfth

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[285] FOCLÓIR PÓCA, *The English/Irish, Irish/English Dictionary*, (Dublin, 1994), p. 489.

[286]THOMAS, C., 'Early Medieval Munster: Thoughts Upon its Primary Christian Phase', in *Early Medieval Munster,* ed. by M.A. MONK & J. SHEEHAN, (Cork, 1998), pp. 9-16; MANNING, C., 'References to Church Buildings in the Annals', in *Seanchas. Studies in Early and Medieval Irish Archaeology, History and Literature in Honour of Francis J. Byrne,* ed. by A.P. SMYTH, (Dublin, 1999), pp. 37-52; O'KEEFFE, (2003b), p. 69.

[287] MACDONALD, A., 'Reiclés in the Irish Annals to AD 1200', *Peritia,* Volume XIII, (1999), pp. 259-75; O'KEEFFE, (2003b), p. 69.

[288] DOHERTY, C., 'The Basilica in Early Ireland', *Peritia,* Volume III, (1984), pp. 303-15; O'Keeffe, (2003b), p. 69.

[289] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 32.

[290] JOYCE, P.W., *Irish Names of Places,* Vol. I, (Dublin, 1869), pp. 317-18.

[291] FLANAGAN, D., 'Ecclesiastical Nomenclature in Irish Texts and Place-Names: A Comparison', *Proceedings of the 10th International Congress of Onomastic Sciences,* Vol. VI, No. 5, (1967), pp. 379-88; FLANAGAN, D., 'The Christian Impact on Early Ireland: Place-Names Evidence', in *Irland und Europa: Ireland and Europe, the Early Church,* ed. by P. NÍ CHATHÁIN & M. RICHTER, (Stuttgart, 1984), pp. 25-51.

century.[292] So it seems that although the temple part of the name most probably dates from the post-twelfth century period, it would seem to only be applied to a particular type of church which was located on the site of an older pre-Norman church, as was the case with Faughart. Interestingly, he also found that in most of the churches in his study area it would appear that the Anglo-Norman settlers built new churches either on or near earlier pre-existing ecclesiastical sites.[293] He also highlighted the need for more in-depth nationwide research into this area and noted the problems inherent in attempting to analyze the origins and meanings of different church names:

An aspect of early and medieval church sites which has received insufficient attention is their nomenclature. A large range of names is used in relation to church sites, but we are still unsure as to why this should be the case. What, if anything do the names applied to different sites mean? Do they imply differences in size, type or status? Are the names merely fortuitous? This can hardly be the case since differences of terminology most probably indicate differences of function or status. Why not simply call all churches by the same name. Most of these questions cannot as yet be answered indeed a good many of them are probably unanswerable.[294]

It is the opinion of this researcher that the site at Faughart was not randomly chosen by the Anglo-Normans for the building of a medieval church, but rather that it was specifically selected because there was already an early twelfth century church in existence at Faughart; a church with illustrious links back to the early medieval period when a monastic settlement had been founded there in the late fifth or early sixth century. In a similar vein, it is more than likely that patronage of this twelfth century church, along with a devotion to the local saintly cults of Monenna and Brigid was considered by the Anglo-Normans as a method of legitimizing their lordship in Faughart, and imbuing their conquest with a sense of sanctity which was not always borne out by their actions. In fact, patronage of native saints by Norman invaders was not confined to Co. Louth,[295] or indeed to Ireland, as it is a trend which has been studied in detail for other areas of this country,[296] and also for England.[297]

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[292] HURLEY, V., 'The Distribution, Origins and Development of Temple as a Church Name in the South-West of Ireland', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society,* Volume LXXXIV, Number 240, (1979), pp. 82-83; FLANAGAN, (1984), pp. 25-51.

[293] HURLEY, (1979), p. 76.

[294] IBID, p. 76.

[295] For examples in Counties Meath and Down see K. HUGHES, 'The Offices of S. Finnian of Clonard and S. Cianan of Duleek' *Analecta Bollandiana,* Tomus LXXIII, Fasc. III-IV, (1955), p. 342 & pp. 344-345; for examples in Co. Offaly see FITZPATRICK, E. & O'BRIEN, C., *The Medieval Churches of County Offaly,* Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1998).

[296] For example, the high crosses still to be seen at Duleek, as well as the references to the church in the early literary sources indicate that the foundation must have been of significant importance between the eighth and twelfth centuries. According to Hughes, at Duleek 'the Anglo-Normans must have found a local

Although it is St. Brigid who is traditionally credited with having founded a religious establishment at Faughart, according to some historical sources it was actually another female saint, Monenna, who was responsible for the foundation. In common with St. Brigid, the history of St. Monenna at this stage is a complicated mixture of fact and fiction and it is difficult to discern her true connection to Faughart. There is no factual date of birth on record for Monenna. Her death has been recorded in various Irish annals for three subsequent years: 516 A.D., 517 A.D. and 518 A.D., with the *Annals of Ulster* even having recorded her death for each of these years.[298]The only possible clue to her date of birth is contained in the entry made in the *Annals of the Four Masters* which recorded that she died in 517 A.D. as Saint Darcerca, whose first name was Moninne;

> *The fourteenth year of Muirchertach. Saint Darerca, of Cill-Sleibhe-Cuilinn* [Killeavy, Co. Armagh] *whose first name was Moninne, died on the 6th of July. Nine score years was the length of her life.*[299]

If '*nine score years*' is taken as ninety years then she would have been born *c.* 426-7 A.D.[300]

According to both versions of her *Life,* Monenna established her first convent *'on the hill of Focharde'* which grew in time to a community of 50 nuns.[301] Lewis stated that the community comprised 150 nuns,[302]a figure which he appears to have taken from the anonymous version of Monenna's *Life*[303]. According to local tradition, and also to both versions of Monenna's *Life,* she was disturbed one night by noise coming from a

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celebration of the saint's cult and they provided for a liturgical commemoration from the traditions which, they encountered there'. See HUGHES, (1955), p. 356.

[297] For English examples see ROLLASON, D., 'The Shrines of Saints in Later Anglo-Saxon England: Distribution and Distribution', in *The Anglo-Saxon Church: Papers on History, Architecture and Archaeology in Honour of Dr. H.M. Taylor,* ed. by L.A.S. BUTLER & R.K. ROBERTS, CBA Research Report No. 60 , (London, 1986), p. 32.

[298] *Annals of Ulster,* 516, 517, 518; *Annals of Inisfallen,* 516, *Annals of the Four Masters,* 517.

[299] *Annals of the Four Masters,* 517.

[300] However it must also be remembered that there is general agreement among scholars that although annalistic evidence is reasonably trustworthy from the eight century onwards, dates in the fifth and sixth centuries carry much less weight. In fact, Gwynn and Hadcock have warned that although obits of most the Irish monastic founders are to be found in the Annals they should be regarded only as a very general guide to Irish history and cannot be considered as being entirely accurate. See GWYNN, & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 25.

[301] *Life of Saint Monenna by Conchubranus: Part I,* ed. & trans. by ULSTER SOCIETY FOR MEDIEVAL LATIN STUDIES, *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 9, Number 2, (1979), p. 257; *Life of St. Darcerca, or Moninna, the Abbess,* ed. & trans. by L. DE PAOR, *Saint Patrick's World: The* Christian *Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age,* (Dublin, 1993), p. 282; *Life of St. Monenna or Darcerca of Killevy*, ed. & trans. by I. SPERBER, *Armagh History & Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by A.J. HUGHES & W. NOLAN, (Dublin, 2001), ed. & trans. by I. SPERBER, *Armagh History & Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County,* ed. by A.J. HUGHES & W. NOLAN, (Dublin, 2001), p. 78; See also ARCHDALL, (1876), p. 464; RYAN, (1931), p. 137; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 35.

[302] LEWIS, (1837), p. 614.

[303] *Life of St. Monenna or Darcerca of Killevy,* p. 78.

neighbouring settlement below the hill of Faughart and she was told that the merriment arose from a wedding party.[304] The next morning she decided to leave Faughart and she sent her brother, Ronan, to find a more remote place for her convent. He founded it at Chellecleve near the mount of Colmus, more commonly known today as Killeavy. However, according to these sources, she did not entirely abandon the holy community at Faughart and left a nun named Orbila behind as a guard.[305] It was claimed that she and her followers at her foundations at Faughart, and Killeavy lived lives of extreme poverty, often surviving at subsistence level[306] and she is famed in the *Martyrology of Donegal* for her piety and abstinence:

> *Since she took a girdle about her body, It is after knowing it I state it,*
> *She ate not a full or sufficient meal, Moninne of Sliabh Cuilinn.* [307]

The ecclesiastical site at Killeavy continued in use right up until the suppression of the monasteries at which point the church and all the lands attached to it were ceded to Sir Marmaduke Whitchurch. The remains of two medieval churches joined length-wise together still survive at Killeavy.[308] Today, Monenna is still revered as the patroness of Killeavy parish[309] and her feast day is celebrated on one of the alleged dates of her death, 6th of July. [310] However, her associations with the early medieval religious foundation at Faughart appear to have been all but forgotten, and it is her contemporary, St. Brigid who is revered locally and credited with the foundation of the ecclesiastical site on Faughart Hill.

According to local tradition Brigid was born at Fochard Muirthemne, a few miles north of Dundalk *c.* 450 AD and because of the strength of this tradition the area later

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[304] *Life of Saint Monenna by Conchubranus: Part I,* p. 259; *Life of St. Darcerca, or Moninna, the Abbess*, p. 282; *Life of St. Monenna or Darcerca of Killevy,* p. 78.

[305] *Life of St. Darcerca, or Moninna, the Abbess,* (1996), p. 282; *Life of Saint Monenna by Conchubranus: Part I,* p. 259; LEWIS, (1837), p. 614; ARCHDALL, (1876), p. 464; O'KANE & BESSBROOK, (1955), p. 8-111; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 35; MACIOMHAIR, D., *Fochart,* (Dundalk, 1970), in http://www.faughart.com/local-history-page26988.html.
http://www.faughart.com/local-history-page26988.html.

[306] *Life of St. Monenna or Darcerca of Killevy,* p. 71; RYAN, (1931), p. 137; FARMER, (2004), p. 373.

[307] CLERY, M., *The Martyrology of Donegal. A Calendar of the Saints of Ireland,* trans. by J. O' DONOVAN, ed. by J.H. TODD & W. REEVES, *The Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society,* (Dublin, 1864), p. 189.

[308] See Plate 27; LEWIS, (1837), p. 614; ARCHDALL, (1876), p. 464; RYAN, (1931), p. 138; O'KANE & BESSBROOK, (1955), p. 8-111; GWYNN & HADCOCK,(1970), p. 327; *Life of St. Darcerca, or Moninna, the Abbess,* (1996), p. 282; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 35; MACIOMHAIR, D., *Fochart,* (Dundalk, 1970), in http://www.faughart.com/local-history-page26988html; http://www.newryjournal.co.uk/content/view/614/31/;http://www.cregganhistory.co.uk/ofiaichcentre/killeavy.htm.

[309] O'KANE, & BESSBROOK, (1955), p. 7.

[310] *The Martyrology of Donegal,* p. 187; O'KANE & BESSBROOK, (1955), p. 8.

became known locally as Fochard Bríde. [311] This, in turn, opens up the possibility that Fochard Muirthemne may have been a proto-historic cult site.[312]As with Monenna, there is no definite date of birth recorded for Brigid in the Irish annals, although, in 456 A.D. the *Annals of Inisfallen* recorded 'the birth of St. Brigid, as some say',[313] the *Annals of Clonmacnoise* state that she was born in 425 A.D.,[314] while the *Annals of the Four Masters* are silent on the matter. According to the *Annals of Ulster,* Brigid died aged seventy in 523 A.D., although they also report her death in 525 A.D. as well. [315] If either of these accounts is reliable, then it would mean that Brigid was born in either 453 A.D. or 455 A.D., although of course there is no way of verifying the authenticity of any of these entries. What is certain is that the few verifiable facts available about the life of Brigid are vastly outnumbered by unhistorical anecdotes about her miracles, tales of turning wine to beer to cater for unexpected guests, or multiplying pats of butter to feed the poor and similar examples of generous compassion,[316] indeed today she is still revered as the patron saint of dairy workers.[317]

If indeed the original ecclesiastical settlement at Faughart was founded by either Monenna or Brigid then it is likely that it would have been a female religious settlement. Gwynn and Hadcock, in their study of the medieval religious houses of Ireland, used the word 'convent' as a blanket term for female religious houses in Ireland. They did not include the settlement at Faughart in this work but they did state that all of the female religious houses which they incorporated into their study appeared, in most cases, to have survived until the eleventh century or later. [318] However, MacCurtain has pointed out that in addition to the foundations listed by Gwynn and Hadcock, there were also numerous early Celtic monasteries of women which had died out before the reforming synod of Rath Breasail in 1111, or did not survive the Anglo-Norman invasion, not to mention the female religious foundations from the continent which were introduced to Ireland by St.

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[311] LEWIS, (1837), p. 614; TEMPEST, (1920), p. 96; MCCLINTOCK, H.F., 'The "Mantle of Saint Brigid" at Bruges', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XII, Number 3, (1951), p. 119; THE COMBINED TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION, (1989), p. 9; CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 1; FOGRA FAILTE, *Official Guide Louth and Meath,* The National Tourist Publicity Organisation for Ireland, (No Date); Louth County Council, *Official Guide to County Louth,* (Monaghan, No Date), p. 25; http://www.armaghdiocese.org/html/Shrines_St%20Brigid's20Shrine,%20Faughart.htm;http://www.slaine.ie/print.php?sid=91.

[312] FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009).

[313] *Annals of Inisfallen,* 456.

[314] *Annals of Clonmacnoise,* 425.

[315] *Annala Uladh,* 523 & 525.

[316] MACMAHON, M., *Saints: The Art, The History, The Inspiration,* (London, 2006), p. 8.

[317] IBID, p. 419.

[318] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 28.

Malachy as early as 1144.[319]It is certainly interesting that two out of the four known early medieval monastic foundations in the barony of Lower Dundalk, Faughart and Roosky, are alleged to have been originally female foundations, although their exact function and status is still unclear at this stage.[320]

13. CHRONOLOGY

Aerial photography has provided evidence for a substantial early medieval monastic enclosure at Faughart Hill.[321] In the absence of archaeological excavation it is impossible to determine when exactly this monastic foundation was established, although it was reputedly founded by either St. Brigid or St. Monenna, which would suggest that it dates to the late fifth or early sixth century. The remains of a stone cross which were discovered at this site and which possibly date to the ninth century, coupled with the evidence on site for a possible round tower or pattern of small circular enclosures, support aerial photographic evidence which suggests that this site was functioning in a religious capacity for several centuries before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in Faughart.

The Anglo-Norman settlement at Faughart probably originated with the construction of the motte *c.* 1195.[322] The settlement was listed in a document dating to 1301, [323] the church of Faughart was mentioned in the *Dowdall Deeds* in 1355, while the manor of Faughart was referred to in 1326, 1385 and 1396 & 1538.[324] Faughart church was also mentioned in 1535 in the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall.[325] In 1540 the tithes of the church were found to belong to the Priory of St. Mary's of Louth, [326]while the lands of Faughart were listed in 1544 in the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall.[327] In 1622 the church of Faughart was described as vacant and ruinous, with

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[319] MACCURTAIN, M., 'Late Medieval Nunneries of the Irish Pale', in *Surveying Ireland's Past: Multidisciplinary Essays in Honour of Anngret Simms,* ed. by H.B. CLARKE, J. PRUNTY, M. HENNESSY, A. HORNER & W. NOLAN, (Dublin, 2004), p. 130.

[320] For a more general discussion on female monasticism see HUGHES, K., *Church and Society in Ireland, A.D. 400-1200,* (London, 1987); DE PAOR, L., *Saint Patrick's World: The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age*, (Dublin, 1993) & HARRINGTON, C., *Women in a Celtic Church: Ireland 450-1150,* (Oxford, 2002).

[321] See Plate 2.

[322] SMITH, (1999), p. 45.

[323] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 42.

[324] *Dowdall Deeds,*1355, 1326, 1385, 1396 & 1538.

[325] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall*, 1535.

[326] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions 1540-42,* (1943), p. 231.

[327] *Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1544,

Viscount Moore the impropriator,[328]but by 1627 Roger Briscoe was curate and in 1641 Richard Clarke was rector of the church and had purchased part of the tithes for £50.[329] In 1658 Faughart church was recorded as being once again out of repair and without a minister,[330] although by 1690 one James Cubet had become curate.[331] Finally, Isaac Butler recorded that the church had fallen into ruins in 1744.[332]

The extant archaeological remains at the church appear to represent at least two different phases of construction. Condit, Buckley & Sweetman have all dated the nave/western portion of this church to the twelfth century.[333] They have based this theory the existing masonry evident at the church, the window evident in the north wall as well as a fragment of twelfth century pottery which was found in the vicinity of the church during O'Connor's excavation of 1966.[334] The eastern end of the church, which is of later medieval date, may represent the chancel, or alternatively some form of priest's residence.

III. PROLEEK

1. INTRODUCTION

There are two early medieval ecclesiastical enclosures located within the townland of Proleek, which is situated in the parish of Ballymascanlan, in the north-western portion of the barony of Lower Dundalk.[335] The first site, Proleek I, is located approximately 1.5km to the south-east of Faughart Church and 1.3km to the north-west of the second site, Proleek II, or *Cille Mór*, which, in turn, is situated 2.8km to the south-east of Faughart Church.[336] Although neither of the enclosures were discussed by Ua Muireadaig or by Gwynn & Hadcock,[337] Proleek II was briefly alluded to by Davies

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[328] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* p. 10; LESLIE, (1911), pp. 300-02.
[329] LESLIE, (1948), p. 112.
[330] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, p. 36.
[331] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*, p. 10; LESLIE, (1911), pp. 300-02.
[332] DEANE, (1922), p. 100.
[333] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 30; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 231; CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 3.
[334] O'CONNOR, (1966), pp. 127-28.
[335] They will be referred to throughout this study as Proleek I and Proleek II.
[336] See Figure 1.
[337] UA MUIREADAIG, (1904), pp. 23-36; UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), pp. 72-77; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970).

in 1941.[338] Both sites, however, were surveyed by Buckley in 1966 and subsequently included in the 1986 *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* where they were classified as early Christian monastic enclosures.[339] They were subsequently listed and described in the 1991 *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* where they were once again categorized as early Christian monastic enclosures.[340] In addition to these two publications, the 1984 preliminary archaeological survey of Louth classified Proleek I as a 'cemetery',[341] while Proleek II was briefly referred to in 2005 by O'Sullivan in his study of the Catholic parishes of the barony of Lower Dundalk.[342] Although neither of these sites has ever been archaeologically excavated, three sherds of pottery were discovered at Proleek II in 1978 by Paul Gosling.[343]

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

There are no surviving historical references to the early medieval ecclesiastical settlements at Proleek. However, one of the associated archaeological monuments in the vicinity, a megalithic tomb, which is located approximately 1.2km to the south-east of Proleek I and 0.75km to the south-west of Proleek II, was referred to in the *Annals of the Four Masters* in 1452 as *Clogh an Bhodaigh,* which Stubbs has translated as 'the Churl's stone'.[344] The origin and meaning of this reference is not clear and although the distance of this site from the ecclesiastical enclosures, coupled with the fact that Ó Nualláin and Walsh have suggested a late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date for this wedge-tomb[345] indicates that the site is unrelated to the early medieval phase of settlement, although the fact that it was mentioned in a medieval source indicates that it was still regarded at this point as a site of some significance.

The only other two surviving documentary references to Proleek, noted occurred in 1628 and 1664. In 1628, following the death of Garrett Viscount Moore, a *Chancery*

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[338] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.
[339] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78.
[340] BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256. Proleek I is listed in both the *Inventory* and the *Survey* as site number 971, while Proleek II is listed as site number 972.
[341] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 6.
[342] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 67.
[343] NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, 1978: 268, Proleek Coarse Potsherd ; 1978 :269, Proleek Coarse Potsherd ; 1978 :270, Proleek Medieval Potsherd.
[344] *Annals of the Four Masters,* STUBBS, (1911), p. 352.
[345] Ó NUALLÁIN, S. & WALSH, P., 'Megalithic Tombs', in *Archaeological Survey of County Louth*, ed. by V.M. BUCKLEY & P.D. SWEETMAN, The Stationery Office, Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1991), p. 24.

Inquisition found that he had been seized of lands including 'Faghart, Ballmascanlon and Prolugg.'[346] According to the Hearth Money Rolls of 1664:

> *Parish of Ffagherd included Ffagherdstowne, Malyard, Edentober, Aghonloghan, Jenkinstowne, Dullargie, Feed, Agherniverny, Aghnoskye, Derryvalone, Proleeke, Plaster, Ballymascanlan, Corcarnan.* [347]

Murray commented further on this source observing that 'the 1664 parish of Ffagherd is roughly the modern civil parish of Ballymascanlon. The civil parish of Faughard – which strange to say does not include either of the Faughard townlands – has already been included in the Castletown Roll. Down to the end of the 18th century, these two parishes were known as Upper and Lower Faughard. We understand that the names were changed on account of the confusion caused between the townlands of Upper and Lower Faughard.'[348]

There is a fourth historical reference upon which it is worth commenting at this point. It was included in the Royal Visitation records of 1622 and recorded a church in the barony of Lower Dundalk called 'Kilmore Cooly' which was described as vacant, but which also listed Ambrose Appiu as curate.[349] There were two ecclesiastical sites in the barony of Lower Dundalk which were referred to alternately as *Cill Mór/Kilmore/Kilwirra/Kilwore* in the medieval period. The first was the early medieval ecclesiastical enclosure located at Proleek II, and the second was the Anglo-Norman church which was established in Templetown.[350] Although Tempest has suggested that there was also a church located at Proleek II in the later medieval period,[351] and although the site at Proleek is technically located on the Cooley Peninsula, the description of the church listed in 1622 as 'Kilmore Cooley' tends to suggest that it related to the church at Templetown, which was located right in the heartland of Cooley, rather than the site at Proleek, which has only ever been described as being situated in either Proleek or Ballymascanlan.

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[346] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 82.
[347] MACIOMHAIR, D., 'Post Reformation Pastors of Fochart', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 9, Number 1, (1978), pp. 151-154.
[348] MURRAY, L.P., 'Note on the 1664 Parish of Ffagherd' *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 9, Number 1, (1978), p. 154.
[349] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*, p. 10. See also Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, IX. Knocknagoran Church, footnote number 26.
[350] See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Templetown.
[351] DAVIES, (1941a), p. 7; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.

3. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Although the ecclesiastical enclosures at Proleek are not depicted on any maps dating to the medieval period, the enclosure at Proleek II was photographed from the air by St. Joseph in the 1960s.[352] This photograph is of chief importance for the study of this site for, as well as clearly showing the extent of the enclosure, which is bounded by a stone wall, it also gives some indication of the extent to which the site is located on a higher contour than the surrounding landscape, something which is not evident to the same degree at ground level.

4. LOCATION

As previously indicated the first ecclesiastical enclosure, Proleek I, is located approximately 1.3km to the north-west of the second site, Proleek II. Proleek II is also located approximately 1.75km to the north-east of the medieval church of Ballymascanlan. Both of the enclosures at Proleek are located in slightly elevated lands in the midst of good quality agricultural land, although strategically neither site appears to have been as prominent as the early medieval monastic enclosure at Faughart. In 1914 Murray, in his historical study of Omeath and its environs made an interesting comment regarding the early medieval monastic foundations in the Omeath/Carlingford region:

> *Three monasteries ministered to the spiritual wants of the people in pre-Norman times, one at Rooskey, near Carlingford where until lately there were the ruins of an old church; another a Columban foundation, on the site of the present graveyard; and a third called Cillansnamh in the present townland of Cornamucklagh. The latter was destroyed by the Danes in 841, and with the exception of the abbot who happened to be away on business all the monks were slaughtered.*[353]

This is certainly an ambiguous statement and initially seems to suggest that this Columban foundation was located somewhere in Omeath, perhaps at one the possible church sites in the townland of Knocknagoran.[354] However this statement could also be construed as referring to the whole peninsula, and if this is the case then this reference to 'a Columban foundation, on the site of the present graveyard', could potentially refer to the site at Proleek which, according to Buckley & Sweetman and O'Sullivan, once

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[352] CUCAP BGL, 46: Aerial view of early medieval monastic enclosure at Proleek. See Plate 32.
[353] MURRAY, L.P., 'Omeath', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume III, Number 3, (1914), pp. 213-231.
[354] See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, IX. Knocknagoran Church.



Plate 32: Aerial view of the enclosure at Proleek II.
(CUCAP BGL 46, Courtesy of the Cambridge University Unit for Landscape Modelling).

contained 'rough headstones'.[355] It is unfortunate that Davies did not include a detailed treatment of this site in his 1941 survey of the churches of Lower Dundalk. Although he did make a brief allusion to this site, it is apparent from his reference that, although familiar with its general location, he did not visit or survey the enclosure himself, nor did he include it in his study as a site in its own right, presumably because at this point there were no physical archaeological remains extant:

> *Mr. Tempest has told me of a place called Kilwore, a mile and a quarter N.N.E. of the church* [Ballymascanlan], *which may be an ecclesiastical site. At neither place is a church marked on the 1609 map of south Ulster.*[356]

5. SIZE

Considering the fact that there are no masonry remains extant at either of the enclosures at Proleek it is impossible to comment upon the size of any church or associated structures which may once have existed at either site. However, it is worth discussing the size of the enclosures themselves, as possible indicators of the functionality and relative importance of the sites in the early medieval period. Proleek I, when surveyed, was found to be circular in area with a maximum diameter of 76.5m, and was bounded by a modern field fence. Buckley and Sweetman identified a possible 'ancient entrance' at the west end of the site. [357] The enclosure located at Proleek II was found to be oval in area with maximum dimensions of 129m east-west and 118m north-south, and was bounded by stone wall, with a sunken lane outside the wall on the south side of the enclosure which Buckley and Sweetman construed as the possible remains of an external fosse.[358]

6. MORPHOLOGY

Although it is impossible to speculate upon the morphology of any possible churches which may have been located at Proleek I and Proleek II in the early medieval period both of these sites have been categorized by Buckley and Sweetman as early Christian monastic enclosures, although the reasons for these assessments were not elucidated.[359] In the case of Proleek I it can only be presumed that this enclosure was

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[355] TEMPEST, (1944), p. 317; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (2005), p. 256; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 67.
[356] DAVIES, p. 7. Presumably the map which Davies refers to here is Richard Bartlett's *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602.*
[357] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[358] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[359] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.

classified as a religious enclosure due to the discovery of two long cist burials in the interior of the site.[360] The classification of Proleek II as an ecclesiastical site appears to be based upon several factors; the site is referred to locally as *Cille Mór,*[361] it is said to have once contained rough headstones,[362] according to the OS Memoranda a cross-inscribed slab was discovered at an unknown date in the fence at the east end of the enclosure,[363] and finally, according to Tempest it was possibly the site of an outlying church belonging to Mellifont Abbey.[364]Additionally, O'Sullivan has speculated that the description of this site 'fits the early medieval period prior to the Norman invasion.'[365]

7. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERIES

Although there are now no physical signs of cemeteries present at either of the Proleek enclosures, there is some tentative evidence to suggest that burials once took place at both sites. Interestingly, in his description of the site of a possible souterrain at Proleek, Buckley described it as being located 'in a field west of Kilmore graveyard (No. 971).'[366] This description is somewhat confusing as site number 971 in both the *Inventory* and the *Survey* is Proleek I, while it is Proleek II, site number 972, which is known locally as Kilmore or *Cille Mór*. Furthermore, in the same publication, in the chapter entitled *Ecclesiastical Remains,* Buckley categorized both sites as early monastic enclosures, but did not describe either site as including a graveyard.[367]

a. GRAVE SLABS/STONES

In the case of Proleek II, there is circumstantial evidence to support a history of burial at this site in the form of the local tradition that the enclosure once contained headstones.[368] Furthermore, a cross-inscribed slab was reputedly discovered at an

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[360] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 16 & 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 66 & 256.
[361] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 67.
[362] TEMPEST, (1944), p. 317; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 67.
[363] OS MEMORANDA, 'Co. Louth 1836', (1938-39); BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[364] TEMPEST, (1944), p. 317; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[365] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 67.
[366] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 44. The preliminary archaeological survey of Louth also classified this site as a cemetery. See ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 6.
[367] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78.
[368] TEMPEST, (1944), p. 317; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 67.

unknown date in the fence at the east side of the enclosure,[369]although, in the absence of any further information about this stone, it is impossible to comment upon its origins or typology.

b. EXCAVATED BURIALS

Although neither of the Proleek enclosures has ever undergone archaeological excavations, Tempest, in 1944, stated that two long cists, aligned east-west had been discovered in the interior of Proleek I; one containing a skull, the other fragments of unidentified human bone.[370] In 1984 this site was categorized as a 'cemetery' rather than an enclosure by the preliminary archaeological survey of Louth.[371] Additionally, in 1986 Buckley identified a possible long cist burial located within the enclosure at Proleek II. He described as a 'flat slab with stones below suggesting a possible stone cist.'[372] These three burials were recorded in the chapter of the *Survey* entitled *Burials (Cist and Pit.)* They were categorized generally along with numerous other sites as being isolated burials, not located within an organized cemetery. As a county grouping they were usually uncovered during the course of building or agricultural work, were difficult to date, and were not found to be associated with surface monuments.[373]

8. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

As previously mentioned, although neither of the Proleek enclosures has been excavated, three surface finds of pottery were discovered in plough soil at Proleek II in 1978 by Paul Gosling. The first and second pieces were two corroded, coarse, medieval potsherds, both red on one side and grey on the other, while the third was post-medieval in date, orange in colour and unglazed.[374] These finds could tentatively support Tempest's view that some sort of a later medieval settlement, possibly an ecclesiastical one, existed at Proleek II, and that the site continued to be utilized in the post-medieval period.

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[369] OS MEMORANDA, 'Co. Louth 1836', (1938-39); BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[370]TEMPEST, H.G, 'Kilwore, Proleek Townland,' *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume X, Number 4, (1944), (1944), p. 317; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 16; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 66.
[371] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND,(1984), p. 6.
[372] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 17; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 69.
[373] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 63.
[374] NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, 1978: 268, Proleek Coarse Potsherd ; 1978 :269, Proleek Coarse Potsherd ; 1978 :270, Proleek Medieval Potsherd.

9. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Although the preliminary survey of Louth omitted the site at Proleek II and listed just Proleek I as a cemetery along with two megalithic tombs,[375] Buckley and Sweetman further expanded this list of sites to include; two megalithic tombs, two long cists, one possible long cist, one souterrain, one possible souterrain, one ringfort, and two early Christian monastic enclosures.[376] One of the megalithic tombs, the famous Proleek Dolmen located on the grounds of the Ballymascanlan Hotel was illustrated by Wright in 1748 who described it as a 'Cromlech at Ballymascandlan'.[377] The sites which are of primary significance to this study are the ringfort, the souterrain and the possible souterrain. The souterrain is located just inside the western boundary of the ringfort, which in turn is located approximately 0.5km to the north-east of Proleek I and 0.3km to the north-west of Proleek II.[378] The site of the possible souterrain is located in a field to the west of Proleek II, and Buckley in 1986 recorded the local tradition of a 'cave' consisting of a passage intersecting with a gallery.[379]

10. ETYMOLOGY

Stubbs has translated the placename 'Proleek' as 'a quern or small grinding stone',[380]but unfortunately, apart from this small snippet of information, there appears to be no other etymological evidence which can assist with the dating of this site.

11. CHRONOLOGY

In the absence of any extant archaeological remains, it is extremely difficult to attempt to construct an accurate chronology for either of the enclosures at Proleek. Unlike some of the other ecclesiastical sites in the barony of Lower Dundalk, where the physical remains were found to be minimal but where a loose chronology could be elicited from

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[375] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 6.
[376] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 109; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 400-1. See Figure 20.
[377] WRIGHT, (2000), plate number 5.See also HARBISON, P., *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland,* Third Edition, (Dublin, 1992a), p. 240; GOSLING, P. (ed), 'Summary Catalogue of the Monuments and Artifacts Illustrated in *Louthiana*', in *Louthiana: or, An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland, Books I, II & III*, by T. WRIGHT, Millennium Reprint of the First 1748 London Edition, (Dundalk, 2000), p. x.
[378] See BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 36 & 56; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 138 & 181.
[379] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 44; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 147.
[380] STUBBS, (1911), p. 352.

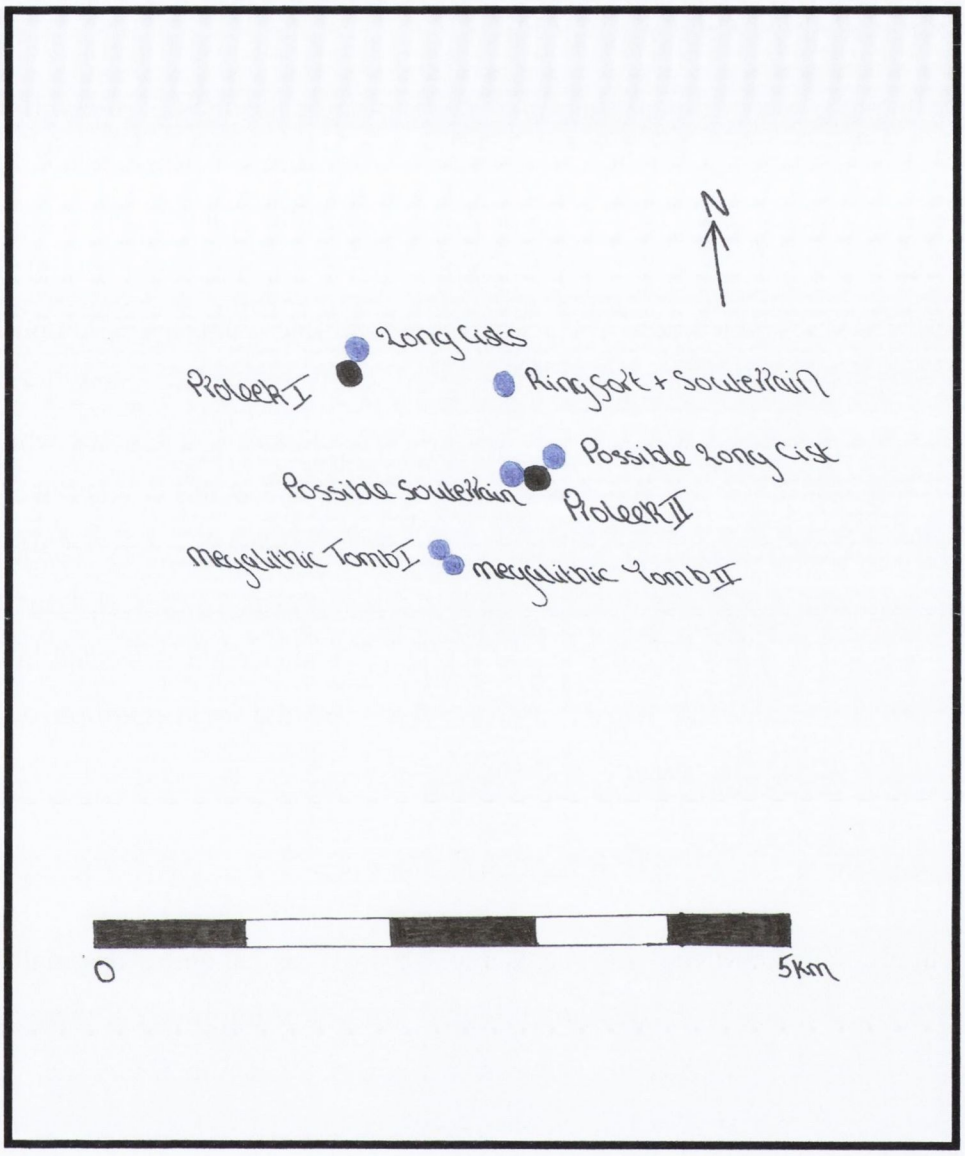


Figure 20: Rough map of the associated archaeological sites at Proleek. The two early medieval enclosures are indicated with black dots, while all other sites are depicted in blue.

the historical record, the paucity of documentary references for the Proleek sites greatly hinders this method of chronological research.

The associated archaeological sites in the general vicinity of the Proleek enclosures indicate that this was an area which had attracted human settlement from at least the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. The presence of the two early medieval enclosures, along with two cist burials, one possible cist burial, one ringfort, one souterrain and one possible souterrain site indicates that there was a pattern of continuity of settlement evident in this region, which is not surprising, considering the nature of the surrounding landscape, which is primarily composed of good quality agricultural lands.

IV. ROOSKY PRIORY

1. INTRODUCTION

The remains of Roosky Priory are located on the eastern extremity of the Cooley Peninsula, on the lower slopes of the Carlingford Mountains overlooking Carlingford town and lough to the north and north-east, and at a distance of approximately 27 km from Faughart Church.[381] The site of this priory was surveyed by Tempest in 1928,[382] by Davies in 1941,[383] and then again on the 9th August 1968 for the *Archaeological Survey of Ireland,* some results of which were published in the *Inventory* in 1986 by Buckley,[384] with a more detailed account being published in the *Survey* in 1991 by Buckley and Sweetman.[385]

> *Three monasteries ministered to the spiritual wants of the people in pre-Norman times, one at Rooskey, near Carlingford where until lately there were the ruins of an old church; another a Columban foundation, on the site of the present graveyard; and a third called Cillansnamh in the present townland of Cornamucklagh. The latter was destroyed by the Danes in 841, and with the exception of the abbot who happened to be away on business all the monks were slaughtered.*[386]

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[381] See Figure 1 & Plate 33.
[382] TEMPEST, H.G., 'Rooskey Priory', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VI, Number 4, (1928), pp.263-64.
[383] DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 10-11.
[384] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76.
[385] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 236-37. See also RMP LH 008-01801, Roosky Priory.
[386] MURRAY, L.P., 'Omeath', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume III, Number 3, (1914), pp. 213-231.

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Despite the fact that the extant archaeological remains at Roosky Priory are minimal, historical references to this site are, compared to the other sites under review, quite numerous. Probably the earliest and only surviving account of the foundation of Roosky Priory is that contained in the *Life of Saint Monenna.* According to the *Life* there was among the community at Faughart a widow who had a young male child named Luger whom Monenna befriended. When he grew up he became a bishop and is credited with Monenna as having founded the church of *'Ruscane'* in the plain of Colyi, better known of course in later centuries as Roosky in the eastern foothills of Sliabh Foy, near Carlingford:[387]

> *There were with her at first, as they tell, eight virgins, as well as one widow who had a small boy named Luger. Darcerca* [Monenna] *adopted the child as her foster son and when she had thoroughly accustomed him to the ways of the church, she raised him to the dignity of a bishop. She crowned his good works as leader of the whole of his people, the Conaille – by building the church of Ruscach in honour of God.* [388]

According to Gwynn and Hadcock Roosky Priory[389] was possibly founded by the Knights Templar. [390] They do not elaborate upon their reasons for arriving at this opinion and although Roosky could definitely not have been founded by this order, as its foundation actually pre-dates the arrival of the Anglo-Normans on the Cooley Peninsula, this is one myth about the Templars in the area which has proven to be a difficult one to dispel. An anonymous handwritten note in the *Sites and Monuments Record* file for Roosky alleges that it may have formed part of the Dominican Abbey founded at Carlingford in 1305, but again this claim is without foundation.[391] The earliest documentary reference to Roosky Priory which can be dated to the period following the Anglo-Norman colonization of Lower Dundalk occurred in 1237 when 'the churches of Carlingford and Rooskey' were mentioned in a deed, their profits having been granted by Hugh de Lacy in that year to the Church and Canons of St.

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[387] RYAN, (1931), pp. 136-37; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 35; FARMER, (2004), p. 373.

[388] *Life of St. Darcerca, or Moninna, the Abbess,* p. 282. For the 18th of September, the *Martyrology of Donegal* also mentions St. Maelcaemhgin of Rusgach in Cuailgne, although I can find no other reference to this saint's connection with Roosky. See Ua MUIREADAIG, L.P., 'Monasteries of Louth. Part 1: The Pre-Norman Monasteries', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Volume 1, Number 1, (1904), pp. 34-35.

[389] This site is referred to in many publications either as 'Roosky' or 'Rooskey'. I will use the spelling 'Roosky' throughout the course of this chapter as it is the version used in the *Archaeological Survey of County Louth.*

[390] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 368.

[391] RMP LH 008-01801 Roosky Priory.



Plate 33: The remains of Roosky Priory as viewed from the road.

Andrew the Apostle in Scotland.[392] While it certainly was not founded by the Knights Templar it is possible however that it was included in the grant of Matilda de Lacy to the order in the thirteenth century. In 1332 the archbishop of Armagh, Roland Joyce was accused of having robbed Roosky manor and church, [393] while in October 1461 Archbishop Octavian leased his manor of 'Ruschag near Carlingford' to one Christopher Marynam of Carlingford for a term of four years at a rent of six shillings and eight pence along with one thousand oysters at Lenten time. Christopher was also required to keep the manor with its 'chapel, houses and fords' in good condition and should he default upon this agreement the archbishop was authorized to terminate his contract. [394] In 1532 the archbishop leased the tithes of Roosky to Simon Betagh vicar of Carlingford for a term of five years.[395]

Roosky is listed in Archbishop Dowdall's rentals for 1544 at six shillings and eight pence which appears to be a continuance of Octavian's Rental of 1491.[396] In an inquisition taken c. 1610 of the estate of Arthur Bagnall of Newry it was found that he possessed 16 acres of 'land called Rowskagh near to the town of Carlingford'. However an inquisition some ten years later of the land of the archbishop of Armagh shows the latter as holding one carucate of land at Rusteagh as well as the 'manor of Rustagh' near Carlingford'. The ownership of the lands of Roosky seem to have been put to rest by the *Royal Visitation of 1622* which found Rustagh to be a parcel of land held by the Archbishop of Armagh, containing 20 acres held in a lease of 60 years by Stephen Neale who also held a third part of the tithes of the rectory of Carlingford and Cooley.[397] Neale was a forfeiting proprietor in the confiscations of the English Commonwealth of the 1650s, but Roosky escaped the clutches of the Bagnalls, the Trevors, Charles II's brother James Duke of York and Theobald Taaffe earl of Carlingford who were the principal beneficiaries in the Restoration Land Settlement of the 1670s in Carlingford.[398]

By 1703, Thomas Ashe, an agent for Primate Narcissus Marsh, noted in a survey of lands in Co. Louth that belonged to the See of Armagh, that for 'Ruskagh':

There are two denominations of land known by that name and distinguished by Upr and Ler Ruskagh each containing 8 acres. They are parks near to the town of Carlingford and

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[392] GOSLING, P., *Carlingford Town: An Antiquarian's Guide,* Carlingford Lough Heritage Trust, (Carlingford, 1992), p. 17.
[393] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 47.
[394] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 47.
[395] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 47.
[396] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall*, p. 221.
[397] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* pp. 8-10.
[398] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 48.

upon them stands an old Monastery and Chapell both which are ruinous and destroy'd, nothing remaining but the old walls. There are also 3 or 4 cabins upon the land. James Thomas and Geo Steers are tenants. Henry Hunter Esq. ac. 16 0. 8 0. Rent £28 13 4. [399]

Over a century later, in 1837, Lewis in a description of Carlingford for his *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* noted that;

On the summit of a neighbouring hill at Ruskey are small remains of a church, or chapel, with traces of a burial-ground, but no other monuments or even graves: it is thought to have been a rural residence of the abbot. [400]

3. CARTOGRAPHY

Roosky Priory is depicted upon a map of Carlingford, Newry and Greencastle entitled *O Hanlans Cvntrie* which dates to 1624.[401] *O'Hanlan's Cvntrie* forms part of a collection of manuscript plans in the British Library entitled *The State of fortes in Ireland as they weare in the yeare 1624.*[402] The map appears to depict three religious buildings; Roosky Priory outside the town walls to the top left, the Dominican Abbey, also outside the town walls to the direct left and a third structure bearing a cross located within the wall boundaries.[403]

4. LOCATION

The archaeological remains of Roosky Priory are situated in the parish of Carlingford, on the eastern portion of the Cooley Peninsula, on the lower slopes of the Carlingford Mountains and in the midst of an agriculturally fertile pocket of land. In common with the church site at Faughart, it is not difficult to understand why this particular spot would have been chosen as the location for an early medieval monastic foundation. From a strategic point of view, the benefits of this site are glaringly obvious; it offers a breath-taking view of the medieval town of Carlingford to the north with an extended view of Carlingford Lough to the north-east. Of course, when the first ecclesiastical settlement was established at Roosky, possibly as early as the sixth century, there was no town in existence at Carlingford, thus reinforcing the fact that this site must have been chosen for its communication and trading advantages, situated as it was so

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[399] *Extracts from Rent Rolls of the See of Armagh in 1703*, p. 92.
[400] http://www.irish-architecture.com/buildings_ireland/louth/carlingford/lewis.html.
[401] See Figure 21.
[402] The map of *O Hanlans Cvntrie* was purchased on 1st July 1861, for £14 14s, at Sotheby's, in the sale of Archbishop Tenison's manuscripts (lot 76). ST. JOHN-MCALISTER, M., pers. comm. (June, 2009).
[403] See Figure 21.



Figure 21: Roosky Priory as depicted upon *O Hanlans Cvntrie'* (1624).
(Armagh County Museum, Accession Number 392.1935(SB 688 Shelf E11, room G14)).

conveniently close to Carlingford Lough. Indeed, it seems certain that strategic factors would have been important to the survival of both of the ecclesiastical sites at Roosky and at Faughart, where not only did they survive the pillaging of the Vikings, but they also endured in varying capacities as parish churches throughout the later medieval period.

5. SIZE

The archaeological remains as they stand today consist of extensive earth-covered remains of walls and a small portion of the standing remains of a church. The standing remains of the church consist of a *c.* 20m length of the north wall and *c.* 8.5m of its west gable.[404] According to Buckley & Sweetman, the church was possibly *c.* 20m long overall and if the area at the east end of the building represents a chancel then this would have measured *c.* 6m by *c.* 6m. [405] These dimensions indicate that overall the church may have had an approximate internal area of 170 square metres, that the internal area of the chancel was 36 square metres, while the nave would have been 119 square metres in area. According to research conducted by Ó Carragáin into the size and function of church buildings in early medieval Ireland this would signify a church of large size, with an important function.[406]This contrasts greatly with the dimensions at Faughart where the internal area of the west end of the church measuring 84 square metres would indicate a church of middle size.[407]However it should be noted that this conclusion is compromised by the fact that the extant archaeological remains at Roosky may be representative of the church of a later medieval religious which developed at the site in the Anglo-Norman period, rather than a structure which dates solely to the early medieval period.

6. MORPHOLOGY

On the balance of evidence it seems that Roosky Priory can tentatively be classified as a nave and chancel church. Although its east end has been completely destroyed down to ground level, Buckley and Sweetman identified evidence for a cross-

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[404] TEMPEST, (1928), p. 263; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236; see Figures 22, 23 & 24.
[405] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[406] Ó CARRAGÁIN, (2006), p. 108. According to Ó Carragáin of the sites mentioned in the annals before *c.* 1050, the three top-ranking sites are Glendalough measuring 131.5 square metres, Lorrha measuring 129.9 square metres and Clonmacnoise measuring 200.9 square metres.
[407] FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009); Ó CARRAGÁIN, (2006), pp. 107-8.

wall at a point approximately 14m east of the west gable. In addition to this, to the east of this apparent cross-wall there is slight evidence of a possible chancel.[408]

7. MASONRY STYLES

Like the medieval church at Faughart, the structure at Roosky is built from blocks and slabs of uncoursed rubble granite and greywacke.[409]

8. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

c. WINDOWS

It is significant that Davies identified evidence of Romanesque building at Roosky Priory. He described a large Romanesque rectangular door with monolithic jambs in the western gable of the church. [410] In addition to this he also recorded the presence of at least two voussoirs of a fair sized round headed window, probably Romanesque both extended through the whole thickness of the wall, although he also noted that some other blocks could not be ascribed to a specific period with any degree of certainty.[411] Unfortunately, due to the overgrown state of this site, these 'Romanesque' features are currently not visible and could be photographed on recent visits to Roosky, although it is possible that they have survived and remain concealed beneath the undergrowth.

d. DOORWAYS

The west gable has a gap in it marked by a large, upright, transversely set granite slab which may represent the north jamb of the original doorway.[412]A large granite stone which is almost certainly the original lintel of the doorway lies just to the south-west of the jamb stone in the west gable. The lintel is 2.16m long and 0.74m wide and 0.39m thick, and has been cut back for a length of 1.75m, leaving its extremities as the portions of the jambs. It has been carefully punch-dressed and decorated on its border with two shallow incised lines. This punch-dressing could indicate anything from a fourteenth date

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[408] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[409] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 34.
[410] IBID, (1941), p. 11.
[411] IBID, (1941), p. 11.
[412] TEMPEST, (1928), p. 263; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236; see Figure 25.

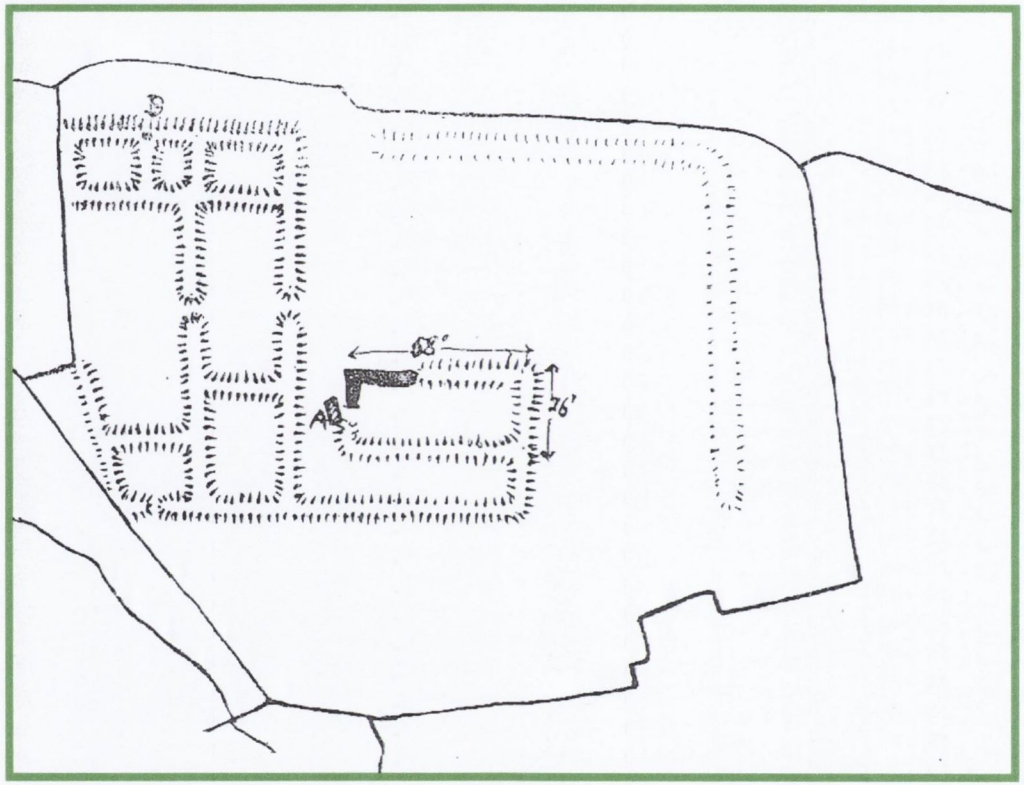


Figure 22: Rough Plan of Roosky Priory by Tempest, 1928.
(TEMPEST, H.G., 'Rooskey Priory', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VI, Number 4, (1928), pp. 263-64).

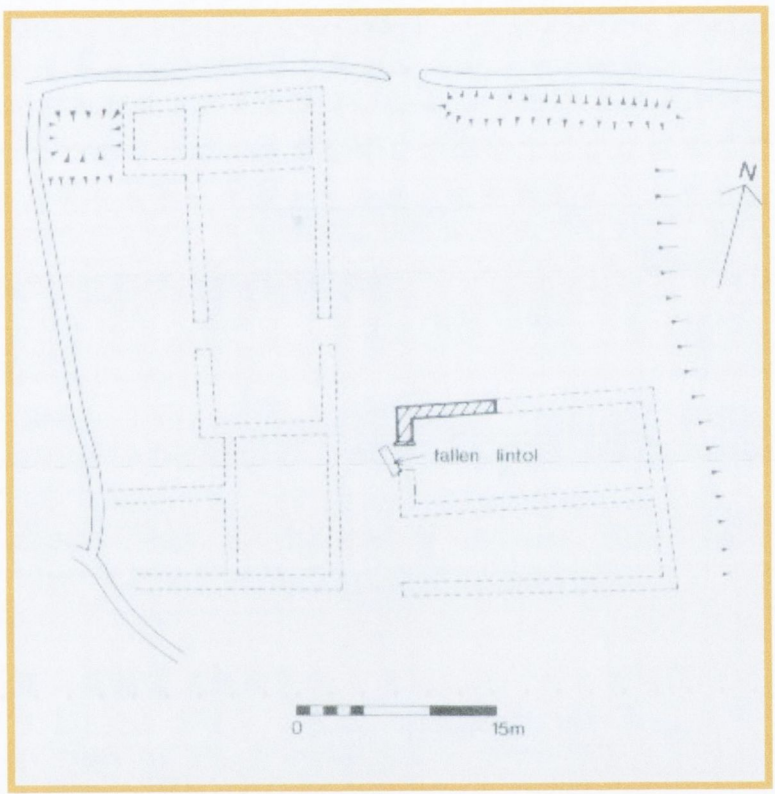


Figure 23: Plan of Roosky Priory by Buckley & Sweetman, 1991.
(BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991)).

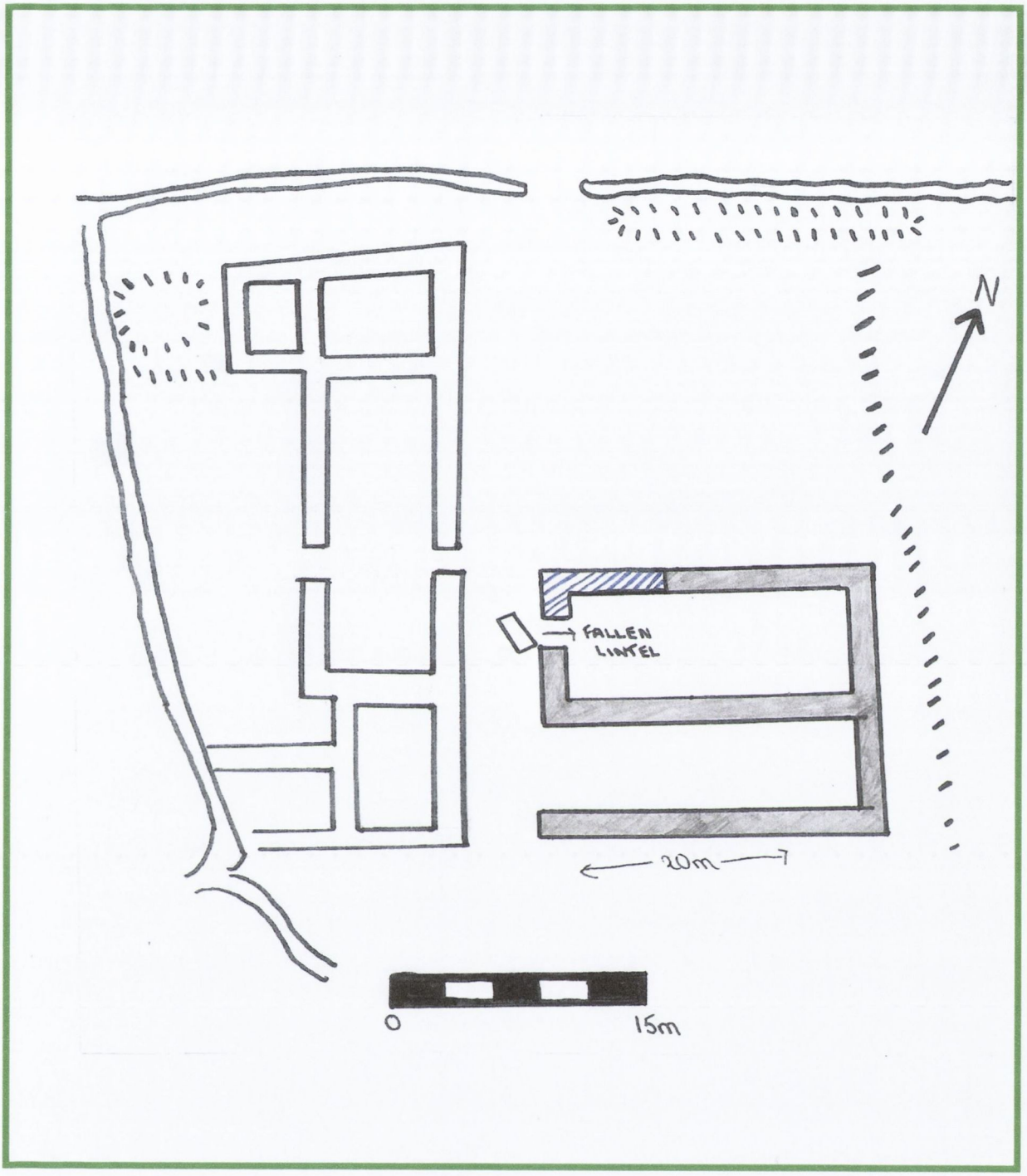


Figure 24: Rough Plan of Roosky Priory.

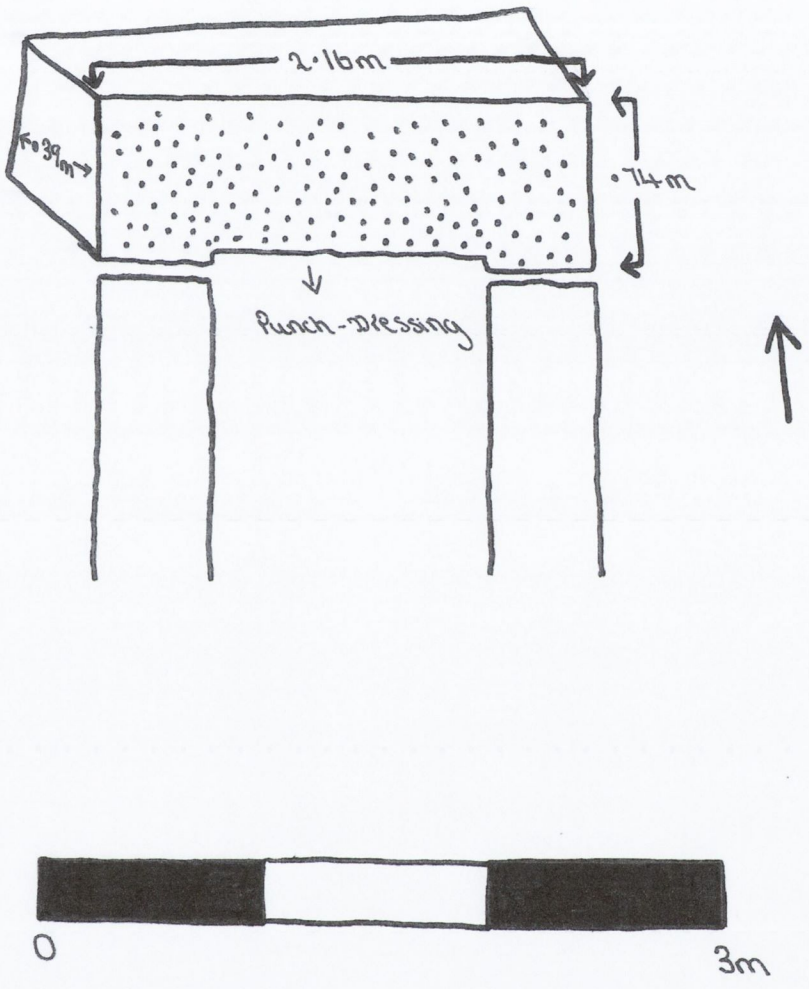


Figure 25: Sketch of the door lintel at Roosky Priory.
(After Sweetman, RMP LH 008-01801, Roosky Priory).



Plate 34: The surviving masonry at Roosky Priory.

onwards. [413] When Tempest visited the site in 1928 he remarked also remarked upon this feature which he marked as A on his plan of the site. Interestingly, he also commented that it was 'of the usual type for the old square topped doorway and has two incised lines giving the effect of a fillet along what would have been the top and bottom edges of the opening, when in its original position.'[414] This type of doorway, along with its position in the western gable of the church could certainly indicate an early date of construction for at least some portion of this structure, as it is known that prior to the twelfth century, the rectangular and flat-headed lintelled doorways of many early medieval churches were located in their west walls.[415] It is significant that Davies identified evidence of Romanesque building at Roosky Priory. He described a large Romanesque rectangular door with monolithic jambs in the western gable of the church. [416]

e. STONE CARVINGS

A large granite stone which is almost certainly the original lintel of the doorway lies just to the south-west of the jamb stone in the west gable. The lintel is 2.16m long and 0.74m wide and 0.39m thick, and has been cut back for a length of 1.75m, leaving its extremities as the portions of the jambs. It has been carefully punch-dressed and decorated on its border with two shallow incised lines. This punch-dressing could indicate anything from a fourteenth date onwards. [417]

9. ANCILLARY BUILDINGS

The substantial grass covered remains to the west and north-west of the church are probably all that is left of the domestic range of the priory. There are two large rectangular enclosed areas to the west-north-west of the church, the largest of which is *c.* 27m long and 10m wide.[418] The one nearest to the church is *c.* 25m long and 12m wide, and may represent the day room.[419]Today the area to the north of the church has no evidence of building but may have held the cloister, possibly a wooden one. However, when Tempest surveyed Roosky in 1928 he stated that the other buildings of the

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[413] SWEETMAN, (1992), p. 8.
[414] TEMPEST, (1928), p. 264; see Figure 22.
[415] HARBISON, (1992a), p. 20; O'KEEFFE, (2003b), p. 71.
[416] IBID, (1941), p. 11.
[417] SWEETMAN, (1992), p. 8.
[418] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[419] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 236-37.

monastery were indicated by grass-covered mounds some of them four feet high inside which are doubtless the remains of the walls.[420] When Davies visited the site in 1941 he observed that the foundations of several buildings could be traced in the grass.[421]

10. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERY

The field where the church is located is of irregular shape, and in 1928 Tempest was of the opinion that the original entrance to the site was probably located to the south, where the present field gate exists.[422] He also remarked that some local people had informed him that the field between the priory field and the road was originally a graveyard and that it was known locally as 'The Crathies'. In particular, one Mr. Redmond Magrath recollected in 1928 that forty years before, *c.* 1890, the church walls were all standing to a height of five feet except for one gap. He did not remember the windows but commented that inside was a large altar stone, which he later thought must really have been the door lintel.[423] The field where the church is located is of irregular shape, and in 1928 Tempest was of the opinion that the original entrance to the site was probably located to the south, where the present field gate exists.[424]He also remarked that some local people had informed him that the field between the priory field and the road was originally a graveyard and that it was known locally as 'The Crathies'. In particular, one Mr. Redmond Magrath recollected in 1928 that forty years before, *c.* 1890, the church walls were all standing to a height of five feet except for one gap. He did not remember the windows but commented that inside was a large altar stone, which he later thought must really have been the door lintel. He also remarked that there were then little grave mounds all over the eastern end of the enclosure while the walls of the buildings on the west were all exposed and of various heights.[425]

f. GRAVE SLABS/STONES

Tempest also remarked that there were then little grave mounds all over the eastern end of the enclosure while the walls of the buildings on the west were all exposed

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[420] TEMPEST, (1928), p. 264.
[421] DAVIES, (1941), pp. 10-11.
[422] TEMPEST, (1928), p. 263.
[423] IBID, p. 263.
[424] IBID, p. 263.
[425] TEMPEST, (1928), p. 264.

and of various heights.[426] It is interesting to note that in 1837 Lewis in his *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* had also noticed these graves;

> *On the summit of a neighbouring hill at Ruskey are small remains of a church, or chapel, with traces of a burial-ground, but no other monuments or even graves: it is thought to have been a rural residence of the abbot.*[427]

11. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Unfortunately however the only excavation to have ever taken place in the vicinity of Roosky Priory did not yield any medieval ecclesiastical evidence, although it was certainly significant in establishing a pattern of continuity of human settlement in the area. This excavation was carried out in 2002 by O'Carroll on a site adjoining Roosky Priory ahead of the construction of a private dwelling. A spread of burnt stones and blackened soil was uncovered in the lower part of the driveway, 20m from the present course of the stream and O'Carroll concluded that she had uncovered the stone and soil components of a fulacht fiadh which she presumed to be prehistoric.[428]

12. ETYMOLOGY

The place name 'Roosky' is derived from the Irish word 'Ruscaigh' which means marshland.[429] Common derivatives of the name occur in many regions of Ireland and include; Roosk, Rusg, Reask, Roosca, Rooskagh, Roosky and Rusgach.[430] It is not clear why this particular ecclesiastical site would have been named Roosky as it not located in marshy land but rather in an area of good quality agricultural land which is now utilized for potato and tillage crops as well as for cattle and sheep grazing.

13. CHRONOLOGY

The earliest known account of the foundation of Roosky Priory is that contained in the *Life of Saint Monenna,* a fifth-sixth century date who reputedly died *c.* 517 A.D. [431] The earliest Anglo-Norman reference to Roosky occurred in 1237 when 'the churches of

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[426] TEMPEST, (1928), p. 264.
[427] http://www.irish-architecture.com/buildings_ireland/louth/carlingford/lewis.html.
[428] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8706.
[429] ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL, *Roosky Local Area Plan: 2009-2015,* (Roscommon, 2009), p. 9; http://www.booksulster.com/library/plnm/placenamesR.php.
[430] http://www.booksulster.com/library/plnm/placenamesR.php
[431] *Life of St. Darcerca, or Moninna, the Abbess,* p. 282. See Ua MUIREADAIG, (1904), pp. 34-35.

Carlingford and Rooskey' were mentioned in a deed.[432] Following on from this in 1332 the archbishop of Armagh, Roland Joyce was accused of having robbed Roosky manor and church, [433] while in 1461 Archbishop Octavian leased his manor of 'Ruschag near Carlingford' to one Christopher Marynam.[434] In 1532 the tithes of Roosky were leased to Simon Betagh.[435]Roosky is also listed in Archbishop Dowdall's rentals for 1544,[436] and in an inquisition taken *c.* 1608 of the estate of Arthur Bagnall of Newry it was found that he possessed 16 acres of 'land called Rowskagh near to the town of Carlingford'. In 1622 Roosky was held by the Archbishop of Armagh, containing 20 acres held in a lease of 60 years by Stephen Neale who also held a third part of the tithes of the rectory of Carlingford and Cooley.[437]

Although Davies identified some remains at this site which he believed to date to the Romanesque period,[438] the remains as they survive today would indicate later medieval date of construction, particularly the punch-dressed door lintel which could indicate anything from a fourteenth century date onwards. The earthworks located to the west of the church at Roosky would appear to represent the remains of a later medieval monastic foundation. However, the documentary references which mention Roosky throughout the medieval period make absolutely no reference to its having been a later medieval monastic foundation. This is in stark contrast to the situation with the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford where there are numerous historical references to it functioning as a medieval Dominican monastery in the later medieval period.[439]

V. CORNAMUCKLAGH

1. INTRODUCTION

The early medieval monastic site of Killansnamh[440] is located in the uplands of Omeath on the east side of a natural ridge to the southwest of the Newry River. It is situated at a distance of approximately 18km from Faughart, 14km from Roosky, and

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[432] GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.
[433] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 47.
[434] IBID, p. 47.
[435] IBID, p. 47.
[436] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* (1928), p. 221.
[437] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* pp. 8-10; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 48.
[438] DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 10-11.
[439] See Chapter IV: Urban Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford, IV. The Dominican Abbey.
[440] Also referred to as *Cillansnamh, Snamh-Aighneach,* and *Cuan Snamha-Aighneach* in various sources. It will be referred to throughout this study as *Killansnamh* to avoid confusion.

17km from Proleek.[441] The site was not mentioned by Davies in his 1941 survey of the churches of the barony of Lower Dundalk. Therefore, results of the survey of this site were published for the first time by Buckley for the *Inventory* in 1986, and then again by Buckley and Sweetman for the *Survey* in 1991.[442] The survey, which formed the basis for both of these publications, had been carried out more than twenty years previously on 27th June 1968.[443]

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Despite the scarcity of the archaeological remains at Cornamucklagh, it is possible to establish a very tenuous chronology for the monastery of Killansnamh through a study of the records of the Irish annals for the ninth and tenth centuries. For example, one entry in the *Annals of the Four Masters* for the year 921 AD reads as follows:

> *Duibhlitir of Cill-Sléibhte priest of Ard Macha, was martyred by the foreigners of Snamh-Aighneach.*[444]

In the footnote which accompanies this entry O'Donovan identified Cill-Sléibhte as Killeavy, near Newry, while he also identified Snamh-Aighneach as being in Carlingford Lough, between the counties of Louth and Down. Considering the fact that there was a monastery located at Killeavy at this time, it is possible that Duibhlitir was on a visit to the monastery at Snamh-Aighneach conducting church business when he was murdered, as it is a well attested fact that contacts between Irish monasteries were flourishing in the tenth century, despite the belligerent Viking presence in Ireland.[445]

Indeed there may even have been an attack on the monastery itself, although this cannot be proven conclusively. It must also be acknowledged that there is a problem with

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[441] See Figure 1.

[442] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 83; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268. The site was also listed as a 'cemetery' on page 3 of the 1984 *Archaeological Survey of County Louth: A Preliminary Description of Field Antiquities in the County from the Mesolithic Period to the 17th Century AD,* although no further archaeological detail was provided in this publication. The results of the 1968 survey can also be accessed at the *Sites and Monuments Record:* RMP LH 002-00101, Cornamucklagh Graveyard & RMP LH 002-00102, Cornamucklagh Abbey Site. Unfortunately, however, these SMR files do not contain any additional data to that provided in the 1986 *Inventory* and the 1991 *Survey,* and there is no *Topographical File* on record at the National Museum of Ireland for this site.

[443] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 83 & RMP LH 002-00101 Cornamucklagh Graveyard & RMP LH 002-00102, Cornamucklagh Abbey Site.

[444] *Annals of the Four Masters,* 921.

[445] HUGHES, (1962), p. 111; HUGHES, K., 'Evidence for Contacts between the Churches of the Irish and English from the Synod of Whitby to the Viking Age', in *England Before the Conquest: Studies Presented to Dorothy Whitelock,* ed. by P. CLEMOES & K. HUGHES, (Cambridge, 1971), p. 66.

linking these annalistic references to the monastery specifically as it has been generally accepted that the ancient name of Carlingford was in fact *Cuan Snamh Aigneach*, a name which derived from the tribe who inhabited Omeath before the arrival of the Uí Méith.[446] Murray noted as far back as 1914 that in the *Félire of Gorman* the Carlingford area is called *Snamh Ech –'The Harbour of the Horse's Swimming'* and also that in the *Book of Ballymote* it is called *Snamh Cluain Dallain*, from the monastery of Cluain Dallain in the territory of Iveagh on the other side of the Lough.[447] So although there are several references to *Snamh Aighneach* in the Irish annals for the ninth and tenth centuries it is likely that, with the possible exception of the entry of 921 AD, they refer to the general area around Carlingford and Omeath rather than to the monastery at Cornamucklagh. What is certain, however, is that there had been Viking activity in this area since at least 841 AD, when the *Annals of Ulster* noted:

> *The plundering of Disert-Diarmata by Gentiles from Cael-Uisce.*[448]

In this case, Hennessy identified *Disert Diarmata* as Castledermot in Co. Kildare, but more importantly for this study, he stated that *Cael-Uisce* referred to the Narrowwater between the head of Carlingford Lough and Newry. Indeed, a perusal of the annals for the decade between 840 to 850 AD indicates that there was a considerable degree of Viking activity in this area. Although these records have been described by Ua Muireadaig as 'a long dreary record of plunderings and burnings'[449] they serve as an important aid to the study of the archaeological chronology of the monastery of Killansnamh.

One event in particular stands out as having had a deep impact upon the settlement history of this area. The fact that it was recorded in more detail than usual by both the *Annals of the Four Masters* and the *Annals of Ulster* testifies to its significance. There seems to have been some confusion over the exact date of this event as it is recorded by the latter for the year 851 AD and by the former for the year 850 AD. In any case, the details of both entries are remarkably similar. The *Annals of the Four Masters* noted that in 850 AD:

> *A fleet of eight score ships of Finnghoill arrived at Snamh-Eidhneach, to give battle to the Dubhghoill; and they fought with each other for three days and three*

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[446] The ancient inhabitants of Omeath were known as the *Aighneacha,* and according to Murray, were of Pictish origin. Their territory was at one time very extensive, probably extending as far as Faughart, as the ancient name of Faughart was Ard Aighneach.
[447] MURRAY, (1914), p. 214.
[448] *Annala Uladh,* 841.
[449] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 74; MURRAY (1914), p. 215.

> *nights, and the Dubhghoill gained the victory; the Finnghoill left their ships to them.* [450]

While the entry for the *Annals of Ulster* for the year 851 AD states that:

> *A fleet of eight-score ships of White Gentiles came to fight against the Black Gentiles, to Snamh-aignech. They were three days and three nights fighting but the Black Gentiles were successful, that the others left their ships with them. Stain escaped by flight, and Ierene was beheaded.*[451]

This episode has been discussed in detail in both articles by Ua Muireadaig (*al.* Murray).[452] Apparently, in 851 AD a great battle took place in Carlingford Lough with the Danish fleet achieving eventual victory.[453] According to Murray, there were two separate classes of Viking invader - The Finnghoill, or Fair-Haired Foreigners, natives of Norway and the Dubhghoill, or Black Foreigners, natives of Denmark. An intense rivalry for supremacy in Ireland eventually resulted in the deciding battle of 850-1 AD which was recorded in the *Annals of the Four Masters,* and also in the *Annals of Ulster.* Murray further stated that although the Finnghoill had first arrived in Ireland in 795 AD, it was not until 841 AD under the command of Thorgils, or Turgesius, that they selected Cuan Snamh Aighneach as their naval base and established a fortress at Linnduachaill, the present Annagassan, in Dundalk Bay. He attested that they were the first founders of Carlingford and that as a precursor to their invasion of the mainland they burned the abbey of 'Cillansnamh' and put the monks to death. [454]

O'Sullivan also commented that this monastery was destroyed in 841 and with the exception of the abbot, who was absent from the monastery at the time, the whole community was slaughtered. Unfortunately he does not give any reference for this event either, but goes on to state that after this, Cuan Snamh Aighneach and the district above the river to Newry and on both sides of the Lough became Viking settlements. [455] The present researcher could find no reference in the annals for the year 841 which describes the burning of this monastery.[456] Any such reference would be vital to this study as it

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[450] *Annals of the Four Masters,* 850.
[451] *Annala Uladh,* 851. See also ETCHINGHAM, C., *Viking Raids on Irish Church Settlements in the Ninth Century: A Reconsideration of the Annals,* Maynooth Monographs Series Minor 1, (Maynooth, 1996), p. 69 & DOWNHAM, C., *Viking Kings of Britain and Ireland. The Dynasty of Ívarr to A.D. 1014,* (Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 257 & 274.
[452] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), pp. 76-77; MURRAY, (1914), pp. 215-16.
[453] THE COMBINED TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION, (1989), p. 11.
[454] MURRAY, (1914), p. 215.
[455] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 35-36.
[456] It should also be noted that, 'Murray's account of the destruction of Killansnamh is also not found in the collation of annal entries with material from the *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaib* in Colmán Etchingham's

would determine what name the monastery was generally referred to in the annals. There is, however, one entry for this year in the *Annals of Ulster* which states that:

> *Comman, abbot of Linn-Duachail was wounded and burned by Gentiles and Goidhel.*[457]

This entry clearly does not refer to Killansnamh, although *Linn-Duachail* could refer to the monastery at Annagassan. This was the opinion of Ua Muireadaig who stated that at Annagassan, at the Pass of the Lynns, stood an old monastery founded centuries before by St. Colman, that it was burned in 841 AD, and that all of the inhabitants escaped except for the elderly abbot Comman who was roasted alive on a gridiron.[458] Ua Muireadaig in his 1908 article tells a similar story to the account in Murray's 1914 paper, stating that the monastery was burned by the invaders at the outset of their campaign,[459] but once again he cited no primary references for his information, although he did include some additional details. He further asserted that after the deciding battle of 850-1 AD the power of the Finnghoill in Ireland was broken and the Dubhghoill became the new masters of the country. He also stated that many of the newcomers were Christians and that they were not as cruel as the Finnghoill had been; 'their object was not so much to massacre the Irish as to make them tributary'. [460]

In any case, the Viking settlements at Carlingford Lough and at Annagassan came under acute pressure from the Irish between the years 921 and 928 AD when Muirchertach, son of Niall of the Cenél Eoghain, led both the Conailli Muirthemne of Louth and the Ulaidh of Down in such persistent and successful attacks upon them that by the year 928 AD it was reported that 'the foreigners of Linn Duachailt [Annagassan] and of Cuan Snamh Aighneach left Ireland' [461] The northern limit of the Viking settlement around Carlingford at this time appears to have terminated at Sheeptown and Magh Cobha in Co. Down. The settlement itself appears to have been centred around the Newry area spreading eastwards to Warrenpoint on the north side of the Lough, down into Omeath on the south.[462] After the expulsion of the Vikings from the shores of Carlingford Lough, the Uí Méith took possession of their vacated territory.[463] This was a

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Viking Raids on Irish Church Settlements in the Ninth Century, (Maynooth, 1996).' SIMMS, K., pers. comm., (March, 2008).

[457] *Annala Uladh,* 841.

[458] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), pp. 73-73.

[459] IBID, pp. 73-74.

[460] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 72. See also MURRAY, (1914), pp. 215-16.

[461] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 76; MURRAY, (1914), p. 216; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 37.

[462] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 37.

[463] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 76; MURRAY, (1914), pp. 214 & 216.

direct result of the rest of the former Viking settlement in the Lough coming into the possession of the High King's ally, Donnchad Ua Cearbhaill, by the beginning of the twelfth century, who subsequently settled his disaffected vassals, the Uí Méith and Mugdorna, upon them; the latter on the north side of the Lough where they gave their name, Mugdorna, anglicised as Mourne to the area formerly known as Boirce, and the Uí Méith on the south side, or Omeath, as the district is known to this day.[464]Murray asserts that thenceforth there were three territories of the same name, one in Monaghan, one in Armagh and one in Louth. They were known respectively as Uí Méith Tíre, Uí Méith Macha, and Uí Méith Mara.[465]Lawless, however, writing four years after Murray disputed this hypothesis and asserted that there had in fact been only two Uí-Méiths, Uí Méith Mara in Omeath, and Uí Méith Macha which, he stated, was exactly the same as Uí Méith in the barony of Monaghan.[466]

3. LOCATION

The townland of Cornamucklagh itself comprises approximately 749 acres[467] and it was here that the earliest known ecclesiastical foundation in Omeath, the monastery of Killansnamh, was established at an unknown date, sometime before the year 841 AD. It cannot be doubted that topographical and geographical factors played a significant role in the demise of the ecclesiastical settlement at Cornamucklagh, which suffered greatly at the hands of the Vikings from the ninth century onwards, and which does not appear to have been reused by the Anglo-Normans in any capacity at all following their settlement of the Cooley Peninsula. In fact, one striking geological feature of this peninsula as a whole is the extensive landscape variety in evidence here which has resulted both from internal contrasts of physical environment and the impact of deviating settlement traditions over several hundred years.[468] The bleak and greatly exposed uplands, where the monastery at Cornamucklagh was located, never seem to have made a significant contribution to the local economy until the introduction of sheep in great numbers late in the nineteenth century. Indeed, most of the land above 400 feet, which encompasses one-

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[464] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 37-38; SMITH, (1999), p. 12.
[465] MURRAY, (1914), p. 214.
[466] LAWLESS, N., 'St. Sillan of Imbliuch Cassain in Cooley', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume IV, Number 4, (1920), p. 300.
[467] http://www.seanruad.com/cgi-bin/iresrch, The IreAtlas Townland Database.
[468] AALEN, F.H.A., 'Some Historical Aspects of Landscape and Rural Life in Omeath, Co. Louth', *Irish Geography,* Vol. IV, No. 4, (1962a), p. 256.

half of the total area of Cooley, remained unenclosed even in the early 1960s.[469] These contrasting physical environments have been succinctly summarised by Hughes:

> *'The basic dichotomy involved the contrasts between the economic and social situation prevailing on the richer clay plains on the one hand and those localities which occupied physically marginal situations to these plains on the other. The dichotomy tended to involve areas which were mutually exclusive, and in Cooley this had an obvious physical basis. The ensuing contrast in settlement patterns and population distribution however, may only be understood in terms of the history of the occupation of the areas concerned.*[470]

A full consideration of the distinctive features of the Omeath district must therefore include some reference to the manner in which it contrasts with adjoining populated districts in the peninsula.[471] The soils of the Omeath region, which originally derived from a drift blanket are generally cold and stony and nowhere are they rich. Even so, however, they vary in quality from place to place and were in no doubt a significant influence upon the former pattern of agricultural organisation in the area, in which land was systematically divided among farmers partly to ensure an equitable distribution of the various soil conditions in the region.[472]

Although the general name of *Cooley* is often utilised to refer to the entire peninsula which comprises the barony of Lower Dundalk, Aalen, in the 1960s, pointed out that it was more 'geographically convenient' to use the term *Carlingford Peninsula* instead and reserve the more specific label of *Cooley* for the lowlands at the eastern end of the peninsula, a usage, he commented, which was supported by local tradition.[473] This differentiation has a particular relevance to the study of the medieval church settlement in Omeath, the part of the peninsula which is situated in the extreme north-east corner of Co. Louth and which differs greatly from the eastern lowlands of Cooley in a multitude of ways. The district known generally today as Omeath encompasses ten townlands; Cornamucklagh, Lislea, Ardaghy, Bavan, Tullagh Omeath, Ballinteskin, Ballyonan, Drummullagh, Corrakit and Knocknagoran,[474] although on official maps the name

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[469] HUGHES, (1961), pp. 149-50.
[470] HUGHES, (1961), p. 173; PASSMORE, J., 'Review of *Irish Geography,* Volume IV, Number 3, (1961)', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XV, Number 1, (1961), p. 99.
[471] AALEN, (1962a), p. 256.
[472] IBID, p. 259.
[473] AALEN, (1962a), p. 260.
[474] MURRAY, (1914), p. 223; O'DUBHDA, P., 'Gaelic Place-Names in Omeath', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume III, Number 3, (1914), pp. 232-236; AALEN, F.H.A., 'Tradition and History in Omeath, County Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XV, Number 2, (1962b), p. 121.

Omeath is given only to the small village which lies along the coast almost directly opposite Warrenpoint.[475] It seems reasonable to acknowledge that Omeath represents a distinct and unique parcel of the Cooley landscape, both physically and sociologically, and indeed, it has long been categorised as one of several unique districts which occupy the upland, rural areas of Ireland and which, according to Aalen, have developed 'apart' from nearby townlands.[476] All of these differentiating dynamics could not have failed to have profoundly impacted upon the development of medieval ecclesiastical settlement in the Omeath area, as an analysis of the surviving church archaeology of this region will demonstrate.

4. SIZE

According to both the *Inventory* and the *Survey* the physical remains at Cornamucklagh in 1968 consisted of a rectangular platform of stones with maximum dimensions of 20m north-south, and 17m east-west, which rose to a height of 0.35m.[477] Buckley and Sweetman were of the opinion that this was definitely the site of the early medieval monastery of Killansnamh, which was said to have stood opposite Narrowwater Castle, and which was apparently re-used as a killeen at a later date.[478] According to Buckley the site comprised a:

> *Rectangular platform of stones (max. dims. 20m N-S, 17m E-W). Reputedly site of monastery of 'Killansnamh', later reused as a killeen.*[479]

While Buckley & Sweetman stated that the site was:

> *Situated on E side of a natural ridge to the SW of Newry River and consisting of a subrectangular low platform of stones (max. dims. 20 N-S, 17m E-W, H. 0.35m). It is reputedly the site of the monastery of Killansnamh which is said to have stood opposite Narrowwater Castle. About 150 years ago, i.e. c. 1837 some remains of the abbey were still to be seen and it was customary to inter unbaptized infants there.*[480]

Neither publication included any further archaeological detail for this site and the scarcity of the remains means that it is extremely difficult to make any definitive statements about the church, or indeed to be certain that the remains which were still evident in 1968

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[475] AALEN, (1962a), p. 256.
[476] AALEN, (1962 a), p. 277.
[477] See Figure 26.
[478] The present researcher has not been able to find any archaeological remains at this site. It is possible that there are now no remains surviving at Cornamucklagh at all.
[479] BUCKLEY, (1986), p.83.
[480] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268.

represented the ruins of the church itself. However, assuming that rectangular platform of stones had once formed part of the church structure, it is possible to make a few broad speculations on the size of the building. Due to the fact that it is known that the monastery at Cornamucklagh did not survive the Viking raids of the ninth century, it is possible that the stone remains at the site do indeed represent the church remains, as it is possible that, at this period, any ancillary monastic buildings at the site may have been constructed from wood.

Furthermore, if the maximum dimensions of the building were 20m north-south and 17m east-west, as per Buckley and Sweetman's calculations, then the overall internal area of the church may have been 340 square metres, exactly twice the size of the interior of the church at Roosky. However it should be noted that this comparison is complicated by the fact that the extant archaeological remains at Roosky, unlike those at Cornamucklagh, may be representative of the church of a later medieval religious order which developed at the site in the Anglo-Norman period, rather than a structure which dates solely to the early medieval period. Additionally, although an internal area of 340 square metres would, according to Ó Carragáin, classify Cornamucklagh as a church of large size,[481] any such presumption is comprised by the paucity of remains of the site.

5. MORPHOLOGY

As far as can be discerned from the results of the 1968 survey of Cornamucklagh, and presuming that the stone remains which were extant at this point were representative of the church building, then it would appear that it was a unicameral, single cell structure. Apart from this however, it is impossible to make any further comments upon the morphology of the site, although it is worth noting that in the 1986 *Inventory,* the site at Cornamucklagh was not included in the chapter entitled *Ecclesiastical Remains,* but was rather listed in the *Killeens and Cemeteries* chapter. Buckley justified the collective grouping of the site in this chapter as follows:

> *This chapter on killeens and cemeteries includes a fairly wide variety of sites, most of which cannot be closely identified with a particular type of archaeological monument and neither can they be closely dated to or be associated with a particular period in the Christian era. A large number of the sites are only listed because the evidence for them consists of a local tradition of burial and/or not properly recorded finds of bones.*[482]

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[481] Ó CARRAGÁIN, (2006), pp. 107-8.
[482] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268.

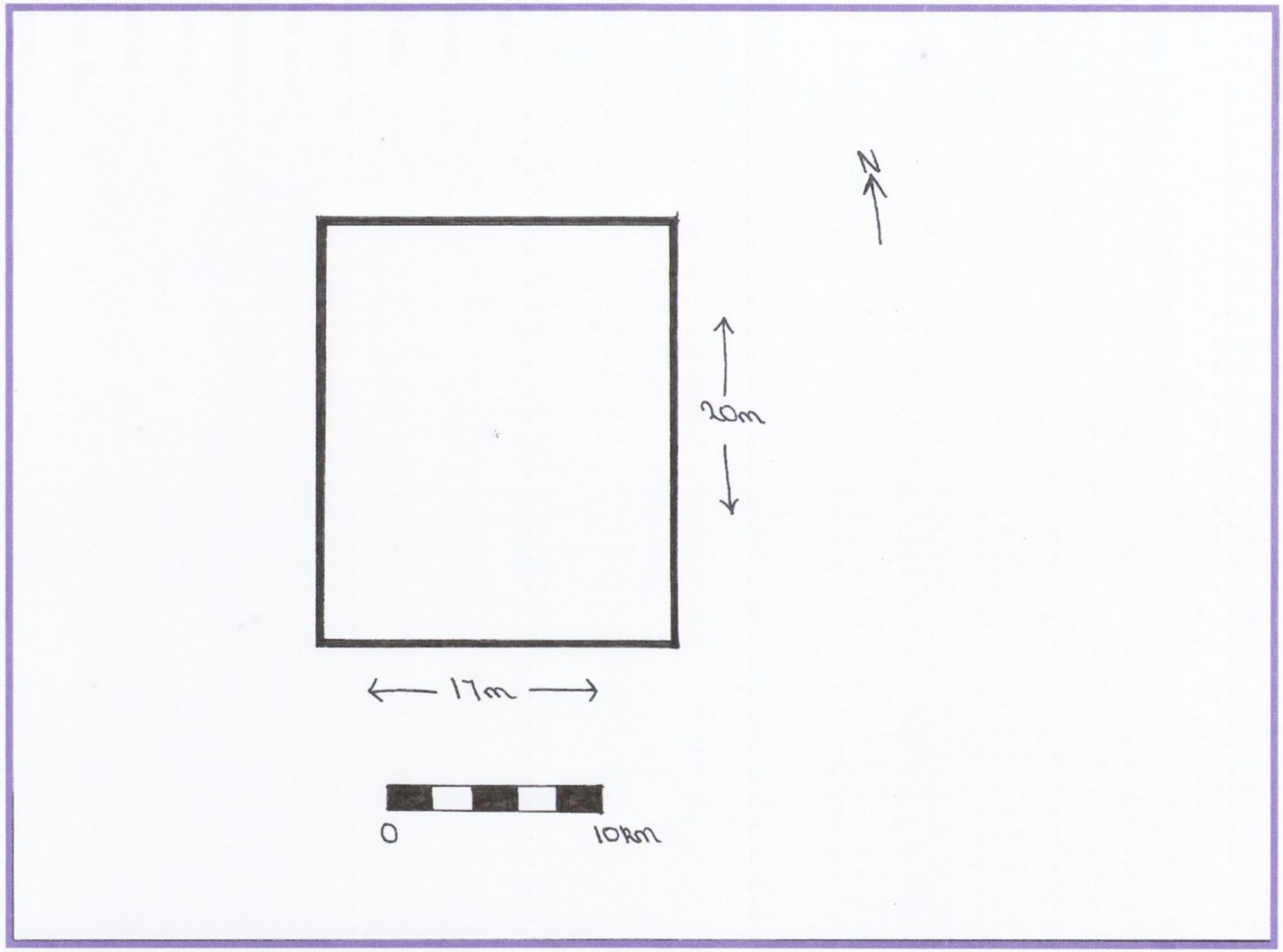


Figure 26: Rough plan of the earthworks at Cornamucklagh.

6. MASONRY STYLES

As is the case with determining the morphology of the church at Cornamucklagh, a discussion of any masonry styles present at this site is solely dependent upon the information recorded in the survey of 1968. Regrettably however, apart from noting that the remains *consisted of a rectangular platform of stones* this survey does not provide any significant detail about the type of stone or masonry construction employed at Cornamucklagh. Moreover, there were no photographs of this section of masonry published in either the *Inventory* or the *Survey,* nor are there any photographs contained within the *Sites and Monuments Record* or the National Museum topographical files for the site.

7. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERY

The 1984 *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* [483] listed a cemetery for the townland of Cornamucklagh, although it makes no mention of a church and/or monastery. Buckley and Sweetman remarked that about 150 years prior to the publication of the *Survey, c.* 1837, some remains of the abbey at Cornamucklagh were still to be seen and also that it was customary to inter the bodies of unbaptized infants there at this time,[484] although they did not cite any primary sources for this information. O'Sullivan also mentioned these two points but he did not cite any primary references either.[485] It is clear, however, that both Buckley and Sweetman and O'Sullivan sourced this information from Ua Muireadaig (*al.* Murray). In 1908 Ua Muireadaig had stated that until seventy years previous to his publication, *c.* 1837-8, some remains of this monastery were still to be seen, just opposite Narrowwater Castle in a plot of ground now occupied by a larch plantation, and that in the graveyard nearby it was customary to inter the bodies of unbaptized infants and the unidentified remains of those drowned in the Lough. The exact same tradition was repeated by Murray six years later in 1914.[486] As the present writer can find no original written source which can be dated earlier than Ua Muireadaig's 1908 article, it can only be presumed that both of these stories had their origins in some sort of oral tradition, which, in the absence of more substantial documentary evidence can serve as an efficient and useful tool for historical studies.

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[483] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 3.
[484] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 83; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268.
[485] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 35-37 & p. 54.
[486] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 73; (1914), pp. 214-15.

8. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

According to the 1984 *Archaeological survey of County Louth* the associated archaeological sites at Cornamucklagh were listed as being a hut-site, a possible earthwork site, and a fulacht fiadh.[487] The subsequent *Inventory* of 1986 and the *Survey* of 1991 listed just a hut site and fulacht fiadh for Cornamucklagh.[488] Despite the inhospitable nature of the terrain around Omeath, it is therefore clear from these earlier archaeological remains that the area around the townland of Cornamucklagh was attracting human settlers long before the establishment of a monastery in the early medieval period. However, neither of these sites date to the early medieval period and do not appear to be significant for the analysis of the archaeology of the monastic site.

9. ETYMOLOGY

Murray has translated the name Killansnamh to literally mean *The Church of the Swimming Place.* [489] It is not exactly clear from whence this name derives or to what period of ecclesiastical settlement it owes its origins, especially as it is not certain that the names *Snamh-Aighneach*, and *Cuan Snamha-Aighneach,* which are cited in the *Annals of Ulster and the Annals of the Four Masters,* refer to the monastery specifically, as opposed to the surrounding region in general. Although, the fact that the monastery itself retained the *snamh* element in its name could support the idea that the reference of 921 AD at least may have referred to the monastery. Interestingly Stubbs states that the *Chronicon Scotorum* mentions the following places plundered by the Vikings: *'Lugmagh, Mucsnamha, Oméith and Druimhubhla and other churches.* '[490]*Lugmagh* is an obvious reference to the well-documented monastery which was established at Louth Village in the early medieval period.[491] *Mucsnamha* would appear to be a derivative of Killansnamh,[492] *Oméith* is most definitely referring to the townland of Tullagh Omeath, and Stubbs himself has identified Druimhubhla as another of the ten Omeath townlands,

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[487] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 3.
[488] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 4 & 24; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 19 & 88. See Figure 27.
[489] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), pp. 73-74.
[490]STUBBS, F.W., 'Place Names in the County of Louth [C-D]', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume II, Number 2, (1909), p. 137.
[491] BRADLEY, (1985), p. 8.
[492]Although it should also be noted that it has been identified in Edmund Hogan's *Onomasticon Goedelicum* with Mucknoe, near Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan. SIMMS, K., pers. comm., (March, 2009).

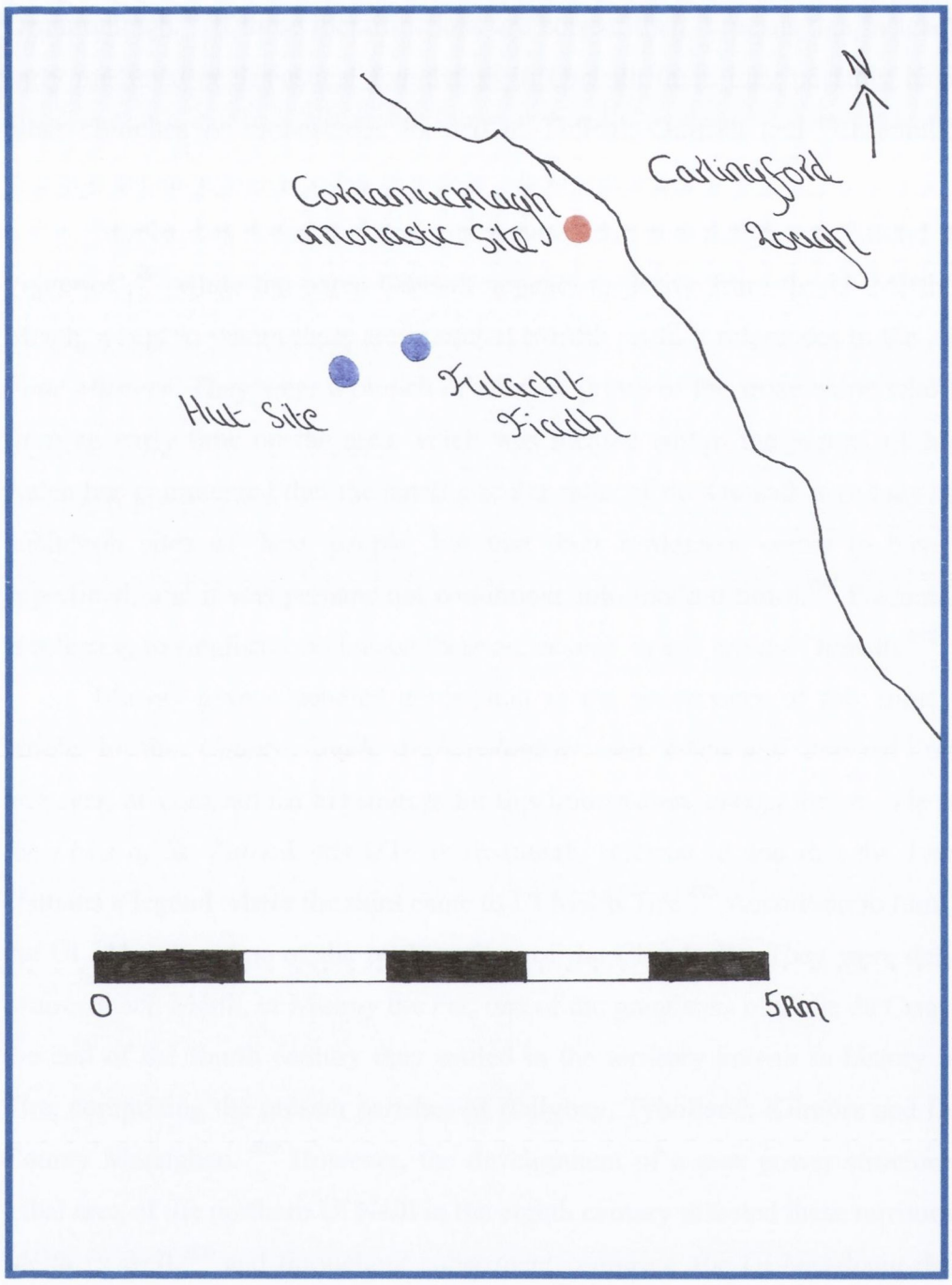


Figure 27: Rough plan of the associated archaeological sites at Cornamucklagh. The early medieval monastic site is indicated in red, the other sites in blue.

Drummullagh.[493] If these identifications are correct then it means that instead of just one early medieval ecclesiastical foundation in Omeath there may possibly have been two other churches or monasteries located at Tullagh Omeath and Drummullagh, not to mention the anonymous 'other churches' also mentioned.

Stubbs has translated the placename Cornamucklagh as 'Round Hill of the Piggeries',[494] while the name Omeath appears to derive from the Uí Méith, or sons of Meath, a sept to whom there are scattered twelfth century references in the *Annals of the Four Masters*. They were a branch of another group of the same name who had resided from an early time on the area which was located within the barony of Monaghan.[495] Aalen has commented that the small circular raths of the Omeath area may mark the old habitation sites of these people, but that their settlement seems to have been very superficial, and it was perhaps not continuous into modern times.[496] Presumably here he is referring to ringforts and indeed there are several in and around Omeath.[497]

Murray gave a detailed description of the provenance of this tribe in his 1914 article in the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* unfortunately however, he does not list his sources for this information, except for one. He states that in the *Lives of St. Patrick this* tribe is frequently referred to and that the *Vita Tripartita* contains a legend where the saint came to Uí Méith Tíre.[498] According to him, the tribe of the Uí Méith was one of the twelve tribes of the Clan Colla. They were descendants of Muircadhach Méith, or Murray the Fat, one of the grandsons of Colla dá Críoch. Towards the end of the fourth century they settled in the territory known in history as Uí Méith Tíre, comprising the present parishes of Ballybay, Tyholland, Kilmore and Drumsnatt in County Monaghan. [499] However, the development of a new power structure within the tribal area of the northern Uí Néill in the eighth century affected these territories of the Uí Méith as well,[500] and throughout subsequent centuries, the Uí Nadsluaig dynasty of Uí Chremthainn shifted southwards from Clogher and Clones to Farney in south Monaghan, reducing the Uí Méith, Mugdorna and Fir Rois tribes to subordinate status.[501] One of the subscribers to a charter establishing the Cistercians at Newry was Donnchad Ua

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[493] STUBBS, (1909), p. 137.
[494] IBID, p. 133.
[495] LAWLESS, (1920), p. 300; AALEN, (1962a), p. 261.
[496] AALEN, (1962a), p. 261.
[497] See BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 59-68 & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 152-187.
[498] MURRAY, (1914), p. 214.
[499] MURRAY, (1914), p. 214.
[500] BYRNE, F.J., *Irish Kings and High Kings,* Second Edition, (Dublin, 2001), pp. 114-15.
[501] IBID, p. 125.

Cearbhaill's son Murchad, and in this twelfth century reference he is referred to as 'king of Uí Méith and of the territory of Airthir.'[502] When next a ruler of the Uí Méith would be encountered it would be between 1260 and 1280 when Matilda de Lacy made her grant in which 'O'Henrethy king of that country once held'. According to O'Sullivan this suggests that the original Uí Méith settlement did not confine itself to Omeath but spread itself southwards via Glenmore into Cooley.[503]

10. CHRONOLOGY

The dearth of physical remains at Cornamucklagh means that is impossible to construct an accurate chronology for this site based upon the archaeological evidence. The only indicators to a chronology for this early medieval monastic foundation are found in the *Annals of the Four Masters* and the *Annals of Ulster.* An examination of these annalistic sources reveals that while there are no surviving records specific to the monastic site, there are several significant references to Viking activity in the Carlingford Lough region in the 840s and 850s. There is also an important reference made in 921 AD to the *foreigners of Snamh Aighneach.* However, due to the fact that the ancient name of Carlingford was *Cuan Snamh Aigneach* any links between these annalistic references and the monastery at Cornamucklagh are tenuous. What is apparent is that the monastery itself does not appear to have survived the Viking incursions of the ninth and tenth centuries, and it is possible that by the close of the tenth century it had been completely abandoned.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 3 analyzed the pattern of pre-Norman ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk. The methodology employed included a comparative archaeological study of the four early medieval monastic sites which were located at Faughart, Proleek, Roosky and Cornamucklagh in the early medieval period.[504] Due to the paucity of early medieval archaeological remains extant at Proleek,[505] Roosky and Cornamucklagh there was a manifest discrepancy in the length of each of the individual site discussions, with the archaeology of the early medieval church settlement at Faughart

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[502] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 48-49.
[503] IBID, p. 49.
[504] See Figure 1.
[505] The remains at Proleek consist of two early medieval monastic enclosures which are referred to throughout this study as Proleek I & Proleek II.

being the most lengthy. For the purposes of this investigation the 'pre-Norman' phase of settlement was defined as the period 1000-1189, as no physical archaeological remains pre-dating this era have survived at any of the three sites. However, due to the fact that documentary evidence has confirmed that each one must have been founded at a date prior to 1000, the year 1000 has not been stringently adhered to as a strict starting point as, in some instances, it was discovered that, given the paucity of extant physical remains, the inclusion of earlier documentary evidence can greatly supplement the archaeological discussion.

It was found that the densest concentration of early medieval monastic sites in Louth occurred in the more southerly regions of the county, in the baronies of Ferrard, and Ardee, while the more northerly baronies of Louth, Upper Dundalk, and Lower Dundalk showed evidence for only each having had two, one and four monastic foundations respectively. The reason for this disparity in the baronies of Louth and Upper Dundalk is not clear, and was perhaps due to political determinants, although the possibility that there were additional foundations in these two baronies for which evidence, either archaeological or documentary, has not survived cannot be discounted either. The situation in the barony of Lower Dundalk however was a unique one and the most dominant influencing factor seems to have been geographical, with the exception of the monastery which was located at Killansnamh and which was founded in the mountainous uplands of Omeath.

a. SURVEYS & EXCAVATIONS

The first detailed report on the archaeology of Faughart Church was made in 1906 by Howard and was published in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*.[506] Following on from this, an archaeological survey of Faughart Church, which was carried out by Davies, was published in the *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* in 1941,[507] with two subsequent archaeological accounts of Faughart Church published in the *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth*[508] and the *Archaeological Survey of County Louth*[509], in 1986 and 1991

[506] HOWARD, (1906), pp. 70-73.
[507] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.
[508] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74.
[509] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 230-31.

respectively. Proleek II was briefly alluded to by Davies in 1941,[510] while both of the Proleek sites were surveyed by Buckley in 1966 and subsequently included in the 1986 *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* where they were classified as early Christian monastic enclosures.[511] They were subsequently listed and described in the 1991 *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* where they were once again categorized as early Christian monastic enclosures.[512] The site of Roosky Priory was surveyed by Tempest in 1928,[513] by Davies in 1941,[514] and then again in 1968 for the *Archaeological Survey of Ireland,* some results of which were published in the *Inventory* in 1986 by Buckley,[515] with a more detailed account being published in the *Survey* in 1991 by Buckley and Sweetman.[516] The site of the early medieval monastic site at Cornamucklagh was included by Buckley in the *Inventory* in 1986, and then again by Buckley and Sweetman in the *Survey* in 1991.[517]

The only one of these sites to have undergone archaeological excavation is Faughart Church which was partially excavated in 1966 by O'Connor. Although the remit of this excavation was severely limited, both by time constraints and by manpower, this brief investigation did succeed in identifying three key periods of activity at the site. In her subsequent excavation report O'Connor explained how she had firstly uncovered evidence for a medieval church which had been built at two different times, and secondly, evidence for a period of twelfth century or earlier occupation which overlay a third trench of an unspecified earlier date.[518]

b. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Although the Anglo-Norman phase of settlement at Faughart probably dates to the late twelfth century,[519] the settlement of 'Fagard' was mentioned in the 1301 list of amercements, or fines, which were imposed at a Royal Court in Drogheda. [520] The manor

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[510] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.
[511] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78.
[512] BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[513] TEMPEST, (1928), pp.263-64.
[514] DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 10-11.
[515] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76.
[516] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 236-37. See also RMP LH 008-01801, Roosky Priory.
[517] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 83; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268.
[518] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 129.
[519] SMITH, (1999), p. 45.
[520] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1302),* p. 42.

of Faughart was subsequently recorded in 1326,[521] 1385, [522] 1396,[523] and 1538, [524] while the church itself was briefly alluded to in 1355.[525] Further references to Faughart Church were recorded in 1535,[526] 1540,[527] 1544,[528] 1622, [529] 1627, [530] 1641, [531] 1658[532] and 1690.[533]

There are no surviving historical references to the early medieval ecclesiastical settlements at Proleek. However, one of the associated archaeological monuments in the vicinity, a megalithic tomb, which is located approximately 1.2km to the south-east of Proleek I and 0.75km to the south-west of Proleek II, was referred to in the *Annals of the Four Masters* in 1452 as *Clogh an Bhodaigh,* which Stubbs has translated as 'the Churl's stone'.[534] The only other two surviving documentary references to Proleek occurred in 1628[535] and 1664. [536]

Despite the fact that the extant archaeological remains at Roosky Priory are minimal, historical references to this site are, compared to the other sites under review, quite numerous. Probably the earliest and only surviving account of the foundation of Roosky Priory is that contained in the *Life of Saint Monenna.*[537] The earliest documentary reference to Roosky Priory which can be dated to the period following the Anglo-Norman colonization of Lower Dundalk occurred in 1237.[538] The church was subsequently mentioned in 1332, [539] while the manor and 'chapel' of Roosky was alluded to in 1461. [540] Further references to the church occurred in 1532[541] and 1544,[542]and more generally, to the settlement of Roosky in 1610 [543] and 1622.[544]

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[521] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1326.
[522] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1385.
[523] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1396.
[524] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1538.
[525] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1355.
[526] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1535.
[527] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions,* p. 231.
[528] *Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1544,
[529] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,*, p. 10; LESLIE, (1911), pp. 300-02.
[530] LESLIE, (1948), p. 112.
[531] IBID, p. 112.
[532] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* p. 36.
[533] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* p. 10; LESLIE, (1911), pp. 300-02.
[534] *Annals of the Four Masters,* 1452; STUBBS, (1911), p. 352.
[535] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 82.
[536] MACIOMHAIR, (1978), pp. 151-154.
[537] *Life of St. Darcerca, or Moninna, the Abbess,* p. 282. See Ua MUIREADAIG, (1904), pp. 34-35.RYAN, (1931), pp. 136-37; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 35; FARMER, (2004), p. 373.
[538] GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.
[539] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 47.
[540] IBID, p. 47.

Despite the scarcity of the archaeological remains at Cornamucklagh, it is possible to establish a very tenuous chronology for the monastery of Killansnamh through a study of the records of the Irish annals for the ninth and tenth centuries and possible references to this settlement occurred in 841,[545] 850/851[546] and 921.[547]

c. CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

The medieval settlement at Faughart was noted in 1599 on Baptista Boazio's *County of Louth and District* as 'Fagart', but unfortunately with no structural detail evident at all.[548] The church at Faughart was subsequently depicted by Richard Bartlett on his *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602* as 'Faghart' where it appears located upon a prominent mound and apparently roofless, with some form of dividing wall evident in the centre of the building.[549] Roosky Priory is depicted upon a map of Carlingford, Newry and Greencastle entitled *O Hanlans Cvntrie* which dates to 1624.[550] *O'Hanlan's Cvntrie* forms part of a collection of manuscript plans in the British Library entitled *The State of fortes in Ireland as they weare in the yeare 1624*. The map appears to depict three religious buildings; Roosky Priory outside the town walls to the top left, the Dominican Abbey, also outside the town walls to the direct left and a third structure bearing a cross located within the wall boundaries.[551]

d. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

An aerial photograph of Faughart Hill indicates that it was once part of a much larger pre-Norman ecclesiastical enclosure than the surviving archaeological remains would suggest.[552] The aerial photograph in question was taken by St. Joseph in 1965 and has provided significant evidence for an early medieval enclosure on Faughart Hill. The

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[541] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 47.
[542] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall*, p. 221.
[543] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* pp. 8-10.
[544] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* pp. 8-10.
[545] *Annala Uladh,* 841.
[546] *Annals of the Four Masters,* 850; *Annala Uladh*, 851. See also ETCHINGHAM, (1996), p. 69 & DOWNHAM, (2007), pp. 257 & 274.
[547] *Annals of the Four Masters,* 921.
[548] See Figure 3.
[549] See Figure 4.
[550] See Figure 21.
[551] See Figure 21.
[552] See Plate 2.

photograph clearly illustrates crop marks in the fields surrounding the church and it is obvious that at one stage, the boundary of the present graveyard lay along the course of a much larger subsurface enclosure, roughly oval in plan and measuring approximately, 150m by 130m; it is now bisected by the road. There is also evidence for the remains of another ditch in the ploughed field to the north of the graveyard. While only a small section of this can be seen in the photograph, it may have formed another outer enclosure encircling the summit of the hill.

Although the ecclesiastical enclosures at Proleek are not depicted on any maps dating to the medieval period, the enclosure at Proleek II was photographed from the air by St. Joseph in the 1960s.[553] This photograph is of chief importance for the study of this site for, as well as clearly showing the extent of the enclosure, which is bounded by a stone wall, it also gives some indication of the extent to which the site is located on a higher contour than the surrounding landscape, something which is not evident to the same degree at ground level.

e. LOCATION

Faughart Church is located at the summit of a strategically positioned mound, in the midst of an expanse of agriculturally fertile land in the extreme north-west of the barony of Lower Dundalk. Both of the enclosures at Proleek are located in slightly elevated lands in the midst of good quality agricultural land, although strategically neither site appears to have been as prominent as the early medieval monastic enclosure at Faughart. The archaeological remains of Roosky Priory are situated on the eastern portion of the Cooley Peninsula, on the lower slopes of the Carlingford Mountains and in the midst of an agriculturally fertile pocket of land. In contrast to these three sites, the early monastic settlement at Cornamucklagh was located in the mountainous upland region of Omeath, in the north-eastern portion of the Cooley Peninsula.

f. SIZE & MORPHOLOGY

Calculations made from a study of Buckley and Sweetman's plan of Faughart church indicate that it would have originally had an internal area of 84 square metres which would qualify it as a church of middle size according to O'Carragáin's

[553] CUCAP BGL, 46: Aerial view of early medieval monastic enclosure at Proleek. See Plate 32.

methodology relating to church size and function.[554]Faughart Church has been classified by Buckley, Sweetman and Condit as a divided nave and chancel structure with some portions of the cross-wall surviving. [555] However, one alternative interpretation of this classification is that the church at Faughart may not have been a divided nave and chancel structure, but rather, a unicameral church which had an additional building, possibly a priest's residence, adjoined to the east end of the church in the later medieval period.[556] Bermingham has determined four main forms of priestly accommodation in medieval Ireland and it is possible that Faughart may fit into the first, and most common of these types; 'accommodation incorporated into the body of the church, at the west gable...also very occasionally incorporated into the east end of the church, over the chancel.'[557]

Considering the fact that there are no masonry remains extant at either of the enclosures at Proleek it is impossible to comment upon the size of any church or associated structures which may once have existed at either site. At Roosky Priory, the available dimensions indicate that overall the church may have had an approximate internal area of 170 square metres, which would signify a church of large size, with an important function.[558] On the balance of evidence it seems that Roosky Priory can tentatively be classified as a nave and chancel church. In the 1960s, the surviving archaeological evidence at Cornamucklagh indicated the remains of a unicameral structure with a possible internal area of 340 square metres, exactly twice the size of the interior of the church at Roosky.[559]

g. MASONRY STYLES

The body of the Faughart Church itself is constructed of a mixture of large granite boulders and thin slabs of greywacke. O'Connor observed in her 1966 excavation report that the walls of the church displayed several different types of stonework, indicating

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[554] See Figure 5. FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009); Ó CARRAGÁIN, (2006), pp. 107-8.
[555] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p .230; CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2; see Plates 3 & 4. See Figures 5, 6, 7 & 8.
[556] FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009).
[557] BIRMINGHAM, (2006), pp. 169 & 170-75.
[558] Ó CARRAGÁIN, (2006), p. 108.
[559] However it should be noted that this comparison is complicated by the fact that the extant archaeological remains at Roosky, unlike those at Cornamucklagh, may be representative of the church of a later medieval religious order which developed at the site in the Anglo-Norman period, rather than a structure which dates solely to the early medieval period.

different dates of construction.[560] The lower courses of stonework consist of large and small stones which appear to form an earlier medieval pattern, while the upper portions are mainly constructed with smaller, flat stones and may have been built up at a later date. The stonework employed in the lower sections of the south and west walls certainly appear to be of a much earlier date than that which is visible on the upper portions of the walls. It is possible that the lower courses of stonework at Faughart could be defined as 'pseudo-cyclopean' in style. The remaining portions of both the north and south walls clearly demonstrate evidence of at least two separate phases of building, and Davies noted patching in both walls in 1941.[561]

Like the medieval church at Faughart, the structure at Roosky is built from blocks and slabs of uncoursed rubble granite and greywacke,[562] although the overgrown nature of the site make it difficult to make any further comment upon the surviving masonry styles at this site.

h. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

At Faughart Church there are window opes extant in the north and south walls unfortunately they are no longer visible either internally or externally due to the obstructive organic growth on the church. The remains of the cross-wall between the nave and chancel appeared to have a jamb at the south terminal indicating a doorway. [563] However, the main doorway of Faughart church as it survives today is located in the west gable and has an opening measuring 2.9m in width. This is obviously too big to be the original entrance, which was probably only c. 0.90m wide[564] as is indicated by two rough granite blocks located in the present entrance. In 1912 H. Morris made a description of one particularly interesting stone carving which was published in the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal* for that year along with an accompanying rubbing which he himself had made of the stone.[565] By the time that Davies was surveying Faughart Church in 1941 this carving had been removed from the graveyard and was on

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[560] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 125.
[561] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.
[562] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 34.
[563] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p .230; CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2; see Plate 3.
[564] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 74; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 231; see Plate 8.
[565] See Figure 9 & Plate 9.

view in the National of Ireland,[566] where it is still on display.[567] In 1941 Davies recorded evidence of Romanesque building at Roosky Priory. He described a large Romanesque rectangular door with monolithic jambs in the western gable of the church. [568] In addition to this he also recorded the presence of at least two voussoirs of a fair sized round headed window, probably Romanesque both extended through the whole thickness of the wall, although he also noted that some other blocks could not be ascribed to a specific period with any degree of certainty.[569] Unfortunately, due to the overgrown state of this site, these 'Romanesque' features are currently not visible.

i. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERIES

At Faughart Church modern burials which have taken place inside the main body of the church seem likely to prohibit further excavation at this site for a long time to come. Most of the visible graves on the ground at Faughart date to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and reveal little evidence of its long history of burial which spans several centuries. In 1967 Mac Iomhair recorded the existence in the eastern end of the graveyard of a number of small and stubby 'penal' type crosses, as well as incised crosses with splayed ends, which he reckoned to medieval or earlier.[570]

In the late 1990s an interesting fragment of what may have been part of the original high cross was recovered during the restoration of a small portion of the graveyard wall at Faughart.[571] The fragment, which measures 34cm by 31cm, consists of a portion of carved granite, representing the central part of a small high cross. On one side there is a prominent boss, 10cm in diameter, extending *c.* 6cm proud of the granite surface. The decoration on the other side consists of a circular area, 14cm in diameter, defined by a ring 2cm wide, with a central 'cupmark'. [572] This fragment is now held in the Louth County Museum in Dundalk. The high cross at Faughart was possibly originally located upon the site of Mound I which was partially excavated by O'Connor in 1966.

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[566] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7; NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, 1935: 167, Faughart Slab.
[567] See Plate 9.
[568] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 11.
[569] IBID, p. 11.
[570] Out of a total of 217 gravestones recorded by MacIomhair, 0.45% dated to the fourteenth century, 26.3% dated to the eighteenth century, 41% dated to the nineteenth century, 15.2% dated to the twentieth century, while 17% were undateable. See MACIOMHAIR, D., *Tombstone Inscriptions in Fochart Graveyard, Co. Louth,* (Dundalk, 1967); http://www.faughart.com/inscriptions-page5467.html
[571] See Plate 19.
[572] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 3.

The remains of the high cross at Faughart have not been discussed or acknowledged by Henry, Scarry and Richardson, Harbison or Stalley, all of whom have only recognised the sites at Dromiskin, Monasterboice and Termonfeckin for Co. Louth.[573] The plain cupped ornamentation which has survived upon the cross fragments which were uncovered at Faughart may indicate that the stone cross at this site was of a relatively simple unornamented design,[574] and the typological evidence offered by the surviving fragments of this cross, particularly the 14cm circular area defined by ring ornamentation and a central cupmark, indicate that it was possibly an early ninth century cross with no iconography.

Barrow was the first to argue in 1977 that there may have been a round tower at Faughart, and he based his theory upon the physical remains of Mound II and the results of O'Connor's excavation of 1966,[575] although O'Connor herself had never ever speculated upon the possibility that Mound II was the base of a round tower. In the 1991 *Survey,* Buckley and Sweetman briefly mentioned Barrow's hypothesis that one of the mounds at Faughart may have been a round tower, but disappointingly they did not comment upon his theory in any way.[576] In 1999 Lalor also discussed Faughart as the site of a round tower although he is not generally considered to be an authoritative source for round towers. Lalor not only included Faughart in his inventory of Irish round towers,[577] but also in his distribution map as an existing round tower site.[578]According to Lalor, Faughart is among the slightest of remains, and its identity as a round tower is only 'possible' rather than 'proven'.

St. Brigid's Well, which is located in Faughart approximately 20m to the north-west of the north wall of the church,[579] is undoubtedly the most neglected of the monuments at the site. The drinking of water from this well is obviously an important part of the devotional ritual for the faithful of St. Brigid who still frequent the site, as is evidenced by the drinking vessels which are still to be found here. There is no surviving documentary evidence which details the construction of the well-house at Faughart. However, it is clear that this is an early structure, especially considering the fact that the

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[573]HENRY, (1964); RICHARDSON, & SCARRY, (1990); HARBISON, (1994); STALLEY, R.A., *Irish High Crosses,* (Dublin, 1996).
[574] See Plate 19.
[575] BARROW, (1977), p. 154.
[576] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 231.
[577] LALOR, (1999), Chapter 7: *Inventory*, pp. 97-235.
[578] IBID, p. 12.
[579] See Figures 7 & 8; see Plate 23.

lower portions of the walls are unmortared. The rectangular, flat-headed doorway[580] would also appear to be an early feature and is typical of, and bears some stylistic resemblance to doorways in evidence at other early medieval ecclesiastical sites in Ireland,[581] for example at Kilcanonagh, on the Aran Islands, Co. Galway which is believed to date to the late eighth or ninth century, [582]and more locally, at Killeavy church in Co. Armagh.[583] The fact that the well house is partially corbelled on the inside would also suggest an early date of construction for this structure. [584] Considering the extant archaeological evidence at Faughart, it would seem reasonable to surmise that the holy well at this site dates to the early medieval period.

In her investigation of Cutting 2 at Faughart church, which extended outward from the north wall in the cross section east of the mid-wall,[585] O'Connor discovered the remains of a human burial. When the cover stone was removed this portion was found to contain the undisturbed foot-bones of a single human burial.[586] In Cutting 6, located at the east wall,[587] in a similar layer of powdery clay soil, under the apparent occupation layer and over the boulder clay, another partial burial cist was found by O'Connor in 1966. This was a single burial, aligned east-west and consisting of a crushed pelvis and complete leg bones lay in the soft soil just above the edging stones of the cist. The fact that the burial in Cutting 2 was found at a level that appeared to predate the foundation courses of the church itself is extremely significant. [588] The chancel of Faughart church, where Cutting 2 was located, was considered by O'Connor, Buckley and Sweetman, primarily on structural evidence, to be a later medieval addition to the earlier twelfth century nave, and the location of this cist burial, which was found to undercut the northern wall of the church, would certainly appear to support this theory.

Although there are now no physical signs of cemeteries present at either of the Proleek enclosures, there is some tentative evidence to suggest that burials once took place at both sites. Interestingly, in his description of the site of a possible souterrain at

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[580] See Plate 25.
[581] HARBISON, (1992a), p. 20.
[582] Ó CARRAGÁIN, (2005), pp. 106, 112, & 127; see Plate 26.
[583] See Plate 27.
[584] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2. In Limerick, O'Danachair observed that many of the holy wells which he surveyed were enclosed or lined with walls of dry or mortared masonry which he found impossible to accurately date as only three of them were embellished with inscriptions which dated prior to 1800; 1750, 1760 and 1791. See O'DANACHAIR, (1955), p. 200.
[585] See Figure 7.
[586] See Plate 30.
[587] See Figure 7.
[588] CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 2.

Proleek, Buckley described it as being located 'in a field west of Kilmore graveyard (No. 971).'[589] This description is somewhat confusing as site number 971 in both the *Inventory* and the *Survey* is Proleek I, while it is Proleek II, site number 972, which is known locally as Kilmore or *Cille Mór*. Furthermore, in the same publication, in the chapter entitled *Ecclesiastical Remains,* Buckley categorized both sites as early monastic enclosures, but did not describe either site as including a graveyard.[590]In the case of Proleek II, there is circumstantial evidence to support a history of burial at this site in the form of the local tradition that the enclosure once contained headstones.[591] Furthermore, a cross-inscribed slab was reputedly discovered at an unknown date in the fence at the east side of the enclosure,[592]although, in the absence of any further information about this stone, it is impossible to comment upon its origins or typology. Although neither of the Proleek enclosures has ever undergone archaeological excavations, Tempest, in 1944, stated that two long cists, aligned east-west had been discovered in the interior of Proleek I; one containing a skull, the other fragments of unidentified human bone.[593] In 1984 this site was categorized as a 'cemetery' rather than an enclosure by the preliminary archaeological survey of Louth.[594] Additionally, in 1986 Buckley identified a possible long cist burial located within the enclosure at Proleek II. He described as a 'flat slab with stones below suggesting a possible stone cist.'[595] These three burials were recorded in the chapter of the *Survey* entitled *Burials (Cist and Pit.)* They were categorized generally along with numerous other sites as being isolated burials, not located within an organized cemetery.[596]

In 1928 Tempest recorded that the field located between Roosky Priory and a nearby road was originally a graveyard and that it was known locally as 'The Crathies'. He also remarked that there were then little grave mounds all over the eastern

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[589] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 44. The preliminary archaeological survey of Louth also classified this site as a cemetery. See ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 6.
[590] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78.
[591] TEMPEST, (1944), p. 317; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 67.
[592] OS MEMORANDA, 'Co. Louth 1836', (1938-39); BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 78; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[593]TEMPEST, (1944), (1944), p. 317; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 16; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 66.
[594] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND,(1984), p. 6.
[595] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 17; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 69.
[596] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 63.

end of the enclosure while the walls of the buildings on the west were all exposed and of various heights.[597]

The 1984 *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* [598] listed a cemetery for the townland of Cornamucklagh, although it makes no mentioned of a church and/or monastery. Buckley and Sweetman remarked that about 150 years prior to the publication of the *Survey, c.* 1837, some remains of the abbey at Cornamucklagh were still to be seen and also that it was customary to inter the bodies of unbaptized infants there at this time,[599] although they did not cite any primary sources for this information. O'Sullivan also mentioned these two points but he did not cite any primary references either.[600] It is clear, however, that both Buckley and Sweetman and O'Sullivan sourced this information from Ua Muireadaig (*al.* Murray).[601]

j. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

Pottery was discovered in two locations at Faughart Church during O'Connor's excavation. During the excavation of Mound II she discovered a body sherd of pottery which she thought was of a probable fifteenth century date.[602] She described it as a body sherd of thin red ware with a greenish-brown glaze.[603] This fragment of pottery is currently located in the National Museum of Ireland where it was examined and found to measure 4cm x 1.9cm. It has been described as a body sherd of thin fired red ware, with a mottled greenish brown glaze. It has been dated to the later medieval period. [604] The second fragment was a sherd of coarse pottery which was located in the vicinity of the church and which O'Connor dated to the twelfth century, or earlier. [605] This piece of pottery is also currently located in the National Museum of Ireland. It measures 5.9 x 3.1cm and has been classified as a rim sherd of coarse mica tempered ware, with a flat rim bearing diagonal impressions. It was found to be of uniform colour with a black exterior.[606]During the course of her excavation O'Connor also discovered evidence to

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[597] TEMPEST, (1928), p. 264.
[598] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 3.
[599] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 83; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268.
[600] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 35-37 & p. 54.
[601] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), p. 73; (1914), pp. 214-15.
[602] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 127.
[603]IBID, p. 128.
[604] NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, E77:1-30
[605]O'CONNOR, (1966), pp. 127-28.
[606] NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, E77:1-30

suggest burning in the south-west corner of the mid-wall and also in the blocked portion of the south wall. [607]

Although neither of the Proleek enclosures has been excavated, three surface finds of pottery were discovered in plough soil at Proleek II in 1978 by Paul Gosling. The first and second pieces were two corroded, coarse, medieval potsherds, both red on one side and grey on the other, while the third was post-medieval in date, orange in colour and unglazed.[608] These finds could tentatively support Tempest's view that some sort of a later medieval settlement, possibly an ecclesiastical one, existed at Proleek II, and that the site continued to be utilized in the post-medieval period.

k. ETYMOLOGY

Although the earliest Christian settlement at Faughart can be tentatively dated to the late fifth-early sixth century, the fact that Faughart is featured prominently in the *Táin Bó Cuailgne* indicates that it also encompassed an important Iron Age settlement before the arrival of Christianity to Ireland.[609] The earliest surviving manuscripts containing the story of the *Táin* date to the eleventh century. However, it has been acknowledged that the origins of this epic saga can be traced to a much earlier period.[610] By the time of the Bruce invasion, in the early fourteenth century, the appellation *Fochart Muirthemne* had clearly been replaced by *Fochart Bhríde,* a clear indication that Christian tradition had supplanted the heroic feats of the *Táin.*[611] Exactly when this change in placename occurred cannot be discerned with any certainty. The fact that Faughart has close associations with two early saints, St. Monenna and St. Brigid, and is recorded as '*Teampull Brighide na hAirde Maire'* in early records,[612] would indicate that this placename originated with the church. It is likely that the site at Faughart was not randomly chosen by the Anglo-Normans for the building of a medieval church, but rather that it was specifically selected because there was already an early twelfth century church in existence at Faughart; a church with illustrious links back to the early medieval period when a monastic settlement had been founded there in the late fifth or early sixth century.

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[607] O'CONNOR, (1966), p. 125.
[608] NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, 1978: 268, Proleek Coarse Potsherd ; 1978 :269, Proleek Coarse Potsherd ; 1978 :270, Proleek Medieval Potsherd.
[609] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 23.
[610] OSKAMP, (1967), pp. 117-37; KINSELLA, (1969), p. ix; BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 23
[611] MACIOMHAIR, D., *Fochart,* (Dundalk, 1970), in http://www.faughart.com/local-history-page26988.html.
[612] BUCKLEY, (1989), p. 32.

In a similar vein, it is more than likely that patronage of this twelfth century church, along with a devotion to the local saintly cults of Monenna and Brigid was considered by the Anglo-Normans as a method of legitimizing their lordship in Faughart, and imbuing their conquest with a sense of sanctity which was not always borne out by their actions. In fact, patronage of native saints by Norman invaders was not confined to Co. Louth,[613] or indeed to Ireland, as it is a trend which has been studied in detail for other areas of this country,[614] and also for England.[615]

Stubbs has translated the placename 'Proleek' as 'a quern or small grinding stone',[616]but unfortunately, apart from this small snippet of information, there appears to be no other etymological evidence which can assist with the dating of this site. The place name 'Roosky' is derived from the Irish word 'Ruscaigh' which means marshland.[617] Common derivatives of the name occur in many regions of Ireland and include; Roosk, Rusg, Reask, Roosca, Rooskagh, Roosky and Rusgach.[618] It is not clear why this particular ecclesiastical site would have been named Roosky as it not located in marshy land but rather in an area of good quality agricultural land which is now utilized for potato and tillage crops as well as for cattle and sheep grazing. Murray has translated the name Killansnamh to literally mean *The Church of the Swimming Place.* [619] It is not exactly clear from whence this name derives or to what period of ecclesiastical settlement it owes its origins, especially as it is not certain that the names *Snamh-Aighneach*, and *Cuan Snamha-Aighneach,* which are cited in the *Annals of Ulster and the Annals of the Four Masters,* refer to the monastery specifically, as opposed to the surrounding region in general. Although, the fact that the monastery itself retained the *snamh* element in its name could support the idea that the reference of 921 AD at least may have referred to the monastery.

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[613] For examples in Counties Meath and Down see HUGHES, (1955), p. 342 & pp. 344-345; for examples in Co. Offaly see FITZPATRICK, & O'BRIEN, (1998).

[614] For example, the high crosses still to be seen at Duleek, as well as the references to the church in the early literary sources indicate that the foundation must have been of significant importance between the eighth and twelfth centuries. According to Hughes, at Duleek 'the Anglo-Normans must have found a local celebration of the saint's cult and they provided for a liturgical commemoration from the traditions which, they encountered there'. See HUGHES, (1955), p. 356.

[615] For English examples see ROLLASON, (1986), p. 32.

[616] STUBBS, (1911), p. 352.

[617] ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL, *Roosky Local Area Plan: 2009-2015,* (Roscommon, 2009), p. 9; http://www.booksulster.com/library/plnm/placenamesR.php.

[618] http://www.booksulster.com/library/plnm/placenamesR.php

[619] UA MUIREADAIG, (1908), pp. 73-74.

I. CHRONOLOGY

Aerial photography has provided evidence for a substantial early medieval monastic enclosure at Faughart Hill.[620] In the absence of archaeological excavation it is impossible to determine when exactly this monastic foundation was established, although it was reputedly founded by either St. Brigid or St. Monenna, which would suggest that it dates to the late fifth or early sixth century. The remains of a stone cross which were discovered at this site and which possibly date to the ninth century, coupled with the evidence on site for a possible round tower or pattern of small circular enclosures, support aerial photographic evidence which suggests that this site was functioning in a religious capacity for several centuries before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in Faughart. The Anglo-Norman settlement at Faughart probably originated with the construction of the motte *c.* 1195.[621] The settlement was listed in a document dating to 1301, [622] the church of Faughart was mentioned in the *Dowdall Deeds* in 1355, while the manor of Faughart was referred to in 1326, 1385 and 1396 & 1538.[623] Faughart church was also mentioned in 1535 in the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall.[624] In 1540 the tithes of the church were found to belong to the Priory of St. Mary's of Louth, [625]while the lands of Faughart were listed in 1544 in the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall.[626] In 1622 the church of Faughart was described as vacant and ruinous, with Viscount Moore the impropriator,[627]but by 1627 Roger Briscoe was curate and in 1641 Richard Clarke was rector of the church and had purchased part of the tithes for £50.[628] In 1658 Faughart church was recorded as being once again out of repair and without a minister,[629] although by 1690 one James Cubet had become curate.[630] Finally, Isaac Butler recorded that the church had fallen into ruins in 1744.[631]

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[620] See Plate 2.
[621] SMITH, (1999), p. 45.
[622] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 42.
[623] *Dowdall Deeds,*1355, 1326, 1385, 1396 & 1538.
[624] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall*, 1535.
[625] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions 1540-42,* (1943), p. 231.
[626] *Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1544,
[627] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* p. 10; LESLIE, (1911), pp. 300-02.
[628] LESLIE, (1948), p. 112.
[629] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, p. 36.
[630] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*, p. 10; LESLIE, (1911), pp. 300-02.
[631] DEANE, (1922), p. 100.

The extant archaeological remains at Faughart Church appear to represent at least two different phases of construction. Condit, Buckley & Sweetman have all dated the nave/western portion of this church to the twelfth century.[632] They have based this theory the existing masonry evident at the church, the window evident in the north wall as well as a fragment of twelfth century pottery which was found in the vicinity of the church during O'Connor's excavation of 1966.[633] The eastern end of the church, which is of later medieval date, may represent the chancel, or alternatively some form of priest's residence.

In the absence of any extant archaeological remains, it is extremely difficult to attempt to construct an accurate chronology for either of the enclosures at Proleek. Unlike some of the other ecclesiastical sites in the barony of Lower Dundalk, where the physical remains were found to be minimal but where a loose chronology could be elicited from the historical record, the paucity of documentary references for the Proleek sites greatly hinders this method of chronological research. The associated archaeological sites in the general vicinity of the Proleek enclosures indicate that this was an area which had attracted human settlement from at least the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. The presence of the two early medieval enclosures, along with two cist burials, one possible cist burial, one ringfort, one souterrain and one possible souterrain site indicates that there was a pattern of continuity of settlement evident in this region, which is not surprising, considering the nature of the surrounding landscape, which is primarily composed of good quality agricultural lands.

The earliest known account of the foundation of Roosky Priory is that contained in the *Life of Saint Monenna,* a fifth-sixth century date who reputedly died *c.* 517 A.D. [634] The earliest Anglo-Norman reference to Roosky occurred in 1237 when 'the churches of Carlingford and Rooskey' were mentioned in a deed.[635] Following on from this in 1332 the archbishop of Armagh, Roland Joyce was accused of having robbed Roosky manor and church, [636] while in 1461 Archbishop Octavian leased his manor of 'Ruschag near Carlingford' to one Christopher Marynam.[637] In 1532 the tithes of Roosky were leased to

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[632] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 30; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 231; CONDIT & BUCKLEY, (2007), p. 3.
[633] O'CONNOR, (1966), pp. 127-28.
[634] *Life of St. Darcerca, or Moninna, the Abbess,* p. 282. See Ua MUIREADAIG, (1904), pp. 34-35.
[635] GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.
[636] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 47.
[637] IBID, p. 47.

Simon Betagh.[638]Roosky is also listed in Archbishop Dowdall's rentals for 1544,[639] and in an inquisition taken *c.* 1608 of the estate of Arthur Bagnall of Newry it was found that he possessed 16 acres of 'land called Rowskagh near to the town of Carlingford'. In 1622 Roosky was held by the Archbishop of Armagh, containing 20 acres held in a lease of 60 years by Stephen Neale who also held a third part of the tithes of the rectory of Carlingford and Cooley.[640]Although Davies identified some remains at this site which he believed to date to the Romanesque period,[641] the remains as they survive today would indicate later medieval date of construction, particularly the punch-dressed door lintel which could indicate anything from a fourteenth century date onwards. The earthworks located to the west of the church at Roosky would appear to represent the remains of a later medieval monastic foundation. However, the documentary references which mention Roosky throughout the medieval period make absolutely no reference to its having been a later medieval monastic foundation.

The dearth of physical remains at Cornamucklagh means that is impossible to construct an accurate chronology for this site based upon the archaeological evidence. The only indicators to a chronology for this early medieval monastic foundation are found in the *Annals of the Four Masters* and the *Annals of Ulster.* An examination of these annalistic sources reveals that while there are no surviving records specific to the monastic site, there are several significant references to Viking activity in the Carlingford Lough region in the 840s and 850s. There is also an important reference made in 921 AD to the *foreigners of Snamh Aighneach.* However, due to the fact that the ancient name of Carlingford was *Cuan Snamh Aigneach* any links between these annalistic references and the monastery at Cornamucklagh are tenuous. What is apparent is that the monastery itself does not appear to have survived the Viking incursions of the ninth and tenth centuries, and it is possible that by the close of the tenth century it had been completely abandoned.

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[638] IBID, p. 47.
[639] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* (1928), p. 221.
[640] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* pp. 8-10; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 48.
[641] DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 10-11.

CHAPTER IV: ANGLO-NORMAN ECCLESIASTICAL SETTLEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

Along with the three early medieval monastic sites at Faughart, Proleek and Roosky, which appear to have been re-used by the Anglo-Normans in the years following the colonization of the barony of Lower Dundalk, a further eight rural churches were established by the newcomers in the years after the initial settlement of the late 1180s; Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Castletowncooley, Templetown, Willville, Grange, Muchgrange and Knocknagoran. Despite the fact that several of these settlements were referred to as 'townes' in surviving early seventeenth century documents, there is no archaeological evidence to suggest that any of them functioned as urban centres in the medieval period. Rather, they can probably be more accurately defined as dispersed rural settlements.

Although there is no one definitive medieval source detailing the exact number or extent of the medieval parishes of Lower Dundalk from *c.* 1189-1650, it would appear, from the available archaeological, cartographic and documentary evidence, that, along with the Church of the Holy Trinity at Carlingford, the churches at Faughart, Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall and Knocknagoran functioned as parish churches within the individual parishes of Faughart, Ballymascanlan, Newtown Cooley and Omeath. In contrast to this, the churches located at Castletowncooley, Willville, Grange and Muchgrange appear to have functioned as chapels of ease within the extensive medieval parish of Carlingford. Indeed, in 1658 the parishes of Omeath and Newtown Cooley were also subsumed into the parish of Carlingford. There is no documentary evidence to suggest that the medieval church at Templetown ever functioned as a chapel of ease within the parish of Carlingford, nor was it one of the church sites which was absorbed into the parish of Carlingford in 1658. Although no specific reference to a parish of Templetown has survived in the documentary record, it is possible that this church also functioned as a parish church in the medieval period.

Of the eight sites under review in this chapter there are medieval masonry remains extant at only three of them; Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall and Templetown, and only one of them, the site of Grange Church, has ever undergone archaeological investigation. In the cases where the physical evidence on site was lacking, cartographic and documentary sources were utilized to supplement the existing data and to construct a

medieval chronology for these sites. It is also worth noting that, with the exception of Knocknagoran Church, which was located in the mountainous uplands of Omeath, in the extreme north-east of the barony, the remaining sites under review were all positioned in the agriculturally fertile lowlands of the barony. Geographically these sites form a broad ring around the periphery of the peninsula, stretching from Ballymascanlan in the north-west, down to Templetown in the south, and back up again to Grange and Muchgrange in the north-east.

II. BALLYMASCANLAN CHURCH

1. INTRODUCTION

The site of Ballymascanlan Church is located approximately 2.1km to the south-west of Proleek, and 8.5km to the south of Faughart Church.[1] The site was included in Davies' 1941 survey of the churches of Lower Dundalk[2] and was subsequently surveyed in 1967 for inclusion in the 1986 *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth* by Buckley[3] and the 1991 *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* by Buckley and Sweetman.[4] It was also briefly discussed by O'Sullivan in his recent article 'The Catholic Parishes in the Barony of Cooley. Part 1: From Earliest Times to the End of the Seventeenth Century' which was published in *Seanchas Ard Mhaca* in 2005.[5] In all four of these publications the site was described as a church with no remains extant which had, in the medieval period, occupied the same location as the modern Church of Ireland church now situated at Ballymascanlan.[6] However, a recent visit to the site for the purposes of this thesis has determined that there are in fact some masonry remains extant to the rear of the modern church which could possibly date to the medieval period. It is not clear why these features were not discussed by Davies, Buckley, Buckley and Sweetman, or O'Sullivan. To date, no archaeological excavation has ever been undertaken at the site of Ballymascanlan Church.

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[1] See Figure 1.
[2] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), p. 7.
[3] BUCKLEY, V.M., (ed), *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin 1986), p. 71.
[4] BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991), p. 221.
[5] O'SULLIVAN, H., 'The Catholic Parishes in the Barony of Cooley. Part 1: From Earliest Times to the End of the Seventeenth Century', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 20, Number 2, (2005), pp. 67-68.
[6] See Plate 1.

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

The settlement of Ballymascanlan was first recorded in the following charter of Hugh de Lacy which makes a substantial land grant on the Cooley Peninsula to the Cistercian monks of Mellifont Abbey:[7]

> *Knowe ye all that for the healthe of my soule and my ancestors and successors I have granted, and by this my present writing have confirmed, to God and the Blessed Marye or the monkes of the order of Cisterne of Mellifonte, Balimascanlan with all the land, betwixt the water that is called Adbui and the river that is called Aduneme....*[8]

According to MacIomhair, who studied the text of the original grant in detail, the charter can be dated within ten years. It must have been earlier than 1205, since de Lacy did not use, as convention would require, the title 'Earl of Ulster' which was granted to him in that year. The grant must also have occurred at some point after the agreement which de Lacy made with Thomas de Verdun when he married Thomas' sister Lescelina, *c.* 1195, a marriage which gave him possession of considerable tracts of land in the barony of Lower Dundalk.[9] In fact MacIomhair was of the opinion that this grant to the Cistercians would have occurred soon after de Lacy's marriage.[10] He explained this theory as follows:

> *Such mountainous country, exposed to the incursions of the Gaelic Irish further north, could turn out highly unprofitable, if not a dead loss to a lord residing far from the scene, as de Lacy was. So he did what many another Anglo-Norman knight did in similar circumstances. Combining piety with prudence he established on the ground men of peace and of a religious habit respected by all, who would hold off the Irish and also perhaps be a discreet buffer between de Lacy's land of Cooley further east and his in-laws to the west.*[11]

Even so, however, there is no way to establish the exact date of this grant and Smith has stated his belief that it did not occur *c.* 1195 but was more likely to have materialized in the years between 1200 and 1205.[12] O'Sullivan has more recently argued that the grant was made by de Lacy *c.* 1200 in association with a proposal to build a new Cistercian

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[7] MACIOMHAIR, D., 'The Lordship of Ballymascanlan', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1970), p. 79.

[8] *Grant of Ballymascanlan to the Cistercians of Mellifont*, ed. by D. MACIOMHAIR, 'The Lordship of Ballymascanlan', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 2, (1970), p. 79.

[9] See Chapter I: Introduction, IV. General Historical Background to the Study Area, b. The Anglo-Norman Period, *c.* 1189-1485.

[10] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 79.

[11] IBID, pp. 79- 80.

[12] SMITH, B., *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland. The English in Louth, 1170-1330,* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 59 & 67.

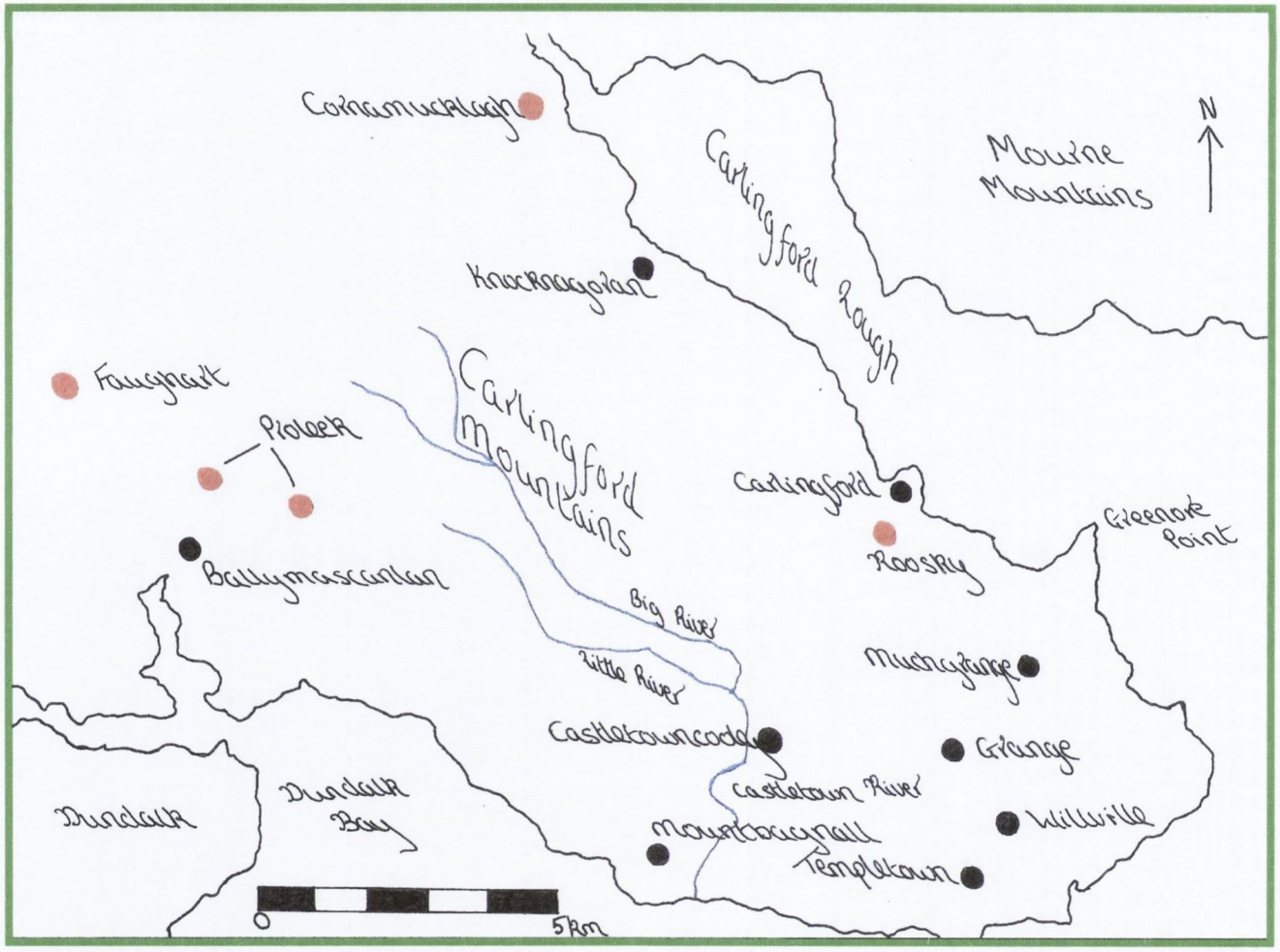


Figure 1: Rough distribution map of the ecclesiastical sites in the barony of Lower Dundalk. The pre-Norman sites are indicated in red, the Anglo-Norman sites in black.



Plate 1: The modern church of Ballymascanlan as viewed from the north side.

foundation at Ballymascanlan but which was not subsequently proceeded with.[13] De Lacy's grant included an unknown number of unnamed 'churches and chapels' which must have been already in existence in the vicinity prior to *c.* 1195-1205 and MacIomhair has stated that one of these churches would have been that which was located at Faughart.[14] Another possible church included in this grant may have been located at Proleek, which, like Faughart, was the site of a pre-Norman ecclesiastical foundation and which was also in fairly close proximity to Ballymascanlan.

In 1301 the placename 'Balymashallan' was included for the barony of Lower Dundalk in a list of amercements, or fines imposed at a Royal Court in Drogheda,[15] while in 1348 the settlement was once again recorded in a confirmation by King Edward III to the monks of Mellifont of all of the foregoing royal charters which had been issued to the monastery. Edward also endowed Mellifont with new privileges and extended to them the privileges already granted to St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin:

> *And that they shall have...in the aforesaid towns of Callan, Ballymascallan...a gallows, pillory, tumbrel and shewe, and all the liberties and quittances which the Abbot and convent of St. Mary near Dublin, who are of the same order, have of the gift of our progenitors by charters which we have confirmed by our charter...*
> [16]

In 1431 the settlement of 'Ballimascallan' was described in the archiepiscopal register of John Swayne as comprising 2 carucates, (approximately 240 acres).[17] In June 1528 Archbishop Cromer declared the curates of Ballymascanlon, Newtown Cooley and Kilwirra (Templetown), contumacious and subject to canonical penalties because of their failure to attend a synod of the *Cleros inter Anglicos* in Drogheda.[18] Local patrons of the various churches mentioned by Cromer included the prior of Kilmainham for Carlingford, and Sir John Plunkett of Beaulieu for Ballymascanlan.[19] The church and

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[13] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 58.
[14] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 82.
[15] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* ed. by D. MACIOMHAIR, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* , Volume XVI, Number 1, (1965), p. 42.
[16] *Inspeximus of 1348,* ed. by R.F. COLMCILLE, in 'An Important Mellifont Document. Inspeximus of 1348', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XIV, Number 1, (1957), pp. 1-5.
[17] *The Register of John Swayne, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland 1418-1439,* ed. by D.A. CHART, His Majesty's Stationary Office, (Belfast, 1935), 1431; MACIOMHAIR, D., 'County Louth Churches and Church Lands in Primate Swayne's Register', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 3, Number 2, (1959a), pp. 369-79; MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 82.
[18] *Archbishop Cromer's Register*, ed. by L.P. MURRAY, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society*, Volumes VII-IX, Number 4, (1936), 1528.
[19] *Archbishop Cromer's Register,* 1528. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 66.

curate of Ballymascanlan were mentioned briefly in 1535 the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall in Order of Visitation of churches in *Cleros inter Anglicos* as well as a list of the Synodals and Procurations payable in respect of religious establishments, *inter Anglicos*.[20]

Ballymascanlan Church appears to have continued under the nominal ownership of Mellifont until the dissolution of the monasteries *c.* 1540 [21] when it was described in the *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions* as follows:

> *Co. Louth. Manor of Balyscanlan. Extent made at Carlingford 4 Oct. 1540. A castle in good repair, with 120 acres arable and pasture...the manor and rectory, lately leased for 4 li. 13s. 4d. are now, by rebellion of the Hanlons and Oneles worth only 40s.*[22]

According to MacIomhair this description of Ballymascanlan was maintained virtually unaltered for the next sixty-five years in the lease of the lordship for forty-one years which was made by the Crown to Edward Moore on July 25th 1579, in the grant in reversion to Anthony St. Leger on July 10 1600, in the assignment of his interest which the latter made to Sir Garrett Moore, son of Edward, on the following November 20th, and finally, in the patent grant of the rectory and church of Ballymascanlan with all tithes, altarages and oblations to Sir Garrett of April 23rd1605.[23] Following on from this, the boundaries of the 'manor of Ballymascanlon' were set down in a Chancery Inquisition of 21 January 1606.[24] In 1622 the curacy of Ballymascanlan was worth £3 with the 'church and chauncell repaired'.[25] In 1627 Roger Briscoe was appointed curate of Ballymascanlan on the 5th February on a salary of £7 per annum, according to Royal Visitation records of 1633. Briscoe was still curate in 1633 and the Moore family were found to be impropriators of the rectory in both 1622 and 1633.[26] In 1628, following the death of Garrett Viscount Moore, a Chancery Inquisition found that he had been seized of

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[20] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall, commonly called the "Liber Niger" or "Black Book,"* ed. by L.P. MURRAY, Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society, Volumes VI-VII, (1926-1930), 1535.

[21] LESLIE, J.B., *Armagh Clergy and Parishes,* (Dundalk, 1911), p. 135; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 58-61.

[22] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions 1540-42,* ed. by N.B. WHITE, Irish Manuscripts Commission, The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1943), p. 120.

[23] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 81. See also LESLIE, (1911), p. 135.

[24] LESLIE, (1911), p. 135; MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 80.

[25] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,(T.C.D. MS. E.36),* transc.& ed. by T. FITZPATRICK, 'The Royal Visitation of 1622', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VI, Number 1, (1925), p. 10.

[26] LESLIE, (1911), p. 133. See also *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* p. 10.

lands including 'Faghart, Ballmascanlon and Prolugg,'[27] while in 1656 the great tithes of Ballymascanlan were rented by the Commonwealth to one John Dodson.[28] The Moores held the manor of Ballymascanlan until 1735 when they sold it to Thomas Fortescue, whose family remained landlords there until the twentieth century.[29]

3. CARTOGRAPHY

The settlement of Ballymascanlan was depicted upon Richard Bartlett's Map *of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602.*[30] In this representation there is what appears to be a tower house located near the banks of the Ballymascanlan River, with some smaller buildings, possibly residences, situated to the north east. As previously discussed,[31]the boundaries of the medieval parish of Ballymascanlan are difficult to determine and the Down Survey Map of *c.* 1655, while not illustrating Ballymascanlan Church, shows a parish of 'Faugher' which includes Ballymascanlan.[32] Just three years later, in 1658, an inquisition of Louth parishes placed Ballymascanlan in the parish of that name,[33] while the *Hearth Money Rolls* of 1664 state that the parish of Faughart at this point included Ballymascanlan.[34]

4. LOCATION

As previously mentioned, the most likely location for the medieval church of Ballymascanlan would appear to have been on the same site where the modern church of Ballymascanlan is now situated. In 1941 Davies described the site of Ballymascanlan Church as follows:

> *Ballymascanlan Church stands on a mound on the edge of a marsh, probably never quite insulated. It could be regarded as quasi-hilltop; but the adjoining hilltop-now destroyed, may explain its position. The site is at present occupied by*

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[27] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 82.
[28] LESLIE, (1911), p. 135.
[29] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 83.
[30] See Figure 2.
[31] See Chapter I: Introduction, VII. Methodology & Structure, 6. Barony and Parish Boundaries.
[32] MACIOMHAIR, D., 'Post Reformation Pastors of Fochart', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 9, Number 1, (1978), p. 151.
[33] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, transc. by J.B. LESLIE, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 1, (1929), p. 35; MACIOMHAIR, D., 'Post Reformation Pastors of Fochart', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 9, Number 1, (1978), p. 151.
[34] *Hearth Money Rolls: Barony of Dundalk,* ed. by L.P. MURRAY, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 4, (1932), pp. 500-15; MACIOMHAIR, D., 'Post Reformation Pastors of Fochart', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 9, Number 1, (1978), p. 151.

> *an eighteenth century church. I could find in the graveyard no stones older than 1742 but it is presumably the site of the old church, as no other is known.*[35]

In 1986 and 1991 Buckley, and then Buckley and Sweetman made two identical but brief descriptions of this site recording that:

> *Present church, dating to late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, built on the site of an earlier church which was in disrepair in 1622.*[36]

More recently O'Sullivan commented that:

> *A fourth church site almost certainly stood at Ballymascanlon at or on the site of the present-day Church of Ireland Parish Church which is itself of late eighteenth-early nineteenth century origins. As nothing survives of the medieval church it must be assumed that it had its origins in the period of the Cistercian grant and served the local population of the Ballymascanlon district under the impropriation of Mellifont Abbey.*[37]

5. MORPHOLOGY

In the absence of any contemporary description of this church, or indeed any cartographical representation of this site, it is almost impossible to speculate upon its size or morphology, except to note that the brief reference to it contained within the 1622 Royal Visitation records, which described the 'church and chauncell repaired', may indicate that it was a divided nave and chancel structure. [38]

6. MASONRY STYLES

Despite the fact that it has been generally accepted by Davies, Buckley, Buckley and Sweetman and O'Sullivan[39] that there are no physical remains of the medieval church of Ballymascanlan extant, there are two separate stone structures evident in Ballymascanlan Graveyard which may be of medieval date. The first is located on a raised grassy mound to the front of the church. It is a small rectangular roofless structure with a flat-headed doorway located centrally in the west wall.[40] There are large quoin stones evident on the north-western and south-western corners of the structure. The door

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[35] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7.
[36] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 71; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 221. See also TEMPEST, H.G., *Gossiping Guide to Louth and Parts of Surrounding Counties: Descriptive and Historical*, Second Edition, (Dundalk, 1920), p. 71.
[37] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 67-68.
[38] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,(T.C.D. MS. E.36)*, p. 10.
[39] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 7; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 71; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 221; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 67-68.
[40] See Plate 2.



Figure 2: The settlement of Ballymascanlan as depicted on Richard Bartlett's *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602.*
(O'SULLIVAN, H., *Irish Historic Towns Atlas No. 16, Dundalk,* Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 2006)).



Plate 2: Unidentified stone structure located in Ballymascanlan Graveyard to the north-east of the church.

jambs and lintel appear to be of fairly simple design[41] and this structure could possibly date to the early medieval period.

The second structure is located to the rear of Ballymascanlan Church and also appears to be positioned upon some sort of a raised mound. [42] A full investigation of this structure was severely hampered by the bushes and trees which surround it, but it would appear that the surviving masonry represents the south wall and two adjoining sections of the east and west walls. Adjoining this structure at the east end is a stone stairway which appears to be of medieval date.[43] There is also a small recess evident in the south wall of this structure.[44]

7. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

In 1984 the preliminary survey of Louth listed an enclosure, a souterrain and a church for Ballymascanlan,[45] while the *Inventory* of 1986 and the *Survey* of 1991 both included a souterrain, a possible souterrain, an enclosure, a church and a possible tower house for Ballymascanlan.[46] The *Inventory* included just a two line description of this site, stating that there were no physical remains extant:

> *According to OS letters 1836 this townland is named after Scanlon O'Neill, who had a castle here. No visible surface trace.*[47]

However, it would appear that by the time of the publication of the *Survey* in 1991 the remains of this tower house had been located. In this volume it was listed as a possible tower house site situated in low-lying ground close to the west bank of the Ballymascanlan River. It was constructed with coursed rubble granite and had only parts of its south and east walls remaining. The walls had been defaced except for a small portion of the only remaining angle and they appeared to have been built against a raised area, although according to Buckley and Sweetman 'this impression may be due to a build up of collapse outside the structure.' The walls were measured at 4m high externally, 2m high internally and were found to be 1.5-2m wide with a slight batter. The length of the east wall was found to be *c.* 13m but it appeared to have run further north.

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[41] See Plates 2 & 3.
[42] See Plate 4.
[43] See Plate 5.
[44] See Plate 6.
[45] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth: A Preliminary Description of Field Antiquities in the County from the Mesolithic Period to the 17th Century AD,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1984), pp. 6 & 10.
[46] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 104; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 393. See Figure 3.
[47] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 96.

The south wall was *c.* 15m long and ran west into the slope of the natural hill. Regarding the date of this structure Buckley and Sweetman commented that 'the remains are featureless but it almost certainly belongs to the late medieval period and could well have been a tower house.'[48] They also noted that a castle was marked in this area by the Down Survey, [49]and also on a map of *c.* 1575.[50]

8. ETYMOLOGY

According to Stubbs, Archdall and Buckley the name Ballymascanlan can be translated as MacScanlan's town, or the town of the son of Scanlan. [51] Leslie stated in 1911, although without any primary references, that the sept of the Scanlans were the ancient proprietors of the parish of Ballymascanlan.[52] According to Buckley, who was citing OS letters the townland of Ballymascanlan itself was named after Scanlon O'Neill, who owned the castle there.[53]

9. CHRONOLOGY

Documentary sources indicate that extensive lands at Ballymascanlan were granted to the Cistercians of Mellifont by Hugh de Lacy at some point between 1195 and 1205.[54] The first direct reference to a medieval church in Ballymascanlan occurred in 1528 when Archbishop Cromer declared the curate of Ballymascanlon to be contumacious, [55]although it is more than likely that a church had existed on this site for several hundred years before this date. The church and curate of Ballymascanlan were mentioned again briefly in 1535 in the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall,[56]while the 'rectory' of Ballymascanlan was recorded in 1540 in the *Extents of Irish Monastic*

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[48] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 304. See also *Louth Ordnance Survey Letters*, ed. by J.T. DOLAN, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 1, (1929), p. 65 for the Down Survey Map.
[49] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 304. See also *Louth Ordnance Survey Letters*, p. 65.
[50] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 304. See also O'SULLIVAN, H., 'A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XXI, Number 1, (1985), p. 43 for the sixteenth century map.
[51] ARCHDALL, M., *Monasticon Hibernicum,* (Dublin, 1876), p. 482; STUBBS, F.W, 'Place Names in the County of Louth [A-B]', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume II, Number 1, (1908), p. 35.
[52] LESLIE, (1911), p. 135.
[53] 'Co. Louth 1836', (1938-39); BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 96.
[54] *Grant of Ballymascanlan to the Cistercians of Mellifont,* p. 79.
[55] *Archbishop Cromer's Register*, (1936), 1528.
[56] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall*, 1535.

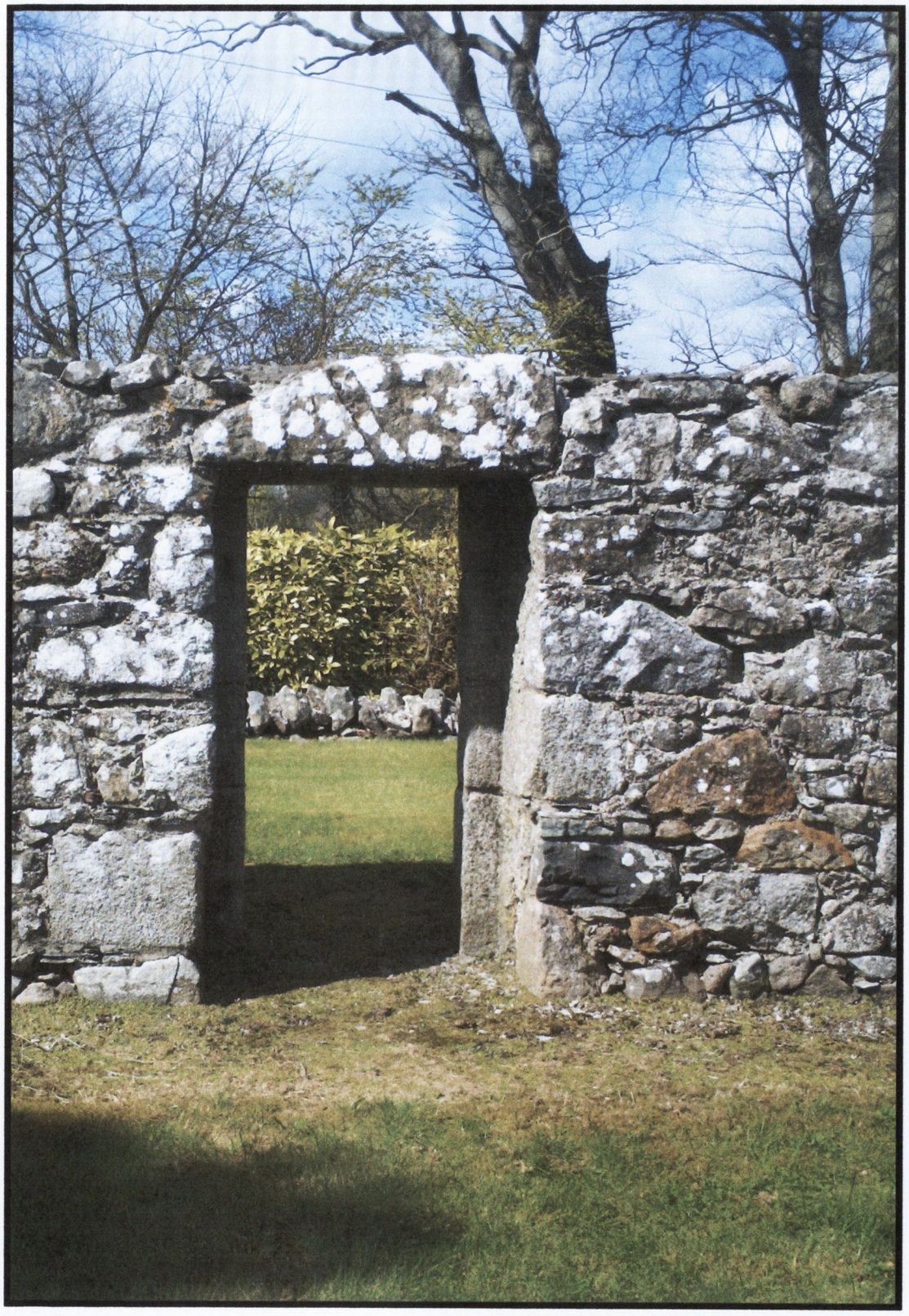


Plate 3: Interior of the flat-headed doorway to the unidentified stone structure located in Ballymascanlan Graveyard.



Plate 4: Unidentified mound and masonry remains located to the rear of Ballymascanlan Church.



Plate 5: Stone stairway located to the rear of Ballymascanlan Church.



Plate 6: Recess evident in the masonry remains located to the rear of Ballymascanlan Church.

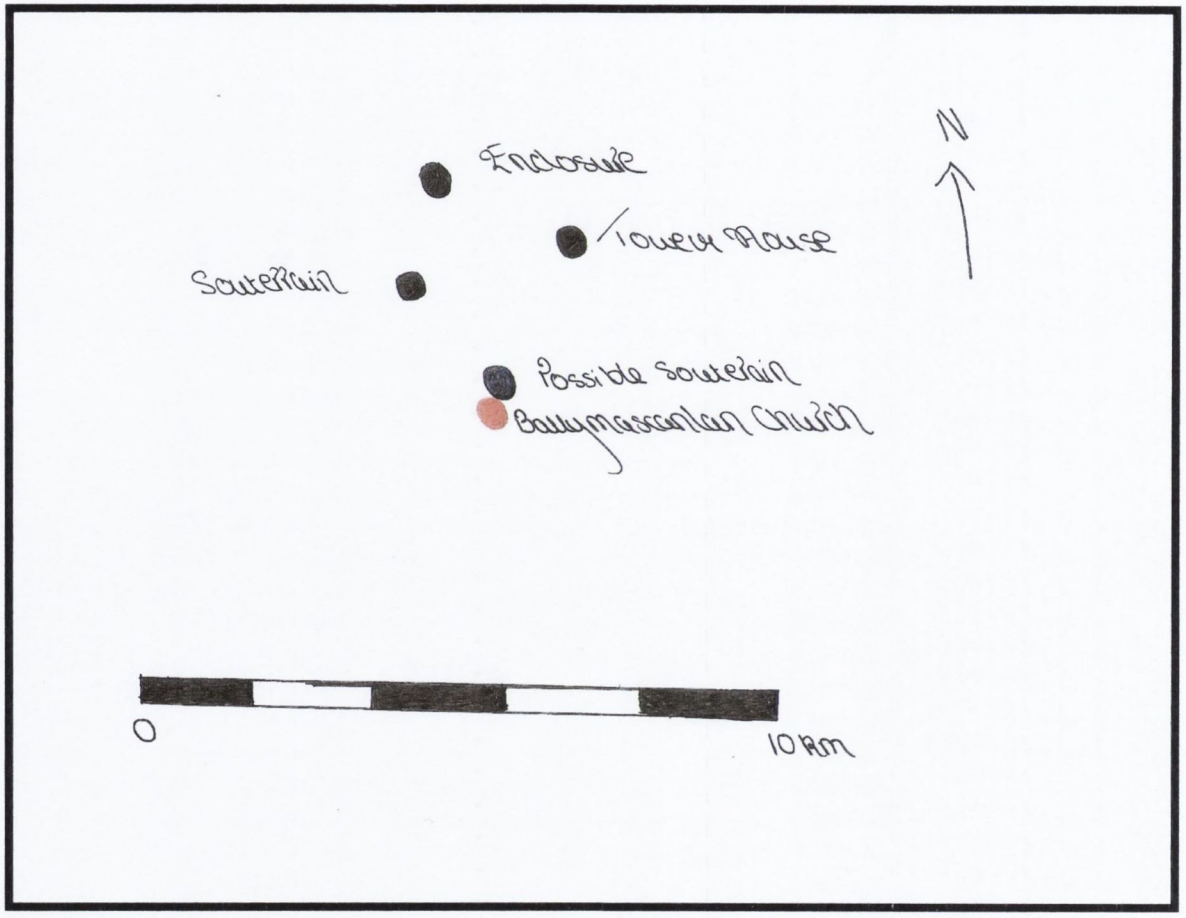


Figure 3: Rough map of the associated archaeological sites at Ballymascanlan. The church is indicated in red, the other sites in black.

Possessions.[57] In the period following the dissolution the church appears to have come into he possession of the Moore family and in 1605 the 'rectory and church of Ballymascanlan with all tithes, altarages and oblations' were granted to Sir Garrett Moore.[58] In the first quarter of the seventeenth century documentary references indicate that the church at Ballymascanlan was still in use and it was mentioned in 1622, 1627, and 1633. [59] Finally, in 1656 the great tithes of Ballymascanlan were rented by the Commonwealth to one John Dodson,[60] and it must have been at some stage after this that the church fell into disrepair and ruin and was subsequently replaced in the eighteenth century with the current Ballymascanlan Church.[61]

III. MOUNTBAGNALL CHURCH

1. INTRODUCTION

Mountbagnall Church is located in the south-western portion of the Cooley Peninsula, approximately 10.3km to the south-east Ballymascanlan Church.[62] It was surveyed by Davies in 1941 for his study of the churches of the barony of Lower Dundalk.[63] It was surveyed for a second time in 1966 by Buckley, the results of which were published in the *Inventory* of 1986[64] and the *Survey* of 1991.[65] It was also briefly discussed by O'Sullivan in 2005.[66] To date, Mountbagnall Church has never undergone archaeological excavation, although in 2001 O'Carroll carried out an excavation of a prehistoric pit which was located in close proximity to Mountbagnall motte and bailey site.[67]

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[57] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions*, p. 120.
[58] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 81. See also LESLIE, (1911), p. 135.
[59] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster,* p. 10. LESLIE, (1911), p. 133.
[60] LESLIE, (1911), p. 135.
[61] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 83.
[62] See Figure 1 & Plate 7
[63] DAVIES., (1941b), p. 14.
[64] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 77;
[65] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 249. See also the *Sites and Monuments Record* file for this site LH 008-073001, Mountbagnall Church.
[66] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 58.
[67] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=6828
O'CARROLL, F., Excavation Report, Mountbagnall, Prehistoric Pit, 2001:873.

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

In July 1236 it was recorded in the *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland* that Rohesia de Verdun had 'built a good castle strongly in her land against the Irish'.[68] This castle as been identified as Roche Castle, in the barony of Upper Dundalk, by Otway-Ruthven, Smith, Hagger and Kenny.[69] In the same entry, it was recorded that Rohesia intended 'to build another castle to the great security of our land' to fund which she was granted the service of Meath and Uriel. The location of this second castle is unknown, and although Otway Ruthven has contended that it may have been the motte and bailey at Mountbagnall,[70] Hagger is of the opinion that she simply intended to rebuild her grandfather's motte and bailey at Castletown, on the periphery of the town of Dundalk,[71] even though there is no evidence, either archaeological or historical, to suggest that de Verduns ever returned to this site following the construction of Roche Castle *c.* 1236. In any case there was a church and a motte and bailey constructed at Mountbagnall at an unknown date and the settlement which sprouted up around these monuments in the medieval period appears to have been manorial in type and was consistently referred to in contemporary documents as the New Town of Cooley. This New Town was included in the 1301 list of amercements, or fines which were imposed by a Royal Court at Drogheda, [72] indicating that at this point a settlement had been established, and possibly also a church.

In 1332 the New Town of Cooley was still in the possession of the de Verdun family and William de Burgh was recorded as holding the settlement from them.[73] A church had definitely been established at Mountbagnall by 1390 when an entry in Archbishop Fleming's Register confirmed that the Cistercian Abbey of Newry had the

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[68] *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland: Volume I: 1171-1251*, ed. by H.S. SWEETMAN, Public Record Office, (London, 1974), 1236.

[69] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, A.J., 'The Partition of the de Verdon lands in Ireland in 1332', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 66, Section C, (1968), p. 407; SMITH, B., 'The Concept of the March in Medieval Ireland: The Case of Uriel', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 88, Section C, (1988), p. 263; HAGGER, M.S., *The Fortunes of a Norman Family: The de Verduns in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, 1066-1316,* (Dublin, 2001), p. 78; KENNY, G., *Anglo-Irish and Gaelic Women in Ireland c. 1170-1540,* (Dublin, 2007), pp. 145-47.

[70] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 407.

[71] HAGGER, (2001), p. 78. SMITH, (1988), p. 263. See also KENNY, (2007), pp. 145-47.

[72] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 43.

[73] MCNEILL, C. & OTWAY-RUTHVEN, A.J., (ed), *Dowdall Deeds,* Stationery Office for the Irish Manuscripts Commission, Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1960), p. 55; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 428.



Plate 7: Mountbagnall Church as viewed from the east.

rights of presentation to the 'rectory of the church of Newtown of Cooley'.[74] In 1431 the settlement was subsequently referred to in the archiepiscopal register of John Swayne as the 'Newtown of Coulye' comprising 2 carucates of land. [75] At an unrecorded date prior to 1439 the *Dowdall Deeds* recorded that the O'Neill's of Orior had attacked the Newtown of Cooley which was burned along with the corn mill at 'Lucistoun', in Castletowncooley. The reference in the Dowdall Deeds arose out of a dispute over ownership of the mill before it had been burned and in 1439 one Johanna Latyn gave evidence to the effect that she remembers seeing an individual named Hankkok as miller in the mill of 'Neveton in Coli', but not as miller in the mill of Lucistoun,[76]indicating that at this stage there had also been a mill established at Mountbagnall.

However, the church at Mountbagnall must have survived this attack because in June 1528 Archbishop Cromer declared the curate of ''Newtown Cooley' contumacious and subject to canonical penalties because of his failure to attend a synod of the *Cleros inter Anglicos* in Drogheda.[77] Seven years later, in 1535 the church at the New Town of Cooley was recorded in the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall in an Order of Visitation of Churches *inter Anglicos* as well as a list of the Synodals and Procurations payable in respect of religious establishments, *inter Anglicos*.[78]

The next reference to the church of the New Town of Cooley occurred forty years later in the 1575 rental of the Bagnall estate when the priest, Reverend O'Bull paid a rental of eleven pence per acre and it was recorded that the 'tithes of the Newtown should this last year be 26s. 8d.'[79] O'Sullivan has construed the details of the rental for Mountbagnall as follows:

> *The devastation left in the wake of the O'Neill wars in the Carlingford area is reflected in the Rent Roll by the relatively small acreages of land held by the respective tenants. In the case of the Newtown of Cooley only sixty of the nine hundred acres belonging to it were inhabited and for which the local priest the Rev. O'Bull paid a rental of eleven pence per acre.* [80]

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[74] *Extracts Relating to Co. Louth from the Calendar of the Register of Primate Nicholas Fleming,* ed. by A. GWYNN, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XI, Number 4, (1948), 1390; *The Register of Nicholas Fleming, Archbishop of Armagh 1404-1416,* ed. by. B. SMITH, The Irish Manuscripts Commission, (Dublin, 2003), 1390.
[75] *The Register of John Swayne,* 1431; MACIOMHAIR, (1959a), p. 373.
[76] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1439.
[77] *Archbishop Cromer's Register*, 1528.
[78] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall*, 1535.
[79] O'SULLIVAN, H., 'A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XXI, Number 1, (1985), pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 74.
[80] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 80.

In fact it should be noted at this point that Nicholas Bagnall had a huge impact upon the political development of the Cooley peninsula in the sixteenth century.[81] He first arrived in Ireland as a fugitive, working as a mercenary soldier for Conn Bacach, the great O'Neill lord of Tyrone, who had petitioned Henry VIII in 1543 to pardon Bagnall for crimes committed in England. Like Bertram de Verdun almost four hundred years before him, Bagnall was a native of Staffordshire, where his family had some property and influence,[82] and his fortunes in Ireland prospered rapidly after he was granted the confiscated lands of the Cistercians at Newry following the dissolution of the monasteries. In 1547 he was appointed Marshal of the Irish Army and in 1550 he was appointed to the Irish Privy Council. On 19th July 1550, the Lord Protector wrote to the Lord Deputy of Ireland directing him to make an official lease of 'the Newerye' to Bagnall for 21 years, and Henry VIII's successor, Edward VI was later to grant Bagnall the property for the remainder of his life, which coincidentally did not end until 1590, in order that he might restore order in those 'rude and savage quarters...far from civil order'.[83]Indeed it is indicative of the continuing political disorder in this region that these lands were described as' mainly pasture for cattle with little corn and often wasted by war.' [84] In 1552 the Privy Council further strengthened his position when his estate was extended to include extensive land holdings on the Cooley Peninsula and was converted from a 'leasehold' to one of 'knight's fee' to hold of the king as a tenant-in-chief.

The 1575 rent roll of his estate in the Carlingford Lough district was prepared in respect of each of the lordships of Newry, Greencastle and Mourne. It would appear to relate to those parts then in the effective control of Bagnall which were yielding, from the respective tenants, specified rents whether in cash or in kind. It therefore, indicates the degree to which the grant of 1552 had become profitable by that time. However, the intervening twenty-three years had been turbulent ones for Bagnall. For example, on 19th February 1559, Queen Elizabeth I had ordered that martial law be exacted in Cooley:

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[81] HUGHES, T.J., 'Land Holding and Settlement in the Cooley Peninsula of Louth', *Irish Geography,* Volume IV, Number 3, (1961), p. 152.

[82] O'SULLIVAN, H., (1985), p. 32. O'SULLIVAN, H., 'The March of South-East Ulster in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries: A Period of Change', in *The Borderlands. Essays on the History of the Ulster-Leinster Border,* ed. by R. GILLESPIE & H. O'SULLIVAN, The Institute of Irish Studies, (Belfast, 1989b), p. 70; Smyth & Turner, (1996), p. 6.

[83] O'SULLIVAN, (1985), p. 33; O'SULLIVAN, (1989a), p. 70; SMYTH, A., & TURNER, C., *Newry: An Illustrated History and Companion,* (Donaghdee, 1996), p. 6; http://www.proni.gov.uk/records/private/anglesey.htm.

[84] O'SULLIVAN, (1985), p. 33; http://www.proni.gov.uk/records/private/anglesey.htm.

> *Similar commission*[to exact martial law] *to William Asshely and Thomas Bramely for the territories of Cowley, Mourne and Newry and confines thereof.* [85]

Furthermore, it appears that the native Irish of the barony of Lower Dundalk had never accepted Bagnall's intrusion into the region, and, during the Shane O'Neill wars of the 1560s, his estate was devastated so much so that he offered on two occasions to sell out his interests to others.

However it seems that the Crown was not prepared to lose the useful services of Bagenal on the northern borders of the Pale. [86] The English royal government at the time was interested in Ulster but only in an indirect way at first hoping to manage and control local lords from a distance. To do this they needed bases and local agents, of which Nicholas Bagnall was undoubtedly one.[87] Although he had suffered a brief eclipse of fortune during the reign of the Catholic Queen Mary, who deprived him of his office and required that he give recognisances for good behaviour, after the reappointment of Sir Henry Sidney as Lord Deputy in 1568, he was restored to office and continued until his death in 1590, when he was succeeded by his son Henry who was later killed by Hugh O'Neill at the Battle of the Yellow Ford in 1599.[88] For Bagnall, the years immediately following the defeat and death of Shane O'Neill in 1568 were representative of a period of recovery from an abominable state of war which had prevailed for more than a decade.[89] As late as 1566 Bagenal, at that time deprived of his estate by Shane O'Neill, stated in a letter to the Earl of Leicester that he 'never knew the country so out of order. Robbery, stealing and killing throughout the English Pale'.[90] In the following year, having recovered his possessions, he set about the work of restoration and recovery on his estates.[91]

In fact it is his restoration to office in 1568 which provides us with more details of what lands he held on the peninsula in the form of a grant made to him for twenty-one years of certain lands in Cooley by Queen Elizabeth:

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[85] *Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, Vol. I,* ed. by J. MORRIN, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1861), p. 409.
[86] O'SULLIVAN, (1985), p. 33.
[87] MALLORY, J.P. & MCNEILL, T., *The Archaeology of Ulster: From Colonization to Plantation,* (Belfast, 1991), pp. 301-02.
[88] O'SULLIVAN, (1985), p. 33.
[89] CANAVAN, T., *Frontier Town: An Illustrated History of Newry*, (Belfast, 1989), p. 46.
[90] *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary & Elizabeth,* ed. by H.C. HAMILTON, E.G. ATKINSON & R.P. MAHAFFY, (London, 1860), p. 289.
[91] O'SULLIVAN, (1985), p. 42; BARDON, (2005), p. 80.

Whereas also heretofore we did signify our pleasure towards the gratifying of the Lord of Louth in certain his suits...upon singular commendation of his faithful service, we are pleased that he shall have a lease in reversion, to begin after the determination of such term as he now hath, for the term of twenty-one years of the Preceptory or dominion of Kylsaran, in the county of Louth, and of Mont Sterviox, with the spiritualities and temporalities thereto belonging; of Knocksmill and Abbotsgrange and of the tithes of Cowley and Carlingforde, and of Templetown , Mocklagh, and Morton, in Cowley. Greenwich, April 20, 1568.[92]

The New Town of Cooley was subsequently included in the 1608 inquisition into the extent of the Bagnall estate and described as 'Newtown in Cooley 120 acres.'[93] In 1622 the Royal Visitation found that the New Town of Cooley was a vacant curacy with Bagnall as appropriator.[94] According to Leslie recorded the great tithes of Newtown were, upon discovery in 1656, rented by the English Commonwealth to one John Slater for five shillings. [95] The parish of Newtown Cooley was not mentioned in the inquisition of Louth parishes in 1658;[96] although it was mentioned in the *Hearth Money Rolls* of 1664 listed the 'parish of Newtown Cooley'.[97]

3. LOCATION

The first of the only two ever recorded archaeological examinations of Mountbagnall Church was conducted by Davies at the outset of the 1940s. The results of this survey were published in the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal* for 1941 and read as follows:

> *Newtown Graveyard, O.S. Louth 8 11 4, lies on the south-west spur of a small mound, just below the motte and bailey, on good pasture land. I could trace the foundations of a long narrow church. In the graveyard is part of an unbevelled ashlar door-jamb, six inches wide and contracting two inches.*[98]

The second survey of Mountbagnall Church was carried out on the 11th of May 1966, for the *Archaeological Inventory of Co. Louth,* the results of which were published by Buckley in 1986, and it reads just as briefly as its 1941 precursor:

> *Locally known as 'Newtown Graveyard' this is a church site. Roughly subcircular enclosure, just SW of the motte and bailey site. Overgrown*

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[92] *Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, Vol. I,* p. 518.
[93] *Irish Records Commission*, Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608.
[94] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*, p. 10.
[95] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.
[96] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, pp. 19-41.
[97] *Hearth Money Rolls: Barony of Dundalk*, pp. 500-15.
[98] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 14.

foundations of a church (max. dims. 19m by 6m in NW corner of the graveyard.[99]

An identically brief survey was again published by Buckley and Sweetman for the *Archaeological Survey of Co. Louth* in 1991.[100]

4. SIZE

The church at Mountbagnall has maximum internal dimensions of 19m by 6m which indicates a total internal area of 114 square metres,[101] which would qualify it as a church of middle size according to O'Carragáin's methodology relating to church size and function.[102]

5. MORPHOLOGY

There is no evidence extant on site to indicate that Mountbagnall was ever a divided nave and chancel church. Therefore, in terms of morphology it is probably best descried as a unicameral, or single cell, structure. It is however quite narrow in form and appears to be positioned within a deep depression.[103]

6. MASONRY STYLES

During the course of the recent fieldwork undertaken for this thesis it became apparent that this site is far too complex to be defined simply with a four or five line description. To cite just two examples, the ashlar door jamb recorded by Davies in 1941 was not mentioned at all in the 1991 survey, and yet recent fieldwork has discovered that it may still be on site and is potentially important architectural feature of this church. The simple plan of this church, along with the surviving stonework could indicate an early date of construction for this site.[104] However, the lack of mortar evident in the fabric of the walls and the peculiar proportions of the structure as it stands today suggests that the masonry may have been re-piled at some stage following the

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[99] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 77.
[100] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 249.
[101] See Figure 4.
[102] Ó CARRAGÁIN, 'Church Buildings and Pastoral Care in Early Medieval Ireland,' in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK, & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), pp. 107-8.
[103] FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2010). See Plates 8, 9 & 10.
[104] See Plate 11.

demise of the original church.[105] As this site was located in close proximity to a motte and bailey,[106] it is likely that it was originally a manorial church. Thus, it is also probable that it was initially constructed at the outset of the de Verdun colonization of the peninsula in the late twelfth-early thirteenth century.[107]

7. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

a. DOORWAYS

The remains of Mountbagnall Church as they are today suggest that the church was aligned east to west with the entrance located at the south-eastern end of the south wall.[108] As previously mentioned a stone which may possibly be the original door jamb described by Davies in 1941 is still in evidence on site.[109]

b. STONE CARVINGS

The only surviving stone carving extant at Mountbagnall Church is located on top of one of the pillars at the entrance-gate to the site and was not noted by Davies in 1941, nor by Buckley and Sweetman in 1986 or 1991.[110] The puzzling location of this carving upon a pillar which appears to be of a relatively modern date would seem to suggest that the stone may have been moved from another part of the cemetery and possibly re-used in the construction of the pillar.

It is not certain what the original function of this stone carving was, but one possibility is that it may have been a mason's mark. According to Hourihane, 'these marks represent the personal signatures of the masons responsible for the cutting of the stone found throughout medieval buildings, and as such, are the closest we can come, in many cases, to identifying individual workers.'[111] He has identified a number of mason's marks at Holycross Abbey, Co. Tipperary, which although not identical to the carving at Mountbagnall, are certainly similar in type and form, and three in particular, appear to

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[105] FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009).
[106] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 87; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 292.
[107] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 292.
[108] See Plate 12.
[109] See Plates 13 & 14.
[110] See Plates 15 & 16.
[111] HOURIHANE, C., *The Mason and His Mark: Masons' Marks in the Medieval Irish Archbishoprics of Cashel and Dublin,* BAR British Series 294, (Oxford, 2000), p. 2.

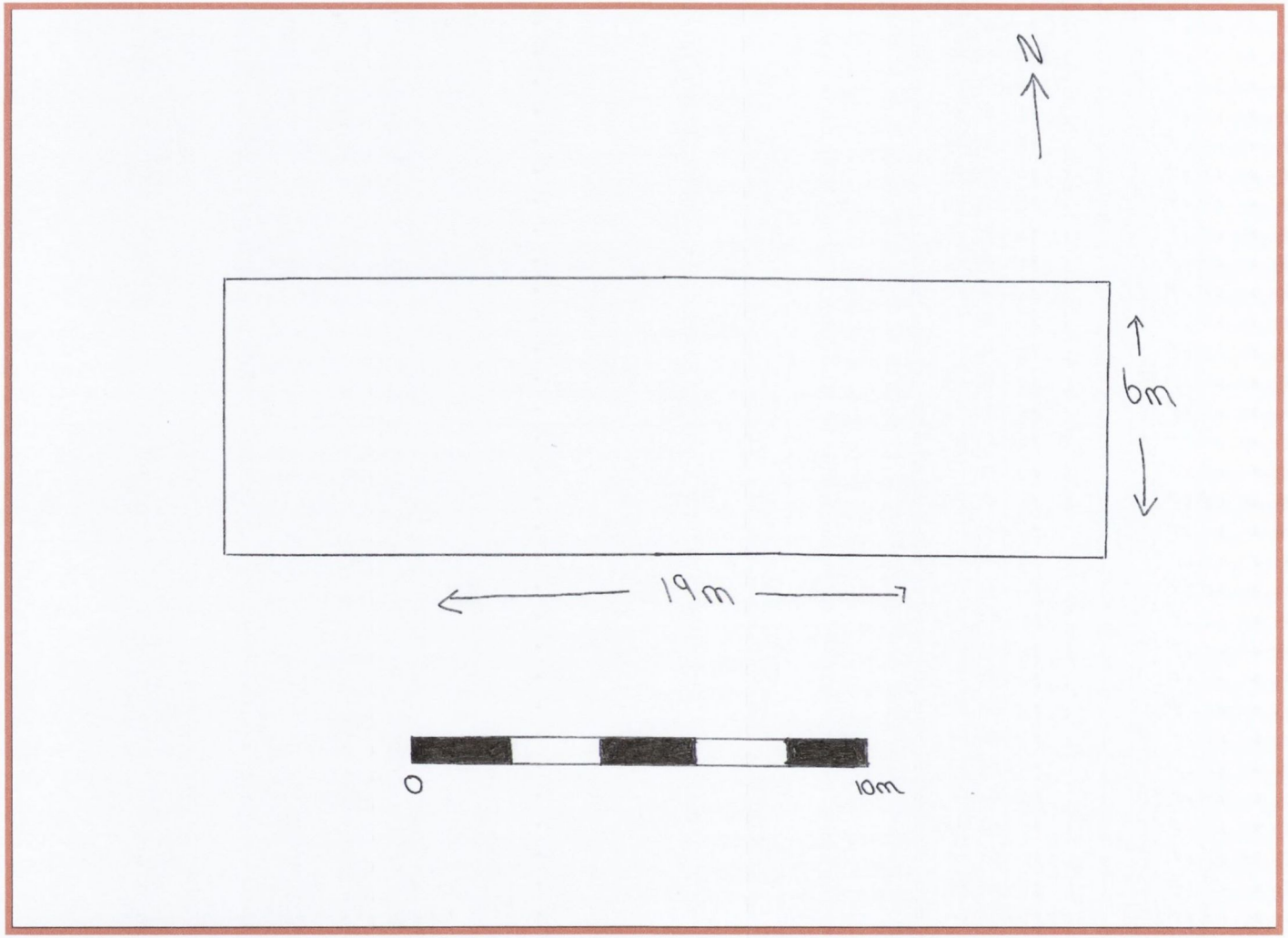


Figure 4: Rough Plan of Mountbagnall Church

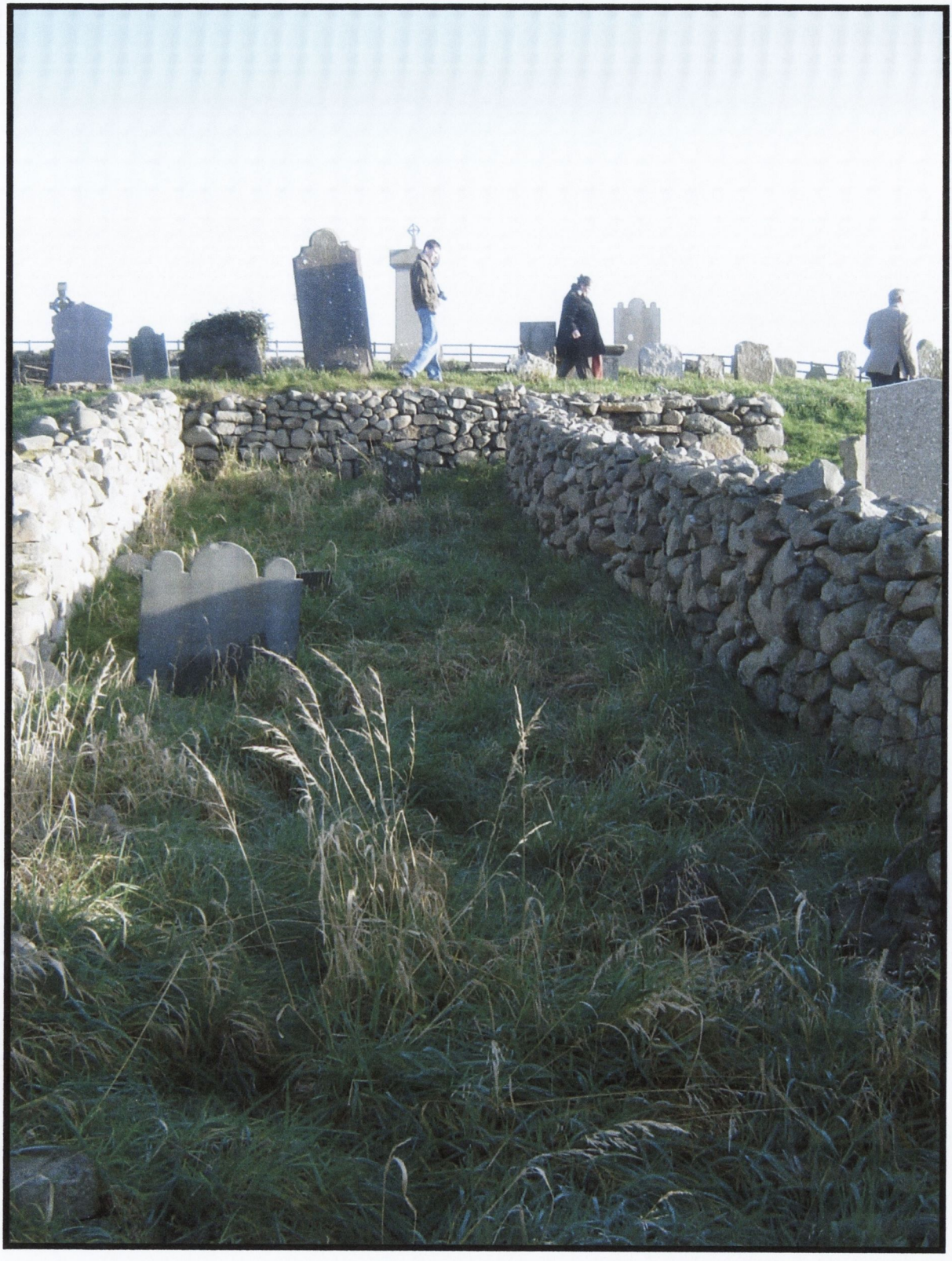


Plate 8: The narrowness of the interior of Mountbagnall Church, as viewed from the west.



Plate 9: Depression in the interior of Mountbagnall Church.



Plate 10: Depression evident in the ground-level of Mountbagnall Graveyard.



Plate 11: The stonework evident in the south wall of Mountbagnall Church.



Plate 12: The entrance to Mountbagnall Church.



Plate 13: The possible door jamb at Mountbagnall Church.



Plate 14: The underside of the possible door jamb at Mountbagnall Church.



Plate 15: Pillar at Mountbagnall Church with carving located in the left-hand side quadrant.



Plate 16: Carving on entrance pillar at Mountbagnall Church.

display a similar leaf motif to that of the Mountbagnall carving.[112] One alternative interpretation of this carving is that it may have been the inauguration cross of the church.[113]

8. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERY

a. GRAVE SLABS/STONES

Although there are a number of eighteenth century headstones in evidence at Mountbagnall cemetery there are no grave markers which can be definitively dated to the medieval period. There are, however, numerous rough, crudely carved stones scattered around the graveyard which are clearly very old but which unfortunately cannot be dated definitively.[114]

9. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

An archaeological excavation of a prehistoric pit in the vicinity of the motte and bailey at Mountbagnall which conducted in 2001 by O'Carroll failed to indicate any activity related to the medieval phase of settlement in the area. [115]

10. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

The preliminary survey of County Louth listed a promontory fort, a motte and bailey site, and a cemetery for Mountbagnall, although no mention was made of the church.[116] Both the *Inventory* of 1986[117] and the *Survey* of 1991[118] listed the promontory fort, the church and the motte and bailey site for Mountbagnall.[119] The church is located approximately 120km to the SW of the motte while the promontory fort is located approximately 1.16km to the south of the motte and church. The coastal promontory fort

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[112] See Figure 9.
[113] BARRY, T.B., pers. comm. (April, 2007).
[114] See Plate 17.
[115] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=6828
O'CARROLL, F., Excavation Report, Mountbagnall, Prehistoric Pit, 2001:873.
[116] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, *Archaeological Survey of County Louth: A Preliminary Description of Field Antiquities in the County from the Mesolithic Period to the 17th Century AD,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1984), pp. 13-14.
[117] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 108.
[118] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 400.
[119] See Figure 5.

at Mountbagnall was completely bulldozed in 1985.[120] According to Buckley and Sweetman, although promontory forts are generally dated to the Early Iron Age in other parts of the country, in County Louth they sites are smaller in size than average, and 'would appear to be contemporary with and analogous to the standard ringfort.'[121] The motte and bailey at Mountbagnall, which, along with Faughart, was one of only two located in the barony of Lower Dundalk, was illustrated by Wright in 1748, photographed by Tempest in 1906, and was completely destroyed in the 1950s.[122]

11. ETYMOLOGY

The name 'New Town' of Cooley, by which name Mountbagnall Church was commonly known throughout the medieval period may possibly have originated in its foundation date, which although unknown, may have post-dated the foundation of the medieval town of Carlingford and resulted in the name 'New Town'. The first definitive reference to an urban settlement at Carlingford was recorded in the late twelfth century when Peter Pipard, the lord of Ardee was granted 'four burgages in Carlingford' with a fishery by Prince John at some stage between 1189-1192.[123]It is therefore possible that a settlement at Mountbagnall was established after this point, and it is also therefore possible that the second castle which Rohesia de Verdun was building in 1236 was indeed the motte and bailey at the New Town of Cooley,[124] as originally suggested by Otway-Ruthven.[125]

As recorded by Stubbs in 1910, the name Mountbagnall is a clear derivative of Nicholas Bagnall's authority in the region in the sixteenth century, [126] the 'mount' element of the name referring to the motte and bailey site.

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[120] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 95.
[121] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 95.
[122] See Figures 6, 7, 8 & Plate 18 See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 58; MORRIS, H., 'Louthiana: Ancient and Modern', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume I, Number 2, (1905), pp. 17-22; MORRIS, H., 'Mount Bagnal Fort', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume II, Number 4, (1911), p. 440.
[123] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, *Carlingford Historic Town Walls, County Louth. Conservation & Management Plan: Final Draft,* (Oxford, 2007), p. 7. See also Chapter I: Introduction, IV. General Historical Background to the Study Area for a discussion regarding the dating of these grants.
[124] *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland: Volume I*, 1236.
[125] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 407.
[126] STUBBS, F.W., 'Place Names in the County of Louth [E-N], *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume II, Number 3, (1910), p. 297.

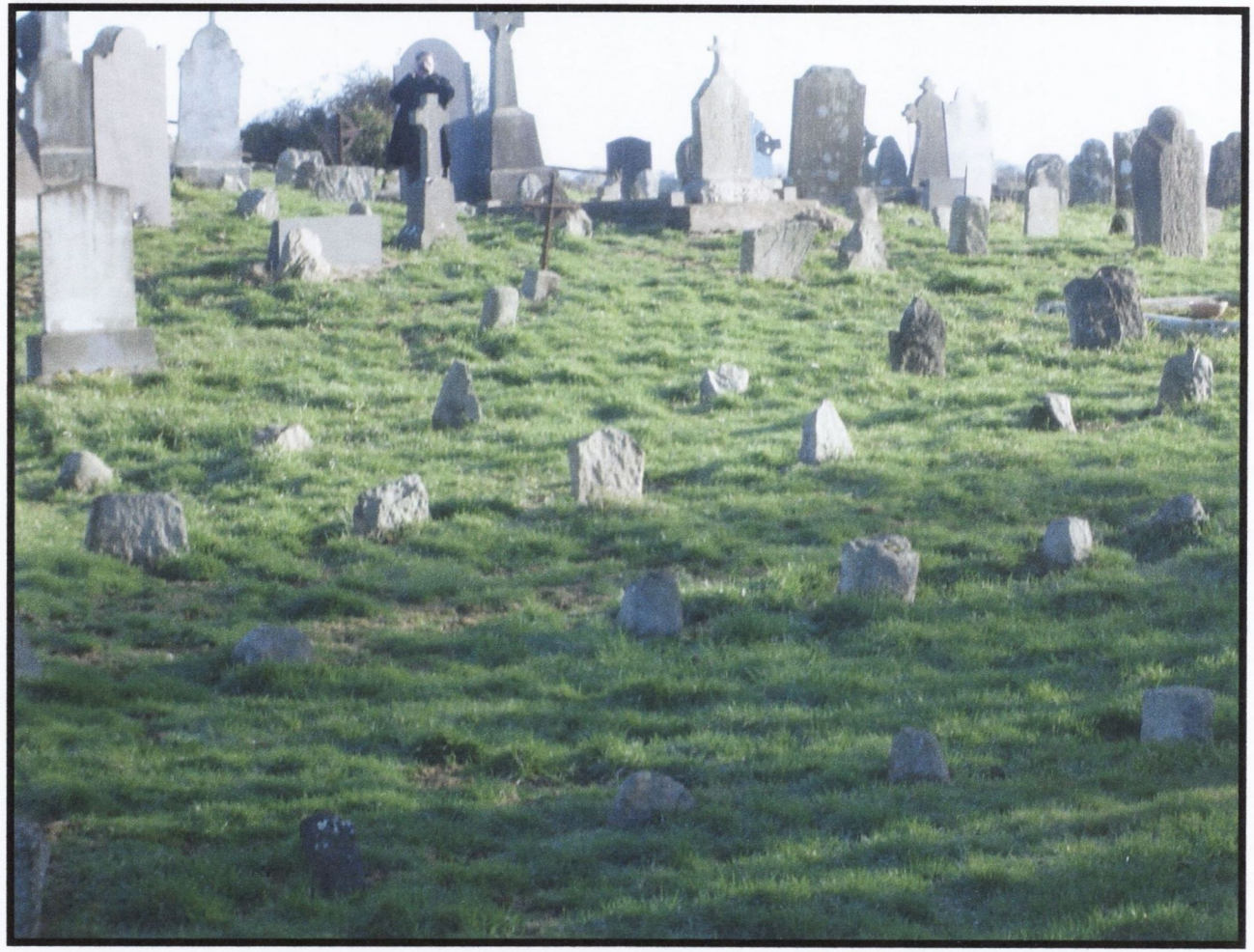


Plate 17: Undated gravestones in Mountbagnall Graveyard.

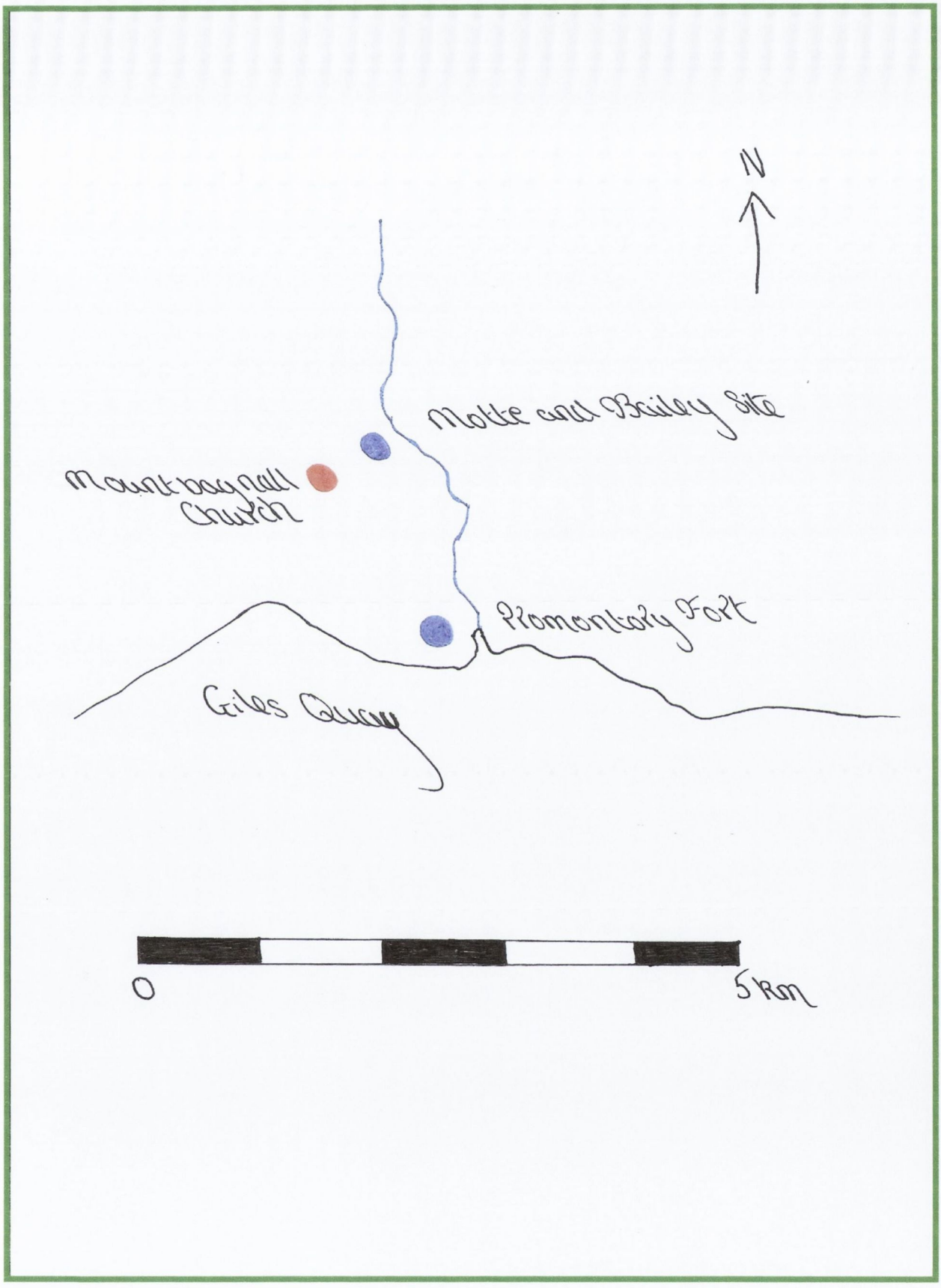


Figure 5: Rough map of the associated archaeological sites at Mountbagnall. The church is indicated in red, the other sites in blue.



Figure 6: Thomas Wright's Sketch of Mountbagnall Motte in 1748.

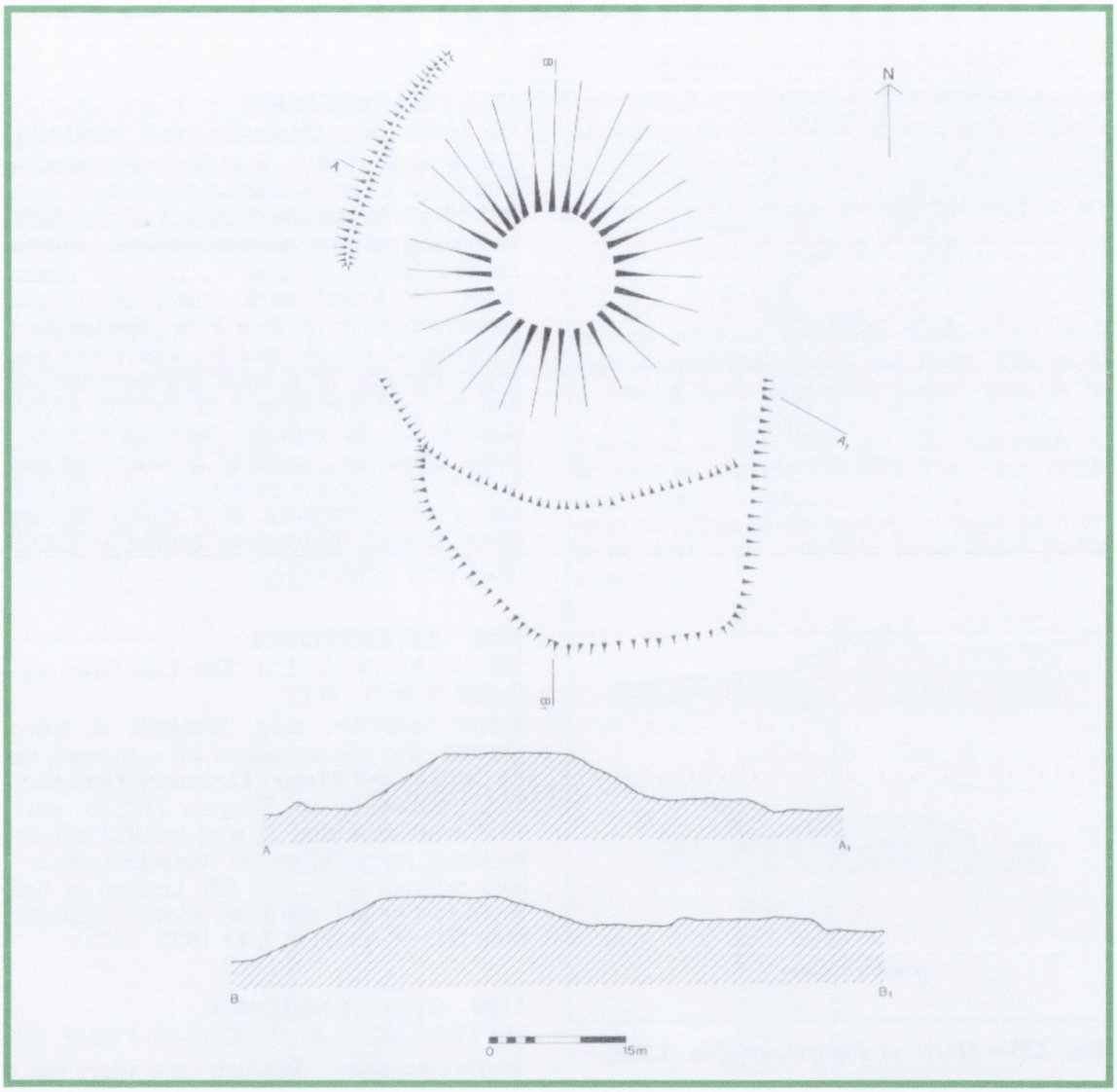


Figure 7: Buckley & Sweetman's Plan of Mountbagnall Motte (1991).

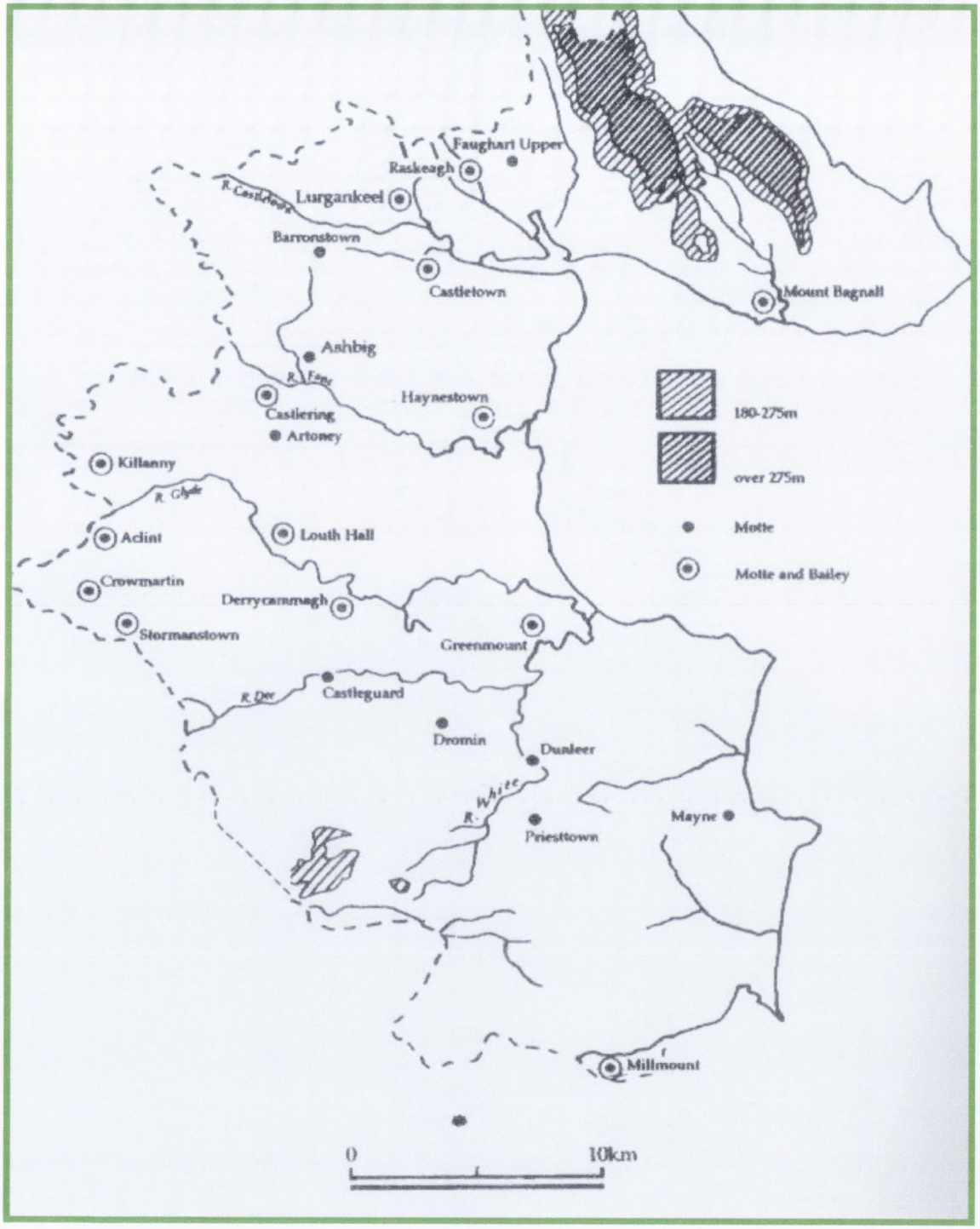


Figure 8: Distribution of Mottes in County Louth
(After Buckley & Sweetman, 1991).

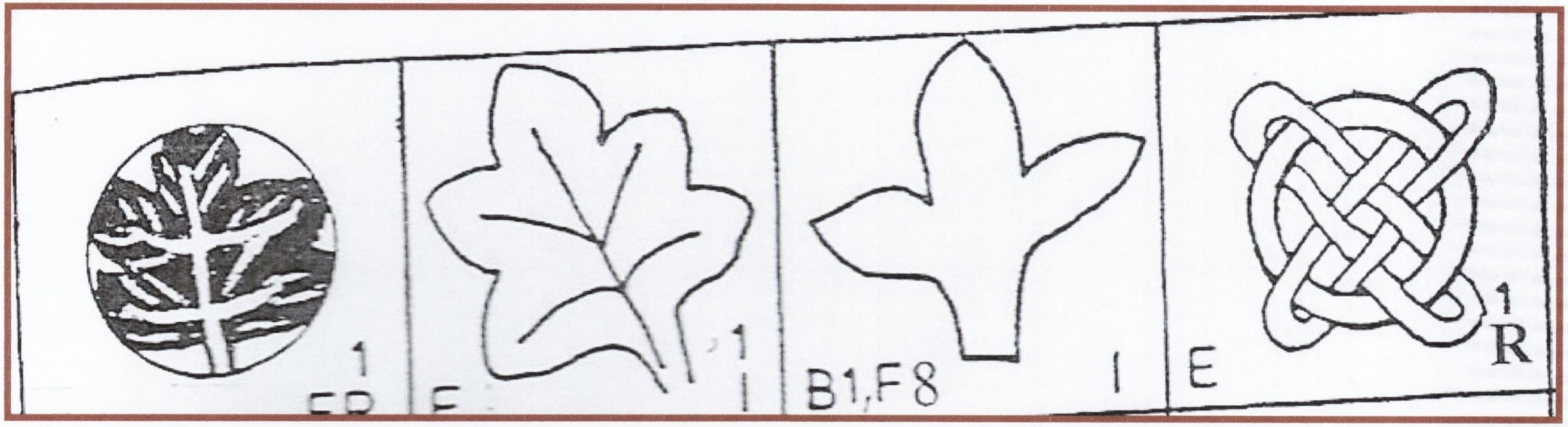


Figure 9: Mason's marks identified at Holycross Abbey, Co. Tipperary.
(HOURIHANE, C., *The Mason and His Mark: Masons' Marks in the Medieval Irish Archbishoprics of Cashel and Dublin,* BAR British Series 294, (Oxford, 2000)).



Plate 18: Mountbagnall Motte and Bailey in 1906.
(Photograph by H.G. Tempest).

12. CHRONOLOGY

Although no definite date of foundation has been recorded for Mountbagnall Church it is possible that an Anglo-Norman settlement had been established here as early as 1236 by Rohesia de Verdun.[127] There was definitely some form of settlement in existence at Mountbagnall by 1301, [128] and in 1332 it was still in the possession of de Verdun family.[129] The earliest reference to a church at Mountbagnall occurred in 1390,[130] the curate of church was recorded as being contumacious in 1528,[131] and in 1535 the church at the church itself was directly referred to in the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall.[132] The next reference to the church of the New Town of Cooley occurred in the 1575 rental of the Bagnall estate when the priest, Reverend O'Bull paid a rental of eleven pence per acre and it was recorded that the 'tithes of the Newtown should this last year be 26s. 8d.'[133] The final reference to the church occurred in 1622when the Royal Visitation found that the New Town of Cooley was a vacant curacy with Bagnall as appropriator,[134]although further reference was made to the tithes of the church in 1656.[135]

Despite the documentary references which indicate that Mountbagnall Church was in use throughout the later medieval period, there does not appear to be significant later medieval archaeological remains in evidence at this site. Rather, the surviving stonework along with the morphology of this site would tend to suggest a church of earlier date, perhaps late twelfth-early thirteenth century, in keeping with the earlier documentary references which indicate that there may possibly have been an Anglo-Norman settlement established at Mountbagnall from as early as 1236.

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[127] *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland: Volume I*, 1236. OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 407; SMITH, (1988), p. 263; HAGGER, (2001), p. 78; KENNY, (2007), pp. 145-47.
[128] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 43.
[129] MCNEILL & OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1960), p. 55; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 428.
[130] *Extracts Relating to Co. Louth from the Calendar of the Register of Primate Nicholas Fleming,* 1390; *The Register of Nicholas Fleming,* 1390.
[131] *Archbishop Cromer's Register*, 1528.
[132] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall*, 1535.
[133] O'SULLIVAN, (1985), pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 74.
[134] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster*, p. 10.
[135] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.

IV. CASTLETOWNCOOLEY CHURCH

1. INTRODUCTION

There is not an abundance of information available for the medieval church which was located at Castletowncooley in the later medieval period; in fact every physical trace of its existence has now been erased completely from the landscape. Nonetheless, it has been included in this study because even the fact of its existence can assist with the analysis of patterns of medieval ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk. The site of Castletowncooley Church is located in the civil parish of Carlingford in the south-west of the peninsula, and at a distance of approximately 1.2km to the north of Mountbagnall Church.[136] It was not included in the 1941 survey of the churches of Lower Dundalk which was conducted by Davies,[137] but was surveyed in 1967 by Buckley and listed in the *Inventory* of 1986 as a church site,[138] although it was omitted from the subsequent *Survey* of 1991 due to lack of evidence.[139]

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Although there are no surviving primary documents which make direct reference to Castletowncooley Church, there are seven references to the settlement of Castletowncooley[140] which can give some indication of the importance and extent of the settlement, of which the church would have been an integral part, in the medieval period. The first reference occurred in the 1301 list of townlands recorded in relation to amercements, or fines, imposed in Co. Louth by a Crown Court, and which listed the townland of *Lucy.* [141] As is the case with the other townlands of Lower Dundalk mentioned in this source, the list of 1301 and its inclusion of *Lucy* indicates that, at this

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[136] See Figure 1.
[137] DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 7-23.
[138] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 72.
[139] There is also no *Topographical File* for this site recorded in the National Museum of Ireland.
[140] Although the settlement is also alternately referred to in primary sources as *Lucy, Luceton, Lucyistoun, Castleton in Couley, Earl's Quarter, Earlsquarter,* and *Upper Castletown in Cooley*, the more modern placename of *Castletowncooley* will be used throughout this study. Significantly, it was also listed as *Luceton, alias Castletown.* The identification of these placenames with Castletowncooley has been discussed and verified by the following: LAWLOR, H.J., (ed), 'A Calendar of the Register of Archbishop Sweteman', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 29, Section C, (1911), p. 294; MCNEILL & OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1960); MACIOMHAIR, (1965), p. 42; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 43, 46, 72, 75, 76, 77. O'SULLIVAN, (1985), pp. 31-47.
[141] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 42.

point, Anglo-Norman sub-infeudation of the area had been asserted,[142] and that some form of settlement at Castletowncooley had been established. This, in turn, raises the possibility of the foundation of a church in Castletowncooley by the early fourteenth century, but of course, this theory is speculative and there is no substantive archaeological or historical evidence to support it.

The next reference to an Anglo-Norman settlement at Castletowncooley was recorded in the archiepiscopal *Register of Milo Sweteman* for 1378 and incorporates a list of names and addresses of the individuals in Lower Dundalk, along with the dues which they paid in kind, showing the quantities paid in crannocks and the persons before whom the statements of the payments were sworn. For *Lucyistoun* the entry reads as follows:

> *Lucyistoun, Adam Sylvester, of the same villa, 6 of wheat, 18 of oats, sworn before master Thomas Sylvester and Henry Brocke.*[143]

O'Sullivan has observed that of all of the townlands of Lower Dundalk mentioned in this return, only two, *Moretoun* and *Jonystoun* were not also included in the 1301 list of amercements, [144] a fact which further emphasizes the importance of the 1301 source as an indicator of the extent of the Anglo-Norman sub-infeudation at this relatively early stage in the colonization of the peninsula. The use of the term *villa* here is also important and indicates that by 1378 the settlement at Castletowncooley may have been a fairly significant one.[145]

Although there are no surviving references to Castletowncooley in the fifteenth century, it is known that in 1543 James Dowdall was granted £10 to build a castle in

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[142] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 43.

[143] *A Calendar of the Register of Archbishop Sweteman,* ed. by H.J. LAWLOR, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume XXIX, Section C, (1911), 1378; *The Register of Milo Sweteman, Archbishop of Armagh 1361-1380,* ed. by B. SMITH, The Manuscripts Commission, (Dublin, 1996), 1378.

[144] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 46

[145] It should also be noted at this point that in 1965 MacIomhair, in his study of Louth churches and church lands mentioned in the registers of John Swayne identified the following entry, dating to 1431, as relating to Castletowncooley: *Deanery of Dundalk, Carucates of the said Deanery: New Town of Coulye (perhaps Castletown Cooley), 2 carucates... Sum total granted 40m which is assessed at 5s of each mark of the churches, according to the tax, and at 5s from each carucate of land of free and other tenants.* However, in the same article he identified an almost similar placename in an entry dating to 1433 as Mountbagnall: *Dondalk Deanery: Church of the New Town of Coly (in Mountbagnall townland) 10shillings.* See MACIOMHAIR, (1959a), pp. 373 & 376. It is the view of this researcher that both of these references refer to the settlement at Mountbagnall as it was invariably referred to as the *New Town of Cooley* in several primary sources from the list of amercements of 1301 right up to the 1622 visitation list. See *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 42; *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,* p. 10 & Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, III. Mountbagnall.

Upper Castletown in Cooley,[146]a sixteenth century tower house which has become synonymous with the medieval settlement at Castletowncooley. Thirty-two years later a rent roll of the tenants of the Bagnall estates, which at this point extended from Greencastle and Mourne on the north side of Carlingford Lough, to Newry at its head and to Omeath on its south, gives some insight into the settlement at Castletowncooley which was referred to in this source as *Earlsquarter.*

The Lordships of Carlingford and Cooley: A rental made this last year 1575 by me Richard Aphewc constable of the castle there and of the lordship of Cooley, and receiver of all rents and duties jucidente to the same viz: Lands set in the Lordship of Cooley as followeth: Ryce Ap Hughes: The town called the Earlsquarter containing thirty acres. Set to Ryce Ap Hughes for every acre 12d. as aforesaid which is for £1 10s.0d.[147]

In addition to this, O'Sullivan, who has made an in-depth study of the 1575 rent roll has also identified the following entry, relating to the holdings of Robert Dowdall, as relevant to Castletowncooley:

Robert Dowdall. Robert Dowdale his town [Castletowncooley] *payeth as follows: Yearly two beeves, at 20s.0d. the piece 40s.0d. Four muttons at 2s.0d. the piece 8s.0d.The keeping of two horses and a horseboy £5. 0s.0d.*[148]

Like the use of the term *villa* in 1378, the reference to the *town* of Robert Dowdall in 1575 is significant and indicates that at this point the settlement of Castletowncooley was possibly a prominent one in the barony of Lower Dundalk, although there is no evidence to suggest that it ever functioned as an urban centre. It is not unlikely, that there would still have been a church in operation here in the later sixteenth century. O'Sullivan has highlighted the close correlation between the lands included in the rent roll of 1575 and the lands listed in the 1608 inquisition into the extent of the Bagnall estate. The 1608 inquisition records the lands of Castletowncooley as follows:

...a parcel of land called the Earl's Quarter containing thirty acres...[149]

However, this document makes no reference to the lands of Robert Dowdall which were listed in the 1575 rent roll.

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[146] RMP LH 008-056, Castletowncooley Tower House Site; TEMPEST, (1920), p. 77; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 91; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 310.

[147] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District,* pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 72-75.

[148] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District,* pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 76.

[149] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 76-77.

Finally, it can be observed that there is no documentary evidence to suggest that Castletowncooley was an individual parish during the medieval period, as the settlement appears to have been too small. This would, in turn, suggest that Castletowncooley was part of the larger parish of Carlingford during this period and that the church would have perhaps functioned as a chapel of ease. In 1658 the *Castle-cooly* was listed as a *towne* of the parish of Carlingford:

> *Carlingford and Omeath Parish: The said jurors being upon their oath doe also say that the parrishs of Carlingford and Omeath consist of several townes following vizt.:...Castle-cooly...*[150]

By 1703, one third of the tithes of the parish of *Carlingford and Cooley* were recorded as being in the possession of the Archbishop of Armagh, the extent of the parish being approximated at 4,320 acres:

> *The Tythes: One third of Carlingford and Cooley belong to the Primat. Note. – The Minister makes of his two thirds, with the Book Money &c. as I am informed about £100 p. annum. The whole parish contains in land 18 Graymores & halfe corce land. Each Graymore containing about 240 acres Irish.*[151]

3. CARTOGRAPHY

There are five surviving pictorial representations of the medieval settlement at Castletowncooley. The first is by Baptista Boazio, dates to 1599 and depicts a tower house which appears to be named *C; Dodall*; the tower house which had been constructed by James Dowdall forty-six years previously in 1543.[152] The second map of the region was drawn *c.* 1602 by Richard Bartlett and is more detailed than Boazio's, depicting a tower house with, what can be construed as either an appending bawn wall with towers, or alternatively, an adjoining structure.[153] To the north-east of the tower house there are three smaller additional buildings which appear to be houses.[154] Both of these maps show the tower house as located in close proximity to a river, although Boazio placed the structure on the wrong riverbank. The next chronological map of Castletowncooley was

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[150] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.

[151] *Extracts from Rent Rolls of the See of Armagh in 1703,* ed. by J.B. LESLIE, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume IX, Number 2, (1938), pp. 92-93.

[152] See Figure 10.

[153] Although there are no surviving bawn walls evident on any of the tower houses of Co. Louth, there is a surviving pictorial representation of one at Castletown tower house in the barony of Upper Dundalk. See TEMPEST. There is also a surviving sixteenth century tower house at Carlingford, Taaffe's Castle, where an adjoining late sixteenth century building has survived attached to the north side of the tower house. See BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 93; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 323-329.

[154] See Figure 11.

created by the cartographer Mathew Wrenn in 1766. This map also illustrates the tower house, along with one additional structure of uncertain functionality located to the south-east of the tower house.[155]Taylor and Skinner, working in 1777, depicted a similar representation of the tower house to Wrenn but this time with no additional structures in close proximity to the tower house.[156] The only cartographical representation of a church at Castletowncooley survives in the form of the 1835 edition of the OS six-inch to the mile map. This map was mentioned by Buckley in 1986 who commented that 'No trace [of the church] now remains; barn built on site.'[157]

4. LOCATION

Castletowncooley church site is located approximately 1.3km to the north of the tower house which was built by James Dowdall in 1543.[158] Its exact siting was recorded on the 1835 edition of the OS six-inch to the mile map,[159] but regrettably, apart from its location, little else is known of this church. The site of the church was surveyed in 1967 by Buckley who remarked that the church had completely disappeared and that a barn had been built on site.[160] The complete lack of archaeological evidence for this site therefore makes it impossible to comment upon its size, morphology, or masonry style of construction.

5. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERY

In the *Inventory* of 1986, in the chapter entitled *Killeens and Cemeteries,* there is a possible cemetery listed for the townland of Castletowncooley. This site is located approximately 0.75km to the south-east of the church site.[161] The site was surveyed in 1967 and consisted of a roughly rectangular area, with maximum dimensions of 17.5m north-south and 15m east-west, with possible boulder-lined perimeter. [162] The site was also included in the *Survey* of 1991, also in a chapter entitled *Killeens and Cemeteries,* which additionally stated that the rectangular area of the site was covered with stones and

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[155] See Figure 12.
[156] See Figure 13.
[157] RMP LH 008-056, Castletowncooley Tower House Site; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 72.
[158] See Figure 14.
[159] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 72.
[160] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 72.
[161] See Figure 14.
[162] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 84.

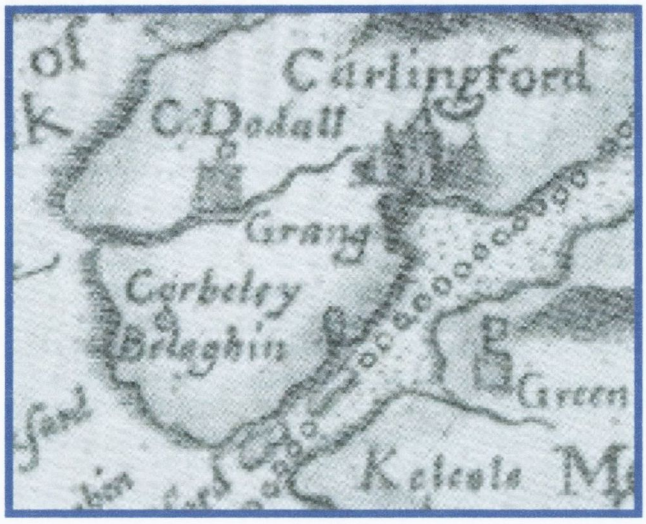


Figure 10: The settlement of Castletowncooley as illustrated on Baptista Boazio's *Map of Ireland: County Louth and District in 1599.*
(TEMPEST, H.G, 'Boazio's Map of Ireland, 1599', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XII, Number 4, (1952a)).

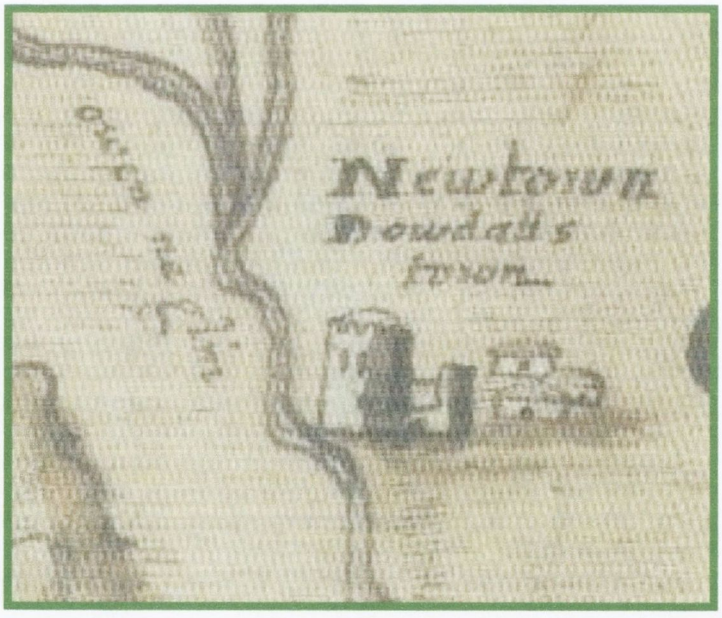


Figure 11: The settlement of Castletowncooley as depicted on Richard Bartlett's *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602.*
(O'SULLIVAN, H., *Irish Historic Towns Atlas No. 16, Dundalk,* Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 2006)).

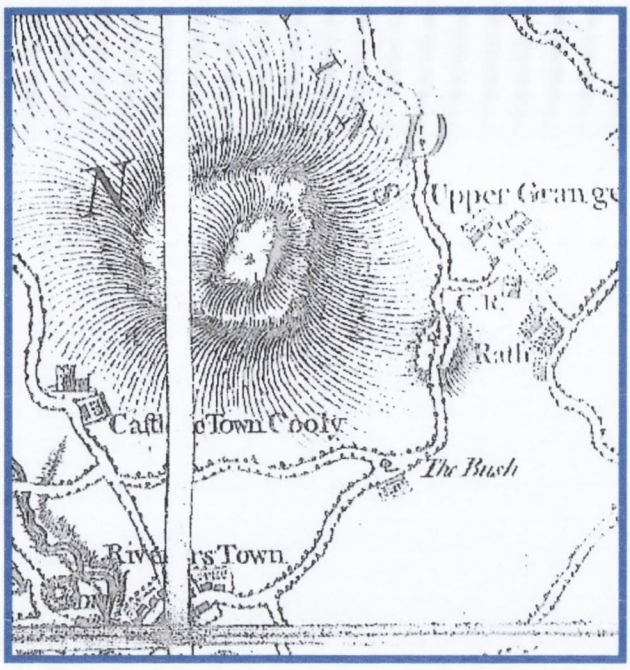


Figure 12: Castletowncooley as depicted on *A Topographical Map of County Louth, 1766,* by Mathew Wrenn.
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).

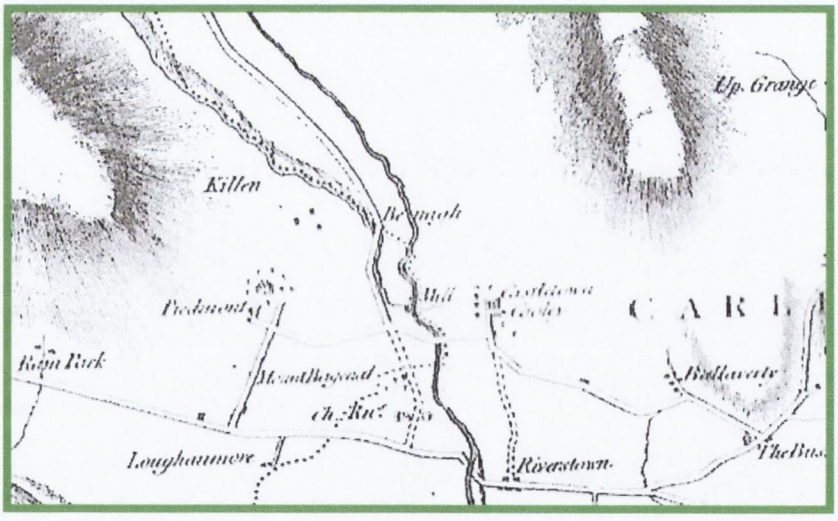


Figure 13: Castletowncooley as depicted on *A Map of the County of Louth, 1777, by George Taylor and Andrew Skinner.*
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).

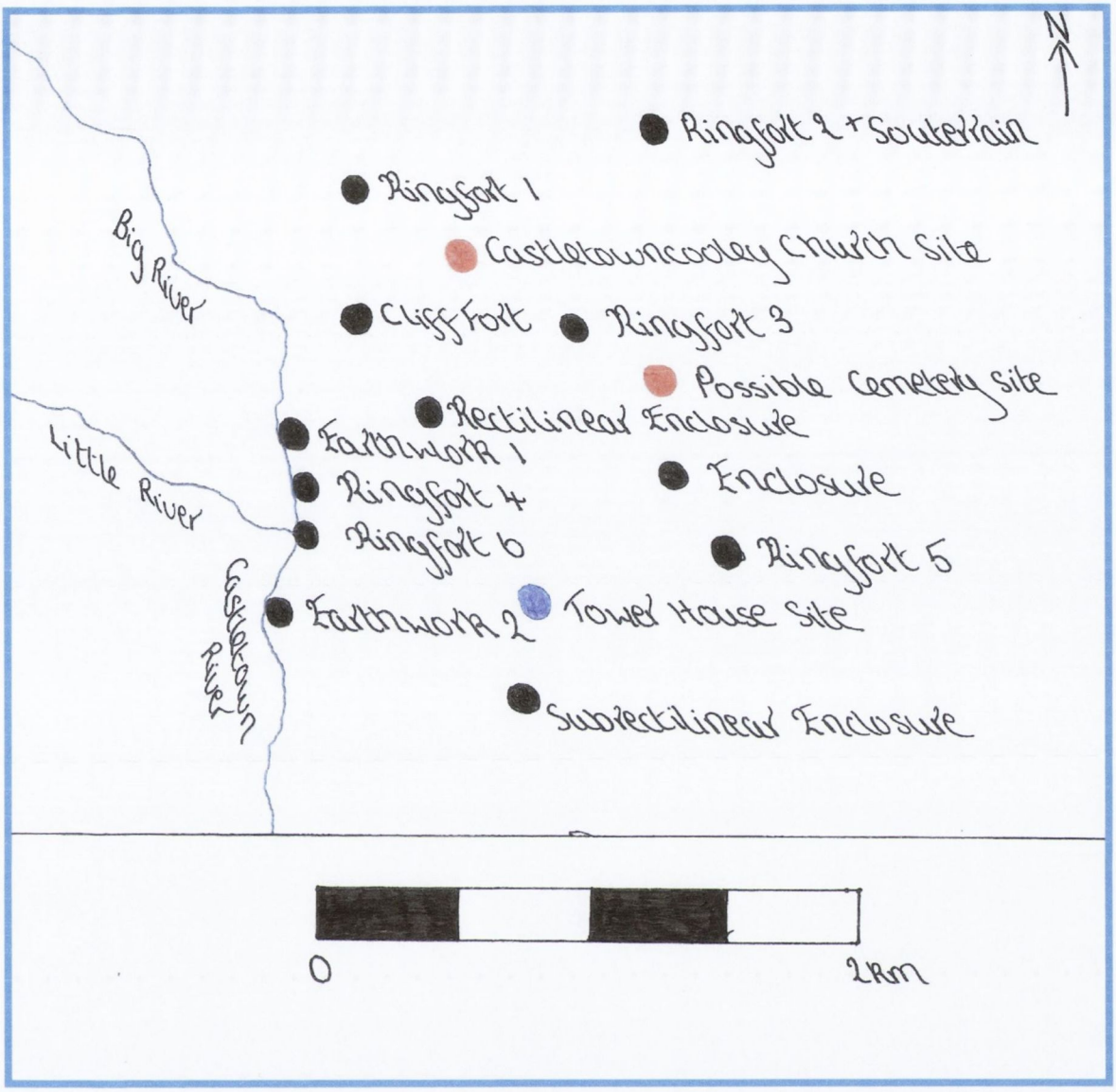


Figure 14: Rough map of the associated archaeological sites at Castletowncooley. The ecclesiastical sites are indicated in red, the tower house in blue and the other sites in black.

that the height of the boulder-lined perimeter was 0.75m. [163] Both the *Inventory* and the *Survey* state that there was a 'local tradition of bones being unearthed' at this site,[164]and it was apparently for this reason that it was included as a possible cemetery.[165]

6. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

The preliminary archaeological survey of Co. Louth, which was published in 1984, recorded a total of fourteen archaeological sites for the townland of Castletowncooley; one souterrain, seven ringforts, one rectilinear enclosure, one rectilinear enclosure site, one cliff fort, one earthwork, one earthwork (uncertain), and finally, one castle.[166] The *Inventory* of 1986 listed sixteen sites for Castletowncooley; one cliff fort, one souterrain, six ringforts, two earthworks, one enclosure, one rectilinear enclosure, one subrectilinear enclosure, one church site, one possible cemetery and one castle site,[167] while the *Survey* of 1991 omitted the church site included in the *Inventory* and recorded fifteen sites; one cliff fort, one souterrain, six ringforts, two earthworks, one enclosure, one rectilinear enclosure, one subrectilinear enclosure site, one cemetery or killeen and one tower house site.[168]

All of these sites are located in an area of roughly rectangular shape which measures approximately 2.5km north-south and 1km east-west. The only site which can be definitively dated to the period following the Anglo-Norman colonization of the peninsula, in the late 1180s, is the tower house, which was constructed by James Dowdall in 1543.[169] According to a handwritten note, signed by Sweetman, in the *Sites and Monuments Record* for this tower house in 1966, there were 'a few large boulders not in situ', lying about in a level lawn.[170] According to this file, the tower house was destroyed

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[163] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268.
[164] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 84; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268.
[165] The introduction to the *Killeens and Cemeteries* chapter of the *Survey* states that: *This chapter on killeens and cemeteries includes a fairly wide variety of sites, most of which cannot be identified with a particular type of archaeological monument and neither can they be closely dated to or be associated with a particular period in the Christian era. A large number of he sites are only included because the evidence for them consists of a local tradition of burial/and or not properly recorded finds of bones.* See BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268.
[166] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), pp. 11-14.
[167] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 105.
[168] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 395. See Figure 14. In 1909 Stubbs recorded 12 'raths' in Castletowncooley, five of which were double-enclosured. See STUBBS, F.W., 'Place Names in the County of Louth [C-D]', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume II, Number 2, (1909), p. 131.
[169] RMP LH 008-056, Castletowncooley Tower House Site; TEMPEST, (1920), p. 77; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 91; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 310.
[170] RMP LH 008-056, Castletowncooley Tower House Site.

1836 and recorded as ruinous in 1846.[171]In the later nineteenth century it was described as ruinous in the *Handbook to Carlingford Bay.* [172]

7. ETYMOLOGY

As previously discussed, the medieval settlement at Castletowncooley is alternatively referred to in several primary sources as *Lucy, Luceton, Lucyistoun, Castleton in Couley, Earl's Quarter, Earlsquarter,* and *Upper Castletown in Cooley.*[173] Although the Cooley Peninsula was originally granted to Bertram de Verdun by Prince John in the late 1180s,[174] in 1194 or 1195 de Verdun negotiated a marriage for his daughter Lescelina with Hugh de Lacy II and as previously discussed[175] it is known from records preserved in the *Gormanston Register* that Lescelina's dowry included lands located within the barony of Lower Dundalk, and more specifically, on the Cooley peninsula.[176]Therefore, it is possible that the placenames *Lucy/Luceton/Lucyistoun,* originated from the fact that the territories of Castletowncooley were in the possession of the de Lacy family from *c.* 1194-5 onwards and are derivatives of *Lacy's Town.* Similarly, the identification of the placename *Earlsquarter* with Castletowncooley may be related in some way to the fact that Hugh de Lacy was Earl of Ulster from 1205-10 and again held the title in 1227.

The more modern name Castletowncooley itself would initially appear to have evolved due to the location of James Dowdall's tower house in the townland from 1543 onwards. However the fact that the area was referred to as *Upper Castletown in Cooley* in the text of the grant of £10 made to Dowdall to build the tower house indicates that it

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[171] RMP LH 008-056, Castletowncooley Tower House Site; *Louth Ordnance Survey Letters*, ed. by J.T. DOLAN, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 1, (1929), p. 66.

[172] ANON, *A Picturesque Handbook to Carlingford Bay,* (Newry, Dublin, Belfast, Downpatrick & Dublin, MDCCCXLVI), p. 99. It was also misidentified in this publication as the *Castle of Rath* which was depicted in Wright's Louthiana in 1748. This erroneous identification as also repeated in the *Sites and Monuments Record* file for this site. The *Castle of Rath* portrayed by Wright was definitively identified by Buckley and Sweetman as the church site of Rath Lower in Grange. See BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256 & Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, VII. Grange.

[173] *Irish Records Commission*, Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; LAWLOR, (1911), p. 294; MCNEILL, & OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1960); MACIOMHAIR, (1965), p. 42; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 43, 46, 72, 75, 76, 77.

[174] *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1189; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, A.J., *A History of Medieval Ireland,* Second Edition, (London, 1980), p. 70; GOSLING, P., *A Survey and Report on the Archaeology of the Town and District, Part 1: Introduction and Review,* Dundalk Urban District Council, (Dundalk, 1982), p. 18; GAVIN, J. & O'SULLIVAN, H., *Dundalk: A Military History,* (Dundalk, 1987), pp. 3-4. See also SMITH, (1999), pp. 23-24. O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 38.

[175] See Chapter I: Introduction, IV. General Historical Background to the Study Area.

[176] *Calendar of the Gormanston Register,* ed. by J. MILLS & M.J. MCENERY, (Dublin, 1916), p. 144.

derived from the existence of an older castle in the area. Considering the fact that there were no other castles known to have been constructed in Castletowncooley in the medieval period, it is possible that the placename of Castletown may refer to the motte of Mountbagnall, which was located approximately 0.75km to the south-west of Dowdall's tower house.[177] The only other alternative is that there was another undocumented castle, either a motte or a tower house, located at Castletowncooley which has long since been destroyed. In 1909 Stubbs commented that there was a 'path up the side' at Castletowncooley called 'The Priest's Pad', unfortunately however, he did not give an exact location for this path.[178]

8. CHRONOLOGY

Although it is impossible to establish a chronology for the church of Castletowncooley based on physical archaeological evidence, the historical references to the settlement generally do provide a possible chronological framework for the site. The earliest reference to the site occurred in the list of amercements of 1301,[179] and this, coupled with the etymological evidence, which suggests that the placename *Lucy/Luceton/Lucyistoun* may have evolved after Hugh de Lacy acquired lands on the Cooley Peninsula in 1194/95, indicates that the initial Anglo-Norman settlement of the townland probably developed quite rapidly in the late twelfth-early thirteenth century.

The next reference to Castletowncooley was recorded in the archiepiscopal *Register of Milo Sweteman* in 1378 in the form of a list of dues paid to the primate in kind.[180] Although no direct reference is made to a church at Castletowncooley it is apparent from this source that the area was under the archiepiscopal remit and it is likely, given the early development of this site, that there was a church already in existence at this point. The next chronological reference to the site occurred in 1543 when James Dowdall received a grant of £10 to build a tower house there, [181] while some years later, in 1575, the settlement was in the hands of the Bagnall family and leased to Ryce Ap

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[177] See Figure 1.
[178] STUBBS, (1909), p. 131.
[179] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 42.
[180] *The Register of Milo Sweteman, Archbishop of Armagh 1361-1380*, 1378.
[181] RMP LH 008-056, Castletowncooley Tower House Site; TEMPEST, (1920), p. 77; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 91; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 310.

Hughes and Robert Dowdall. [182] Castletowncooley was still under the control of the Bagnall family in 1608[183] and in 1658 it was listed as a *towne* of the parish of Carlingford.[184]

V. TEMPLETOWN CHURCH

1. INTRODUCTION

> *...the Knights Templars after figuring a brief space on the stage of life, and astonishing the world, first by their virtues and afterwards by their vices, have passed away like a falling meteor, and sunk into eternal night, are now only remembered as the baseless fabric of a vision.*[185]
>
> **(*The Dublin Penny Journal*, 1834)**

Templetown Church is situated in the parish of Carlingford, in the barony of Lower Dundalk *c.* 0.43km to the north of the shoreline at Templetown Beach, which is located at the southernmost extremity of the Cooley Peninsula, near Cooley Point.[186] It is located approximately 5.7km to the south-east of the site of Castletowncooley Church. The church and graveyard are enclosed by a wall, and the church is positioned prominently at the centre of a mound which rises up from the low-lying terrain of Templetown and which gives a good vantage point over the surrounding countryside.[187] Looking north from the church, there is an impressive view of the Cooley Mountains, with Ballug tower house in their shadow, about 1km to the northwest of the church, while to the southwest the visitor is greeted with a vista of sea and shoreline, once described by Davies in 1941 as a 'marshy coastal plain'[188], it is now heavily built up with residential construction.[189] The remains of the church and graveyard at Templetown are in a state of good preservation, especially when compared with the majority of extant medieval church remains in Louth. This is no doubt partly due to the fact that the graveyard is still being used for local Catholic burials, similar to, but on a smaller scale than, the way in which the churches of some of the great Franciscan

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[182] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District*, pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 72-76.
[183] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District*, pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 76-77.
[184] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* (1929), pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.
[185] 'The Knights Templars (in Ireland)' ,*The Dublin Penny Journal*, Volume 2, Number 87, March 1, (1834); http://www.libraryireland.com/articles/TemplarsDPJ2-87/index.php.
[186] See Figure 1 & Plate 19.
[187] See Plate 20.
[188] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.
[189] See Plate 21.



Plate 19: Northern view of Templetown Church.



Plate 20: Ballug tower house and the Cooley Mountains viewed from Templetown Church.



Plate 21: View of the shoreline from Templetown Church.

friaries of the country were preserved by local families of influence even after the dissolution of the monasteries and the later suppression of Catholicism.[190]

Templetown church was first surveyed in the first half of the twentieth century by Davies, the results of which were published in the *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal* in 1941.[191] The next publication on the physical remains at Templetown was not to come until 1986: the result of a survey carried out almost twenty years earlier by Buckley for the *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth* on 18 October 1967.[192] Then, in 1991, a much more detailed account of the extant remains of the church were published by Buckley and Sweetman in the *Archaeological Survey of Ireland,* and indeed, sparse as it is, it has been the most comprehensive study of the church ever undertaken.[193] Apart from these three main sources, there are fleeting references to the church in various different articles, most of which have been published in the *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* and of course, many of which refer to the church's enduring association with the Order of the Knights Templar. Probably the most comprehensive historical account of the church was published in *Seanchas Ard Mhaca* in the 1960s by MacIomhair in his article on the Knights Templars in County Louth, and even here Templetown church is mentioned only sparingly.[194] Finally, the most recent historical account of the church, again a very brief one, can be found in O'Sullivan's recent publication on the history of the Catholic parishes of Lower Dundalk.[195]

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

As with the majority of sites under review in this thesis, the earliest reference to an Anglo-Norman settlement at Templetown occurred in the 1301 list of amercements, or fines, which were imposed on the barony of Lower Dundalk at a royal court in Drogheda, and which recorded the placename 'Templar'. [196] As previously mentioned,

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[190] MOONEY, C., 'Franciscan Architecture in Pre-Reformation Ireland: Part 1', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland,* Volume LXXXV, Part II, (1955), p. 139.
[191] DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 12-14.
[192] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 79-80. The church was also listed in the 1984 preliminary survey of Louth. See ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984).
[193] BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 258-260. See also SMR LH 009-011001 Templetown Church & SMR LH 009-011002 Templetown Architectural Fragments.
[194] MACIOMHAIR, D, 'The Knights Templars in County Louth', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 4, Number 1, (1960-61), p. 72-91.
[195] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 34-105.
[196] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 43.

this list of placenames represents a fairly substantial part of the townland system of County Louth as it was little more than one hundred years after the Anglo-Norman invasion, and MacIomhair has commented that many of these denominations had been taken over from the Gaelic-Irish townland system, especially those with Gaelic names.[197] Moreover, this document is a vital source in attempting to determine the degree of Anglo-Norman sub-infeudation of the barony which had been achieved at this point.

The Knights Templars had only a brief existence in County Louth. They were barely fifty years here when their order was suppressed by papal decree, never to be revived. There is very little material available for the years preceding the suppression of 1308 by which the Crown seized the order's property and personnel all over Ireland. At the dissolution, the Templars' property was assigned by the Pope to the brother Order of Knight's Hospitallers and the subsequent history of the Hospitallers thus becomes another source of information for Templar properties,[198] and this is particularly relevant in Lower Dundalk where the church at Templetown and the advowson of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Carlingford were granted to the Hospitallers in the period after 1308, although there are few direct references to the church at Templetown after it was granted to the Knights Hospitallers in 1314. However, this evidence is not always clear-cut and it is often necessary to sift through the voluminous myths surrounding the Order of the Knights Templar in general before any level of truth or fact can be arrived at. This quandary was perfectly defined by Wood in at the turn of the twentieth century when he observed that;

> *It would almost appear that a castle or a ruin which really belonged to the Hospitallers received an added dignity by being attributed to the Templars.*[199]

Indeed, because of the shocking and dramatic nature of their fall from power and privilege, the destruction of the Templars has gained a powerful hold on the popular imagination which has endured to the present day.[200] The best recent example of the Templar legend is Baignent and Leigh's *The Temple and the Lodge* which seems to rely more on fancy than fact. For example, adding an Irish angle to the legend, they claim

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[197] MACIOMHAIR, (1965), p. 42.
[198] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 72.
[199] WOOD, H., 'The Templars in Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 26, Section C, (1906-7), p. 327.
[200] http://homepage.eircom.net~seanjmurphy/irhismys/templars.htm. See also HOWARTH, S., *The Knights Templar,* (London, 1982), p. 243 & PARTNER, P., *The Murdered Magicians: The Templars and Their Myth,* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 100-101.

that fleeing Templars on their way to Scotland had landed in Donegal, purely on the basis that there are places in the county with 'Temple' in their name, such as Templecrone and Templecavan.[201] This perfectly illustrates the dangers of presuming that the church at Templetown was founded by the Order simply because of the 'temple' element in the placename. Additionally, there are countless other legends surrounding the Order of the Knights Templar on the Cooley peninsula, one of the most enduring of which states that the order were responsible for the foundation of Roosky Priory which is situated just to the north of Carlingford in good pasture land at the foot of the Cooley Mountains.[202] While it certainly was not founded by the Knights Templar it is possible however that it was included in the grant of Matilda de Lacy to the order in the thirteenth century.

The military order of the Knights Templars was originally founded with the object of protecting pilgrims proceeding to Jerusalem but soon developed into a powerful politico-religious order. Preceptories, so called from the Latin words *Praecipimus tibi*, (we enjoin you), were the district establishments for administering the property and furthering the interests of the order.[203]The order was introduced to Ireland at some stage before the death of Laurence O'Toole in 1180, as he and an individual named 'Mathew the Templar' witnessed a deed of King Henry II. Clontarf subsequently became the chief house in Ireland, and although there is evidence to suggest that some of the Irish preceptories may have been fortified, there is no evidence of this in Cooley. The native Irish were excluded from the order at first but they must have been admitted later as several Irish names appear on a list of seventeen names connected with the preceptory of Clonoulty.[204]

It is unclear what prompted Henry II to make the initial grants to this order in Ireland but it has been hypothesized that it may have been connected to the murder of Thomas Becket. It has been suggested by several scholars that, in order to appease the indignation of the Pope at the murder of Becket, Henry II had vowed to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in person at the head of a powerful army, and also to provide for the support of two hundred Templars.[205] If this is indeed the case, then it may have been in part-performance of this vow that he granted lands in Ireland for the

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[201] BAIGNENT, M. & LEIGH, R., *The Temple and the Lodge,* (London, 1990), pp. 108-110.
[202] See Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, IV. Roosky Priory.
[203] LESLIE, J.B., *History of Kilsaran Union of Parishes in the County of Louth,* (Dundalk, 1908), p. 20.
[204] WOOD, (1906-07), p. 330 & 339; GWYNN, A. & HADCOCK, R., *Medieval Religious Houses,* (London, 1970), p. 327; HOWARTH, (1982), p. 244.
[205] WOOD, (1906-7), pp. 330-1; http://www.enniskferry/stokes-lecture/.

maintenance of the Templars. The exact date of this initial grant of Henry II is not known, but it was definitely confirmed by subsequent kings: Richard, John, Henry III and Edward I. Wood has speculated that the grant must have been made sometime between 1172 and 1177.[206] In any case it is the only royal grant to the Templars in Ireland on official record but, as was the case in Cooley, certain Anglo-Norman nobles followed this royal example and subsequently bestowed grants of land upon the Order for the good of their souls.[207] The Order of the Knights Templar had two establishments in Co. Louth; one in Cooley and one at Kilsaran. They also owned a property in Drogheda which was described in an inventory made after the seizure of Templar lands in Ireland as a *tenement*.[208] It is likely that this tenement functioned as a lodging house for travelling brothers, as it is known that both the Templars and Hospitallers maintained such houses in towns, which because they were frank, or free, of the customary feudal duties and impositions were called frank-houses. [209] When or how this particular one in Drogheda came into the possession of the Templars is not recorded.

The date of the grant made by Matilda de Lacy to the Knights Templar and the exact details of the territories it bestowed upon the order remains unknown to this day. As with the marriage settlement of Hugh de Lacy and Lescelina de Verdun, some details pertaining to this grant have survived in the *Gormanston Register*.[210] It transpires that when de Lacy arranged a marriage for his daughter Matilda with David, Baron of Naas, some of the lands of her mother passed to her, and thus, in her widowhood, she was able to make free gifts to the order of valuable tracts of land in places as far apart as Cooley and Kilsaran. Why she chose to bestow lands in these two regions is unclear but it cannot be denied that there is a strategic importance about the sites she selected. They were situated at either end of her lordship, those territories in Cooley guard the entrance to Dundalk Bay while the Kilsaran preceptory lay along the River Glyde close to its confluence with the River Dee and the sea at Annagassan.[211]

However, despite the general dearth of information relevant to this grant, some terms of the original foundation charter of the Templar property in Cooley are extant.

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[206] For a more detailed discussion on the dating of this charter see WOOD, (1906-7), p. 331.
[207] For a list of such Templars lands see WOOD, (1906-7), Appendix A, pp. 363-67.
[208] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), pp. 72-73.
[209] IBID, p. 73.
[210] IBID, pp. 75-6.
[211] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 76.

They are part of the record of a lawsuit of 1302, which was held in Dublin.[212] This court case originated in a complaint taken by Matilda de Lacy's daughter, Matilda la Botillere against William, the Master of the Knights of the Temple in Ireland. The details of Matilda's complaint and the hearing of the case read as follows;

William, Master of the Knights of the Temple in Ireland was summoned to answer Matilda la Botillere of a plea that he allow her to present a suitable person to the vicarage of the church of Carlingford, which is vacant and belongs to her gift. She pleads that the advowson of the vicarage of the said church belongs to her on the following grounds. A certain Matilda de Lacy was seized of the manor of Carlingford to which the advowson of the vicarage of the said church belongs as of fee and right. The said Matilda de Lacy presented to this vicarage her clerk John, who, on her presentation was admitted to the said vicarage and by the bishop of the place instituted in the same. Afterwards the said Matilda de Lacy enfeoffed Matilda la Botillere of the said manor. Now the vicarage is vacant by deprivation of he said John, the advowson of the vicarage of the said church belongs to her, and the defendant unjustly impedes her to a loss of £100.[213]

The eventual verdict of this case decreed that Matilda de Botillere was to take nothing, and an order was given to the custodian of the spiritualities of the archbishopric of Armagh to admit, on the presentation of William, the Master of the Temple, a suitable candidate to the vicarage of Carlingford, not withstanding the claim of Matilda la Botillere.[214] Probably the most interesting aspect of this document is that it includes a copy of the original charter by which Matilda granted land in Cooley to the Templars, although the date of the original charter is unfortunately not recorded. In English the charter reads as follows;

Let all men know that in pure and free widowhood, for the salvation of my own soul and the souls of my father and mother, forbears and successors, as well as of David, Baron of Naas, formerly my husband I have granted to the brethren of the Knights of the Temple of Jerusalem in Ireland 40a with appurtenances in Coly which Ohenrethy, king of that country, once held, along with the advowson of the whole church of Carlingford and of all my tenement in Coly, to hold to the said brethren and their successors, in free, pure and perpetual alms with all appurtenances, liberties and free customs belonging to the said 40a and the advowson of the said church, as freely and quietly as any alms can best, most fully and freely be given to any religious house, free of all secular service, exaction and demand forever. Witness: Sir Henry de Hadeleye, Sir Gilbert de Repenteney, Sir Richard de Heddesouere, Sir Adam de Stanle,

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[212] LEWIS, S., *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland,* Vol. I, (London, 1837), p. 253; MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 73; MCONNON, M.P., *Townlands in County Louth – Kilsaran,* (Castlebellingham, 1990), p. 6; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 41; http://www.irish-architecture.com/buildings_ireland/louth/carlingford/lewis.html.

[213] *Extracts from a Lawsuit of 1302 concerning the Advowson of the Church of Carlingford: Irish Records Commission Repertory to De Banco Rolls 29 and 30 Ed. I, No. 64,* ed. & trans. by D. MACIOMHAIR, 'The Knights Templars in County Louth', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca*, Vol. 4, No. 1, (1960-61), p. 73.

[214] *Extracts from a Lawsuit of 1302,* p. 74.

Sir William Talun, Sir Simon de Clynton, Sir John Malet, Henry de Naule, Richard Fulstawe, Roger Gerun, Miles fitz Oun, Robert fitz Miles, John de Coly.[215]

It appears that this grant in Cooley was only an endowment and not the establishment of a preceptory or regular house of the order. This would seem to indicate that this property was simply an outlying parcel of the Order's possessions which were centrally administered from Kilsaran. Although Matilda de Lacy's original gift of land was only 40 acres, by 1308 this figure had become much enlarged and included a dwelling-house which was built in Cooley and which had one Brother resident in it. MacIomhair has identified this dwelling-house as having been located at Templetown, but unfortunately there is no archaeological evidence on site to support this. The basis for this theory seems to be the fact that in 1308, when the Templars in Ireland had been dispossesed, there is a record of one brother, Richard, living at Templetown. [216] The church and its possessions are mentioned in the entry, but it is not clear if this dwelling-house was actually located at the church.

In some respects the terminology used in this grant is quite vague. For example, when the charter states that Matilda de Lacy grants the advowson of the Church of Carlingford 'and of all my tenement in Coly' to the Templars. The fact that the language is not more exact could indicate that at this stage, when the conquest of Cooley had not yet been completed, she did not know what there was exactly in her part of Cooley. Possibly she was providing for when this country would be under effective English lordship. If this was indeed the case then it is likely that more than just the church at Templetown would have come into the possession of the Templars on the Cooley peninsula.[217]After Matilda la Botillere had lost out legally to the Order of the Templars in 1302, the Master of the Temple, William proceeded to claim and to win damages. After an adjournment the case was finally held in Hilary term of 1303 before a jury which found that the vicarage of Carlingford was worth 12 marks a year and awarded William 6 marks for the loss he had suffered by Matilda's interference.[218]

Matilda de Lacy's charter bears no date, although it has generally been acknowledged to have been made at sometime between the years 1262 and 1280.[219]It must have been drawn up earlier than 1280, for this is the date when she relinquished

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[215] *Extracts from a Lawsuit of 1302,* p. 74.
[216] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 75.
[217] IBID, p. 75.
[218] WOOD. (1906-07), p. 342; MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 77.
[219] LEWIS, (1837), p. 253; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 41; http://www.irish-architecture.com/buildings_ireland/louth/carlingford/lewis.html.

the manor to her daughter, Matilda la Botillere. On the other end of the scale it is known that her husband was still alive in the 46th year of Henry III, October 1261-2, when Pipe Roll accounts charge him with 13 marks for two escapes from Carlingford. Thus the date of the charter can be narrowed down to eighteen years between 1262 and 1280. MacIomhair narrowed down this time frame even further from eighteen to thirteen years. The first clergyman to be presented to Carlingford by Matilda de Lacy while she still held the advowson was one John who was only deprived of his benefice about the time of the lawsuit of 1302. If John was the last, then the appointment of Walter in 1267 was certainly under the de Lacy regime, and 1267 thus becomes the earliest possible year for Matilda's gift to the Templars.[220]

Next to nothing has survived about the life and activities of the Louth Templars during their few short years of existence in County Louth, and this poses problems for dating this charter. Since the available documentary sources have already been exhausted, the only other remaining option seems to be to examine the details of the lives of the thirteen witnesses to the charter. About Henry de Hadeleye, Gilbert de Repenteney, Richard de Heddesouere, Sir William Talun, Sir Simon de Clynton, Sir John Malet, Henry de Naule, Richard Fulstawe Miles fitz Oun, Robert fitz Miles, and John de Coly, no information could be found. Interestingly however, an individual named Roger Gernoun had lands at Castlebellingham adjoining the Templar lands at Kilsaran and he is mentioned in a lawsuit of 1306 concerning fishing rights on rivers in the area.[221] In all probability he is the same person as the Roger Gerun who bore witness to Matilda de Lacy's charter. Unfortunately no information could be found about the date of his death which could have assisted in the narrowing of the time frame for the date of the charter. However, his inclusion in this document is interesting in terms of the dating of Matilda's grant to the Templars in Kilsaran. No documentation has survived at all concerning this grant and it has been generally presumed that it was made around the same time as the grant in Cooley. It is possible, however, that the grant in Kilsaran was made sometime before the grant in Cooley, and that important land magnates from the area of the first foundation, bore witness to the second. Although this is certainly a tenuous suggestion it is possibly reinforced by the fact that a William de Clynton occurs in the same lawsuit as Roger Gernoun. The Clintons also held lands at this time in the Kilsaran area which adjoined the Templar land and so it is possible

[220] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 91.
[221] IBID, p. 76.

that the Simon de Clynton, who witnessed the charter, was from the same branch of this family.[222]

Regrettably, the only witness to this grant of whom certain dates of birth and death could be found, Adam de Stanle, appears to have died in 1285 and so this does not help at all in the dating of the charter. However, the details of his family history certainly offer some interesting insights. There are several Adams to be found in the early history of the Anglo-Norman family of Stanley. The first Adam de Stanley was from Staffordshire and died around 1190, so therefore cannot be the same Adam that witnessed the charter.[223] The Adam relevant to this study is probably one Sir Adam de Stanley of the manor of Stanley who was born *c.*1215 and who died in 1285.[224] Although it is not certain that this Adam is the same man who witnessed the charter, the scenario becomes much more likely when his family history is scrutinized. William the Conqueror was attended by one, Adam de Aldithley, who was accompanied from Aldithley in Normandy' by his two sons, Lydulph and Adam. After the victory at the Battle of Hastings, the Duke rewarded his followers, including Adam de Aldithley, with grants of English lands. The manor of Stanley from which the later family name is derived was granted to the Aldithley family in the twelfth century when it was the gift of their overlord, Bertram de Verdun, before he left England for the Crusades in 1190. This is the very same Bertram de Verdun who was granted lands in Louth in 1185. The manor of Stanleigh was situated about five miles from Leek in Staffordshire, where the de Verdun family also held extensive territories; by 1135 the de Verduns had been granted some 22 manors in Staffordshire concentrated in the north of the county, and the family caput at Alton was also located in the county.[225]

Adam de Aldithley played a prominent part in the retinue of Bertram de Verdun and acted as his Deputy when Bertram was Sheriff of Warwickshire and Leicestershire from 1168 to 1183. He succeeded Bertram as Sheriff of these two counties in 1184 and 1185, and acted as his Deputy in Cheshire in 1186. In 1190 Bertram de Verdun accompanied King Richard I to the Crusades in the Holy Land. Before leaving England, he granted to Adam de Aldithley the additional Manor of Stanleigh in Staffordshire, as a mark of his special favour. Bertram did not return to England, dying in Joppa in 1192.

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[222] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 77.
[223] http://www.stanleyroots.co.uk/earlyexamples.htm.
[224] http://www.stirnet.com/HTML/genie/british/ss4tz/stanley01.htm.
[225] HAGGER, (2001), p. 26.

[226] The surname of de Stanle was adopted sometime *c.* 1203 when it was recorded for the first time in a charter witnessed by one William de Stanle. Peter Stanley in *The House of Stanley from the 12th Century,* has found that in their early history, the Stanleys were closely associated with the De Verduns and the Audleys. The arms of all these families were similar which does not necessarily imply that these families had a blood relationship, as it was common in the thirteenth century for families to adopt similar arms to those of their feudal overlords, thus making identification easier in battle.[227]

It does not appear that any other lay individual granted lands to the Order of the Knights Templar in Louth at all apart from Matilda de Lacy. The Templars may have been the choice of Matilda de Lacy for family reasons. Her great-grandfather, Gilbert de Lacy had been a benefactor of theirs in England, and had himself put on the habit and had distinguished himself fighting in the east.[228] Indeed, as previously mentioned, another great-grandfather of Matilda, Bertram de Verdun had also gone on crusade, dying at Joppa in 1192. Unfortunately there is no more information available about Bertram's activities in the east. There is, however, slightly more information available for the activities of Gilbert de Lacy in the east. The main secondary source for Gilbert's crusading exploits comes from a mainstream history of the Knight's Templars written in the nineteenth century by Addison, the second part of which focuses on the Temple Church in London, the English headquarters of the Templars.[229]

Addison stated that on Tuesday, June 19th 1156, the Order of the Knights' Templar were drawn into an ambush whilst marching with Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, near Tiberias. Three hundred of the Knights Templar were reported to have lost their lives in this encounter with a further eighty-seven allegedly falling into the hands of the enemy, among whom was Bertrand de Blanquefort himself and his brother Odo, who was Marshal of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. In revenge for this butchery thirty Knights Templars put to flight, slaughtered and captured two hundred infidels, and in a night attack on the camp of Nourreddin they compelled the Saracen leader to take flight, without arms and half naked, from the field of battle. It was due to his involvement in this last incident that Gilbert de Lacy, Preceptor of the Temple of Tripoli was

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[226] MURPHY, D., 'The de Verdons of Louth', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland,* Part IV, (1895), p. 319.
[227] http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~ourpage/history.htm.
[228] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 76.
[229] http://www.sacred-texts.com/sro/htk/index.htm.

mentioned honorably alongside another Englishman, Robert Mansel.[230] The only contemporary record of this event and of Gilbert de Lacy's involvement was made by William of Tyre whose history of the kingdom of Jerusalem up to 1184 provides vital information about the Templar role and the environment within which the order operated.[231] However the Archbishop's bias against the Templars makes it difficult to make a balanced conclusion about his version of events.[232] What is certain is that at some stage after this encounter Gilbert de Lacy returned to England, and unfortunately, little more is known about his life from this stage onwards. The list of English benefactors of the Knights Templar in England under Kings Stephen and Henry II however includes the noble names of Ferrers, Harcourt, Hastings, Lacy, Clare, Vere and Mowbray; although no individual names or details are provided.[233]

The dramatic suppression of the Order of the Knights Templar undoubtedly illustrates the power of the French monarchy in the early fourteenth century. The reasons for this suppression are complex. The Order of the Temple had been founded to assist the defence of the State of Jerusalem and the disappearance of that state in 1291 effectively removed its *raison d'etre* and provided the Order's enemies with at least one convenient validation for their actions.[234] It seems more than likely that the legendary tales of the victories of the Templars when contrasted with the harsh reality of what happened in the Kingdom of Jerusalem in the second half of the thirteenth century would have prompted contemporaries to ask why God had abandoned the military orders, and some to even conclude that they must have become sinful. The reality of this situation was succinctly summed up by Nicholson on the subject when she noted that:

> *The rising popularity of the newly-created, austere friars distracted patronage away from the military orders, who seemed spiritually second-rate in comparison.*[235]

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[230] *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea, by William Archbishop of Tyre*, trans. & ann. E.A. BABCOCK & A.C. KREY, (New York, 1943), p. 8; ADDISON, C.G., *The History of the Knights Templars, The Temple Church, and the Temple,* (London, 1842), p. 46; http://www.answers.com/topic/john-maunsell; http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/TAV_THE/TEMPLARS.html.

[231] *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, p. 8.

[232] BARBER *M., The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple*, (Cambridge, 1994), p.394.

[233] http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/TAV_THE/TEMPLARS.html.

[234] WHALEY, D. & DENLEY, P., *Later Medieval Europe, 1250-1520,* Third Edition, (London, 2001), pp. 54-55.

[235] NICHOLSON, H., *Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights: Images of the Military Orders 1128-1291*, (Leicester, London & New York, 1993), p. 11.

The great prestige of the Knights Templar initially won them a universal favour which showed itself in feudal exemptions conceded by Church and State and in the vast estates they received from individual benefactors. However, in this instance, admiration turned to jealousy and fear, so that the State came to plot their destruction and the Church to consent to it.

Furthermore, Pope Adrian VI had legislated to allow the Order of the Knights Templar to have their own churches and this is in evidence in Louth where, at Kilsaran, it is known that the order were in control of twelve churches and also of the tithes of eight others.[236] The Templars took the tithes themselves and put a chaplain in to perform services at a small salary by which they made a considerable profit.[237] It is thus very likely then that they were not popular with local farmers generally nor with the secular clergy in the region. Pope Eugenius III further extended these rights to include control over churchyards and he also exempted the order from the operation of ordinary excommunications and interdicts. In addition to this they were, as defenders of the Church, exempted from paying tithes. They were allowed to visit the churches in the surrounding countryside once a year to make a collection for the Holy Land, and, even if such churches were laid under an interdict, they were to be thrown open on their coming and divine service was to be performed. Their dwellings too were to be considered as sanctuaries, and any felon fleeing there was safe from arrest. Furthermore they could also prohibit any mills being erected to their detriment.[238]Very soon however the order refused in any way to submit to the ordinary jurisdiction of the diocesan bishops and formed in effect a separate ecclesiastical organisation under the pope as supreme bishop.[239]

The instructions for the suppression of the Order of the Knights Templar in England were to be transmitted on December 20th 1307 to the government in Ireland where they were to be followed in exactly the same manner as they had been in England, except that it was left to the Justiciar and Treasurer to fix the dates for action. But a covering letter warned them to act with all speed before any rumour could reach Ireland of what was happening across the Irish Sea. It is obvious that the government officials in Ireland to whom these instructions were relayed acted swiftly because

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[236] LESLIE, (1908), pp. 21-22; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 330; MCCONNON, (1990), p. 6.
[237] WOOD, (1906-07), p. 338.
[238] *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland: Volume I: 1171-1251*, No. 2101; WOOD, (1906-7), p. 334.
[239] ORPEN, G.H., *Ireland Under the Normans: 1169-1333,* (Dublin, 2005), p. 215; http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/TAV_THE/TEMPLARS.html.

although they did not receive the letter until January 25th, the date they selected for seizure was Saturday 3rd February. Early that morning, the Sheriff of County Louth, Benedict le Hauberge who lived near Ardee set out, and by all accounts achieved the closure of both the Templar communities at Kilsaran and at Cooley.[240]

From a study of *the Inventories of Goods and Chattels of the Knights Templars in Co. Louth in 1308,* a number of important observations can be made about the Templar settlement in Cooley. [241] The Cooley house of the Templars was plainly a small one, with brother Richard the only monk in residence. Brother Richard was possibly a priest although there is no mention made of where exactly this house was located, although as previously mentioned, MacIomhair was of the opinion that it was at Templetown. By this time the manorial lands of the order had increased from the original gift of 40 acres. That much alone was under winter wheat, and allowance must be made for the other crops, for ground lying fallow, for pasturage and for waste land. MacIomhair calculated that the produce and stock shown in the inventory would be the equivalent to a farm of 118 Irish acres, but with medieval conditions in farming and the state of the land taken into account it is reasonable to suppose that the Templars holding in Cooley had already reached the 240 acres which were recorded for the Order of the Knights Hospitallers in the *Extents of Monastic Posessions* in 1541.From the *Inventories* it is apparent that the farming was mixed and also that the manor brewed its own ale. [242] No mention however is made of the mill, even though it is recorded at Templetown in other sources. This was a valuable part of the property drawing revenue from the whole neighbourhood and in particular from manorial tenants who were obliged by law to have recourse to it and no other. MacIomhair suggested that it may have stood on Shillin Hill, where a little stream runs down to the sea near Cooley Point.[243]

Although there is no evidence, either archaeological or historical, to suggest that the dwelling-house of the Templars was located at Templetown Church, the documentary sources certainly indicate that the church in 1308 was in the posession of the order. For example, the possessions of Brother Richard included a chalice and a missal, among other things. In addition to this it appears that at some point the church

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[240] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 79.
[241] *Inventories of Goods and Chattels of the Knights Templars in Co. Louth in 1308, (E. 101/239/13 English Public Record Office),* ed. by D. MACIOMHAIR, 'The Knights Templars in County Louth', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca*, Vol. 4, No. 1, (1960-61), pp. 80-81.
[242] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), pp. 80-81.
[243]MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 85.

was rededicated from St. Sillean to the Blessed Virgin Mary, a favourite patron of the Templars, along with Saint James the Apostle and Saint Catherine of Alexandria. There is also local placename evidence which supports this rededication to the Blessed Virgin as the church at Templetown later became known as *Kilwirra,* or *Cille Mhuire,* which translates from Irish as Mary's Church.

After the lands in Cooley were confiscated from the Templars in 1308, they were left in the care of one John de Kent who held control of them until May 1st 1309; and then from October 30th of that year they were under the care of Walter Dowdall. The *Inventories* record this change of ownership and also the worth of the lands, tenements and rents of the Templars in Cooley as follows;

By the said rolls and memoranda it was also ascertained that the lands, tenements and rents of the said templars in the manor of Cooley which were worth 10£ 15s per annum were seized into the King's hands by the said Benedict then sheriff of Uriel, and were given to the said Bertram [Meuerel] and Adam [fitz Walter] to be kept and sown as they judge to the King's best advantage, according to the form of the said writ. This Bertram and Adam [local men] did until the following feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady.Thenceforth John de Kent [government official] had the custody of the said manor. Worth per annum 10 £ 15s.[244]

It appears that the rectory of Carlingford was not included as part of the lands, tenements and rents of Cooley. For some reason it is not mentioned in the sources, and remains unnoticed until 1313 when it had recently been held by a certain Master Philip de Erdeley who held it, however, as a layman might, by lease from the Crown but was never instituted rector by the Primate.[245]In 1310 the Crown granted the Kilsaran lands to Richard de Burgh, the Earl of Ulster, and in 1312 farmed out eleven of the churches which had been under Templar control to new bidders for higher rents than had been charged before the confiscation. With the exception of one civil servant attached to the Dublin administration, William de Hothum, those who chose to rent the churches were all from Louth and included Milo de Verdun and Benedict le Hauberge who as sheriff in 1308 had supervised the confiscation of the Templar property in Louth.[246]

Of the trial of the Templar brethren in Ireland a partial record survives but it is only for the province of Dublin, and the enigmatic Brother Richard of Cooley is never again mentioned after 1308. During the third session at the Council of Vienne which took place during the winter of 1311-12, Pope Clement V promulgated the bull *AD*

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[244] *Inventories of Goods and Chattels in 1308*, p. 81.
[245] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 86.
[246] SMITH, (1999), p. 130.

providam, which transferred the goods of the Temple to the Hospitallers, except for their possessions in Iberia, reserved by the Pope for a future decision. The main reason cited for transferral of the valuable lands and goods was as follows:

> *There was the further danger that tardiness in our arrangements and dispositions might lead to destruction or dilapidation.* [247]

Edward II however was not easily persuaded to relinquish the valuable estates he had been administering, and not until November 28th 1313 did he issue the writ to the Justiciar, Chancellor and Treasurer of Ireland. This writ reached Ireland on February 24th 1314 and was probably executed more or less immediately. Thus the entire property of the Templars in Louth passed safely to the Hospitallers and remained with them until the dissolution of the monasteries in1540.[248] The manor of the Templars at Templetown however did not become a preceptory after passing to the Hospitallers. In 1335 the lands with *Castle Hasard* and a mill were held of the Hospital by Thomas de Lafelde, chaplain, and James le Blound, layman and the estate was apparently managed by the preceptory of Kilsaran. [249]

Apart from the list of amercements of 1301, the only other fourteenth century references to Templetown appear to have been recorded in the *Register of Milo Sweteman* which was compiled when Sweteman served as Archbishop of Armagh from 1361-1380. In particular, there is an interesting list of dues said to have been 'paid in kind' which dates to 1368. The names and addresses of the persons, with the dues they paid in kind, are set out, showing the quantities paid and the persons before whom the statements of the payments were sworn. One of these entries refers to Templetown;

> *Name: Thomas Whyte of Moretoun*
> *Crannocks of Wheat:2 crannocks of Oats: 4*
> *Sworn before vicar of Tempiltoun. Sworn to pay this before*
> *John Langcastel and William Walshe.*[250]

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[247] *Ad providam,* Papal Bull 2 May 1312, in *The Templars; Selected Sources,* trans. & ann. by M. BARBER & K. BATES, (Manchester & New York, 2002), p. 319.

[248] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 91. The Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem was established in the early twelfth century for infirmarians who took three perpetual vows following the rule of St. Augustine. They were brought to Ireland in 1172 with the Anglo-Normans. This body had originated in the efforts of some Italian merchants to care for the sick at Jerusalem, but they gradually extended their sphere of action to protecting pilgrims on their way to the Holy Sepulchre. They styled themselves Knights of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, from St. John the Eleemosynary, a canonised patriarch of Alexandria, to whom the chapel of one of their hospitals had been dedicated; and finally became a military and monastic Order of Knights, like the Templars for the protection of Christendom. See WOOD, (1906-7), p. 330; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 332 & BURMAN, E., *Supremely Abominable Crimes: The Trial of the Knights Templar,* (London, 1994), p. 260.

[249] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 342.

[250] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1368; O'SULLIVAN, (2004), p. 45.

Of course the fact that this statement was sworn before the '*vicar of Tempiltoun*' would suggest that the church was still in use between 1361 and 1380 and so perhaps had not been too adversely affected by the Bruce Invasion of 1315-18, the Great European Famine of 1316-18 or indeed the Black Death of 1348-50. As previously mentioned there is a notable scarcity of contemporary sources pertaining to Templetown in the fourteenth century. Nevertheless what few references have survived are important in assessing how well this church and its surrounding community survived the economic disasters of this calamitous century. It is probable, however, that the church remained under the control of the Knights Hospitallers throughout this period. This is suggested by the fact that in 1361 the Prior of the Order in Ireland, Thomas Burley, was exercising the right of presentation to the vicarage at Carlingford;

> *April 1361: Acts of Master Isaac O Culean, canon of Armagh, and commissary of the dean and chapter, during vacancy of the see, regarding the vicarage of Carlingford. 1. Thomas de Burley, Prior of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in Ireland, having presented Sir Thomas Waleys, priest, to the vicarage, O Culean orders the archdeacon, or his commissary, to make the customary inquiries, 6 April.*[251]

Following on from this, there is an interesting case noted in the Register of Archbishop Fleming on 11th March 1411which was recorded in the form of a letter to Sir Richard Waspayn, vicar of Carlingford which reads as follows:

> *The archbishop having in the course of his ordinary visitation sequestrated (the fruits) of the church of Karlingford, pertaining to the prior and brethren (confratres) of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in Ireland, rectors of the second (alterius) portion thereof, on account of their failure to repair part of the chancel, and appointed Sir Richard FitzJohn, chaplain, and John Seyn, clerk, sequestrators; Waspayn is commanded to warn all the faithful not on any pretext to meddle with dues pertaining to the said prior and brethren, without special licence from the archbishop, on pain of greater excommunication.*[252]

It is clear from this extract that the church at Carlingford had remained under the care of the Knights Hospitallers in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and although Archbishop Nicholas Fleming was in office from 1404-16 and his registers contain many references to this church at Carlingford, there is not even one surviving reference to the parish church at Templetown for this period. However, one important entry has survived in the *Register of Primate Swayne* for 1433 which states that the Hospitallers

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[251] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1361.
[252] *The Register of Nicholas Fleming,* 1411.

held 3 carucates in Templeton; and if a carucate or ploughland is equivalent to 120 acres of arable lands, as it usually was in Louth at this time, this would mean that they owned a total of 360 acres of arable land.[253] Indeed Swayne's *Register* also confirms that the church of Templetown was still in use in 1433 as it is listed as the church of *Kylmory* with a valuation of 1 mark.[254]This entry is somewhat confusing and it does seem to repeat itself. The '*old castle*' mentioned in Templetown can only be identified as Ballug tower house as it is the only known castle ever constructed anywhere near Templetown church. The placename of *'Molagh'* has never been identified, but it seems certain that the 120 acres listed for '*Moreton*' refers to those same 120 acres referred to as *'Templeton'*. Furthermore the name *Moreton* itself would appear to be an anglicized version of *Mhuire's Town,* or *Mary's Town,* would appear to be a direct reference to the church's association with and dedication to the Virgin Mary, and also to the local name for the church which endures to this day, *Killwirra.*

In June 1528 Archbishop Cromer declared the curates of Ballymascanlan, Newtown Cooley and Kilwirra (Templetown) contumacious and subject to canonical penalties because of their failure to attend a synod of the *Cleros inter Anglicos* in Drogheda.[255] Seven years later, in 1535, and on the eve of the dissolution of the monasteries in England, the Archbishop of Armagh, George Dowdall ordered that a Visitation of Churches be undertaken in his diocese. The results of this Visitation were recorded in his *Register;*[256] all of the churches in the barony of Lower Dundalk were listed bar three: Templetown, Roosky and Grange. The reason for the omission of the church at Templetown is probably due to the fact that it was attacked and burned by the O'Neills of the Fews and the O'Hanlons of Orior in 1529, along with the church at Grange.[257] Roosky is not mentioned either and this may be because at this time it was disused as an ecclesiastical centre.[258] In the same year as this visitation, the properties of the Knights Hospitallers of Kilsaran and Cooley were leased by Sir John Rawson, Prior of the Hospitallers in Ireland to Sir Oliver Plunkett for 66s 8d. This was the year when the legislation providing for the dissolution of the monasteries was first enacted, and of

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[253] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), pp. 74-5.
[254] IBID, p. 75.
[255] *Archbishop Cromer's Register*, 1528.
[256] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1535.
[257] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions*, p. 108; JEFFERIES, H.A., *Priests and Prelates of Armagh in the Age of Reformations 1518-1558,* (Dublin, 1997a), p. 21; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 51-53
[258] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1535.

course this would suggest that the lease was entered into as an avoidance of confiscation.

Six years later, in May 1541, an inquisition was held in Termonfeckin to determine the extent of the preceptory or manor of Kilsaran and Cooley.[259] The lands in Cooley were described as having been laid waste for twelve years by the Irish of Ulster and it seems that they lay uncultivated even after they were taken over by Oliver Plunkett.[260] These properties remained in the hands of the Plunketts until the land confiscations of the 1650s.[261] In the same Inquisition the lands at Templetown were described as follows;

> *Templeton in Cowley: an old castle thrown down, and 120 acres arable, which have been wasted during the last twelve years by the Irish living in Ulster, and still lie uncultivated. Moreton, in Cowley. A castle 120 acres arable, and a church waste (as preceding). The castle and the said lands and tenements with tithes, altarages etc. in Templeton, Moreton, and Molagh in Cowley are held per indenture for a term of years by Sir Oliver Plonket for 66.s.8.d...*[262]

It would appear that, due to the depredations of the native Irish in Cooley, Templetown church was left ruins in 1541, although the fact the lessee of the church was to find a *'chaplain to celebrate in the parish church of Morton'* would indicate that whatever state the church was in there must have been intentions to restore it and repair any damage at this stage. O'Sullivan believes that, considering it was in a ruinous state at the time of the *Extents* in 1541, it is likely, as also happened at Haggardstown Church, in the barony of Upper Dundalk, that reconstruction took place in the period after the ending of the Shane O'Neill wars in 1568.[263]

One important document for the study of the townlands of Templetown and Ballug is a report prepared for the trustees for the Forfeited Estates in Ireland[264] which includes a description of Ballug;

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[259] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 342; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 78.
[260] GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 342.
[261] O'SULLLIVAN, (2005), p. 79.
[262] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions*, p. 108.
[263] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 58.
[264] The Trustees were appointed in 1700 by the English Act of Resumption to take over the lands that had been confiscated from the Irish Jacobites who were outlawed for supporting James II in the War of 1689-91. The take-over represented a victory of the English parliament over William III who had made large grants to favoured individuals. William's land grants were nearly all cancelled and the lands ordered to be sold by the Trustees for the benefit of the English tax payer. The trustees appointed a number of surveyors to map the lands taken into their charge. The mapping appears to have been preceded by descriptive accounts, of which this document is an example. The Trustees held inquiries into the claims made by interested parties and gave decisions on them. After all the claims had been heard, the property remaining with the Trustees was put up to auction at Chichester House, College Green, Dublin. These sales, which were concluded in 1703, did not realize nearly as much money as the English Parliament had

Ballag (recte Ballug) in Cooley in the Parish of Carlingford by Estimation 60 Acres of which Seven good meadow the rest Arrable and produceth good wheat, and bare (barley) it is on the North East and South Sides Surrounded by the Sea. There is one the Primises a ruined Castle and one poor Cabin with a Garden Answerable, Dundalk ye nearest Markett towne from which it is Distant 6 miles the Land valued at 6s 6d per acre.[265]

3. CARTOGRAPHY

Unfortunately, apart from those already discussed in this chapter, there are no other surviving documentary sources relating to the history of Templetown church in the Middle Ages. Even the Down Survey Map of *c.* 1655 only seems to show a church immediately to the south of the town of Carlingford, and no other church/chapel sites are marked for the rest of the barony.[266] Whether or not the church at Templetown had ceased functioning at this stage is not clear, although it is shown on an earlier map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula which was drawn up by Bartlett and dates to *c.* 1602 as *'Kill Merrie'*,[267] although it was not included in the earlier Boazio's map of 1599 it was almost certainly still in use at this point and indeed, many important monuments in the region which were in existence in 1599 were omitted from Boazio's map.[268] Moreover, Templetown Church was noted on the maps of both Wrenn in 1766 and Taylor and Skinner in 1777.[269] Confusingly, O'Sullivan has drawn attention to the discrepancies evident on Lythe's map of 1575 which depicts a church named "Kilmore" adjacent to Templetown and Ballug but with Templetown Church shown separately.[270]

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originally expected. The document gives particulars of fifteen townlands in County Louth and about 300 in County Meath. It seems to be the assignment given to a particular surveyor, and does not represent all the lands in the two counties to which the Trustees laid claim. The surveyor was concerned to describe each townland with particular reference to the former and present occupants, the quality of the land, and its estimated value. The particulars of ownership and tenancy do not always correspond with other documentary records. See SIMMS, J.G., 'A Surveyor's Report on Some Townlands of County Louth, c. 1700' *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 3, (1971), p. 150.

[265] *A Surveyor's Report on Some Townlands of County Louth, c. 1700,* ed. by J.G. SIMMS, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVII, Number 3, (1971), p. 152

[266] FERGUSON, P., pers. comm., (June, 2009). See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 89.

[267] See Figure 15.

[268] TEMPEST, H.G., 'Review of *The Mapmakers Art: Essays on the History of Maps* by Dr. Edward Lynam', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XII, Number 4, (1952), p. 283.

[269] See Figure 16.

[270] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 56.



Figure 15: Templetown Church as depicted on Richard Bartlett's *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602.*
(O'SULLIVAN, H., *Irish Historic Towns Atlas No. 16, Dundalk,* Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 2006)).

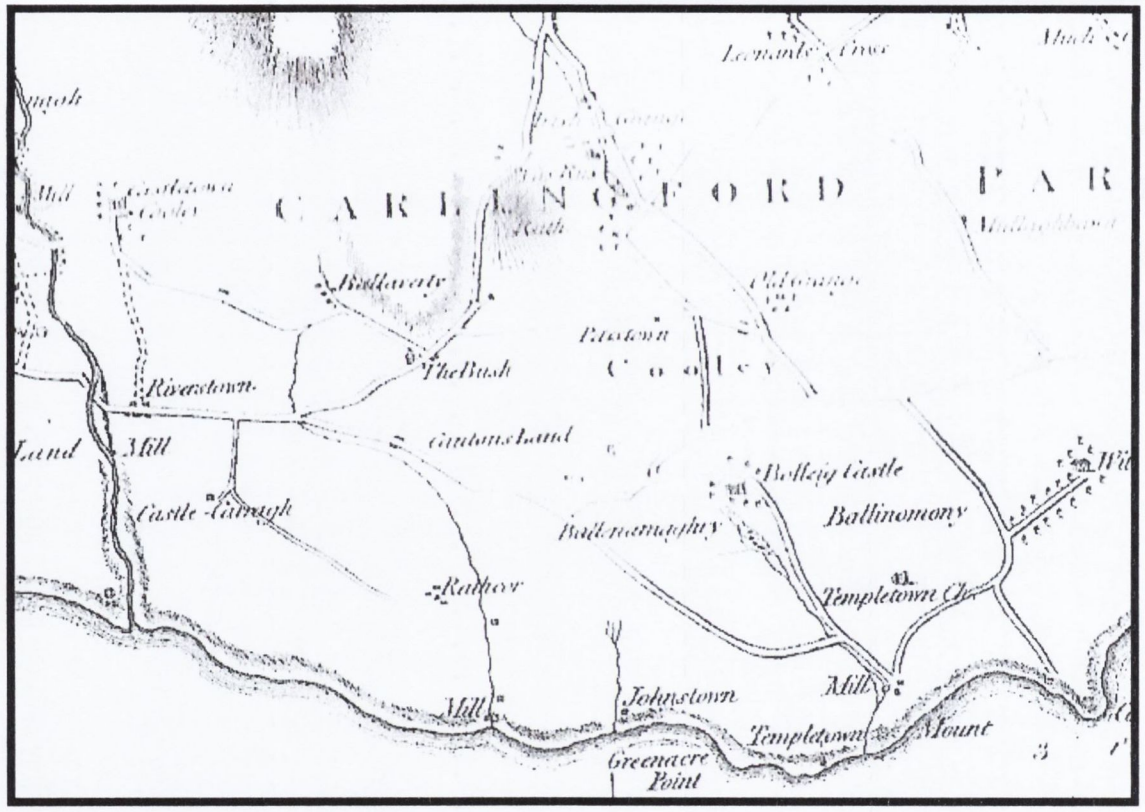


Figure 16: Templetown Church as depicted on *A Map of the County of Louth, 1777, by George Taylor and Andrew Skinner.*
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).

4. LOCATION

As previously mentioned, Templetown Church is located almost half a kilometre from the coast at the centre of a strategic mound which rises up from the low-lying terrain of Templetown and which gives an expansive view of the surrounding countryside. Indeed, this the church is so prominently situated that it can be clearly seen from the entrance to Willville House which is situated in low-lying ground approximately 3km to the north-east of Templetown.[271]

5. SIZE

Templetown church is rectangular in shape, aligned east to west, and has maximum internal dimensions of 15.4m by 5.4m.[272] These dimensions mean that it has an internal area of 83.16 square metres which would qualify it as a church of middle size according to O'Carragáin's methodology relating to church size and function.[273] Davies described it as a 'narrow' church[274]; however it is certainly not among the narrowest or smallest of the Louth churches, rather, its measurements are average when compared to the other Louth examples.

6. MORPHOLOGY

In form, this church had a divided nave and chancel. [275] It also appears that there was a wooden roodscreen positioned approximately 5m from the east gable; the evidence for this has survived in the form of two beam holes which can be seen on the inner face of the north wall, as well as two corbels which project from the inner face of the south wall.[276]

7. MASONRY STYLES

The east and south walls of the church are fairly complete, the western gable has mainly fallen and the north wall was at one time buttressed. The west gable of

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[271] See Figure 1.
[272] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 79; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 258; LH 009-01101, Templetown Church. See Figures 17, 18 & 19.
[273] Ó CARRAGÁIN, (2006), pp. 107-8.
[274] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.
[275] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12; BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 79-80; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 260.
[276] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12; BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 79-80; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 260; see Plate 22.

Templetown church has been destroyed down to the ground level and the foundation course is not visible, although some later buttressing indicates its original position.[277] The church itself is constructed of roughly coursed limestone boulders, blocks and greywacke.[278]

8. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

a. WINDOWS

In all there are four windows extant at Templetown Church, the biggest example being located in the eastern gable, with two smaller ones surviving in the south wall, and the remaining one in the north wall. The east window, along with southern doorway is interesting in terms of dating the building, and as such was the architectural feature which was given the most attention by both Davies in 1941, and Buckley and Sweetman in 1991.[279] As it stands today, the east window is a single-light window which shows evidence of having been originally two-lighted. The bottom of the original centre mullion appears to have been later used as the base of a jamb with the arrow window having a cusped ogee head, partly convex, partly concave, with deep corner panels and a rectangular drip moulding with horizontal bar terminals rounded on the upper side. The wall below each of them has been patched on the south to ground level. The east gable is coped with ashlar slabs.

This window displays features which are characteristic of Irish fifteenth century mouldings, and this is most clearly seen in the hollow concave quarter-circle carvings. Other features which would indicate a fifteenth century date are the triangular compartments or spandrels which are incorporated into the hood moulding. Indeed, the ogee window form itself indicates a fifteenth century or even a later date. As a weight carrying arch form its shortcomings are obvious, but in its favour it is certainly one of the most attractive medieval decorative features of fifteenth century Irish architecture. Originally utilized in fourteenth century England, the ogee form later infiltrated Irish building techniques, and it occurs most frequently in the Pale counties, leading Leask to observe that the Pale may well have been the centre of diffusion for the whole country.[280]

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[277] See Plate 23.
[278] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 79; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 258.
[279] DAVIES, (1941), p. 13; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 258; see Plates 24 &25 & Figures 20 & 21.
[280] LEASK, (1960), pp. 164-66.

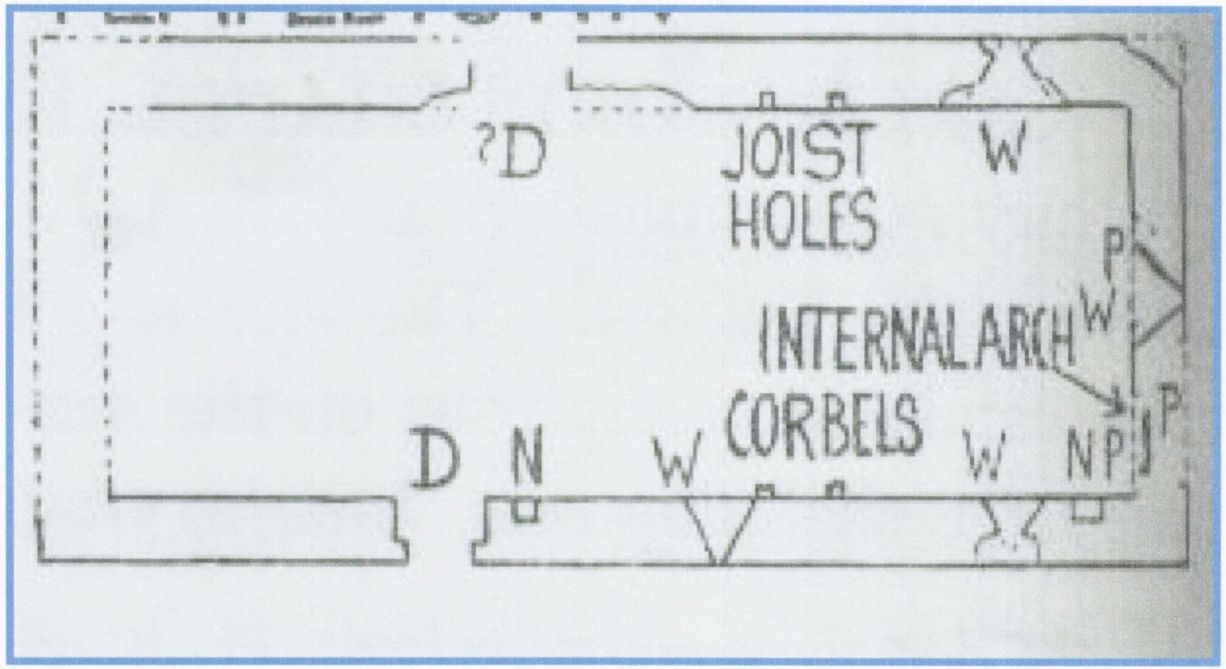


Figure 17: Plan of Templetown Church.

(DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), pp. 7-23).

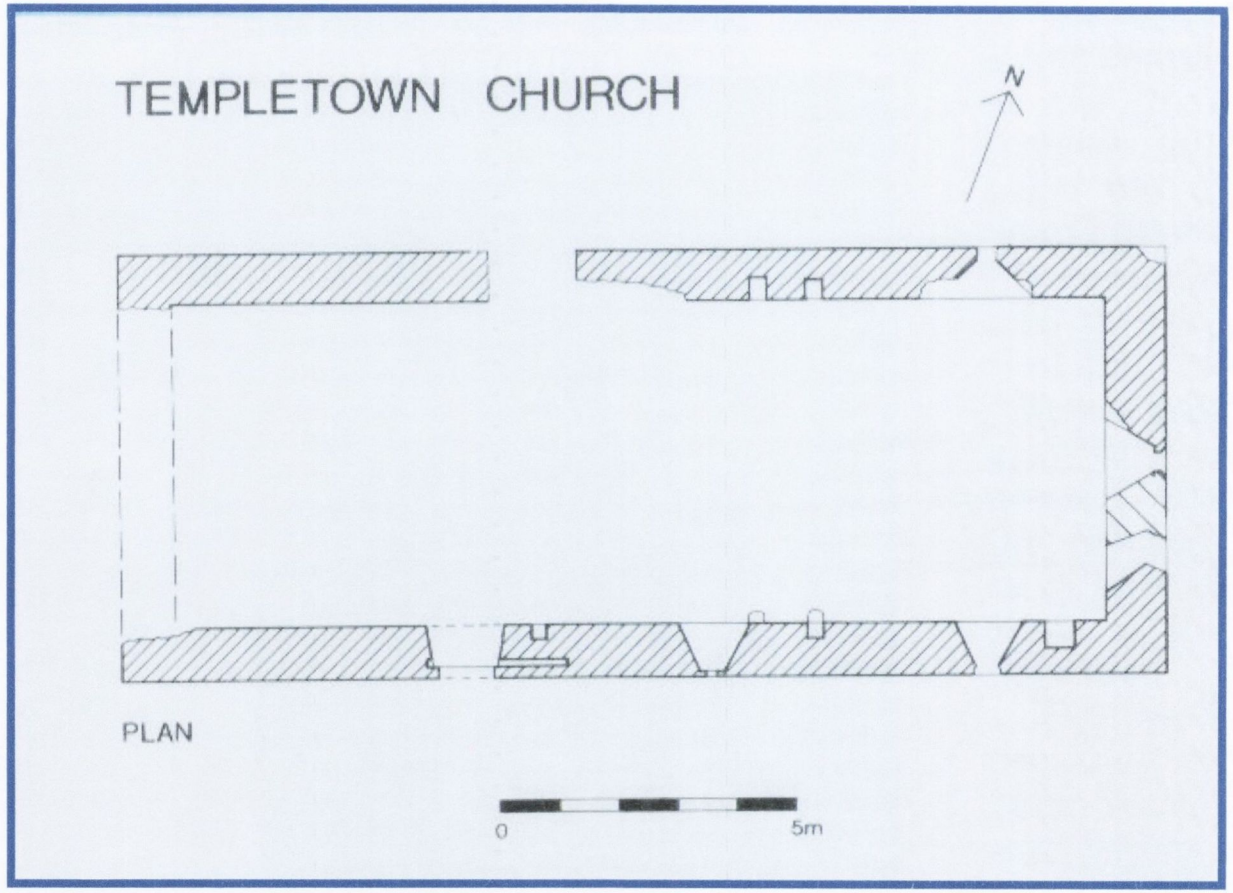


Figure 18: Plan of Templetown Church
(BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991)).

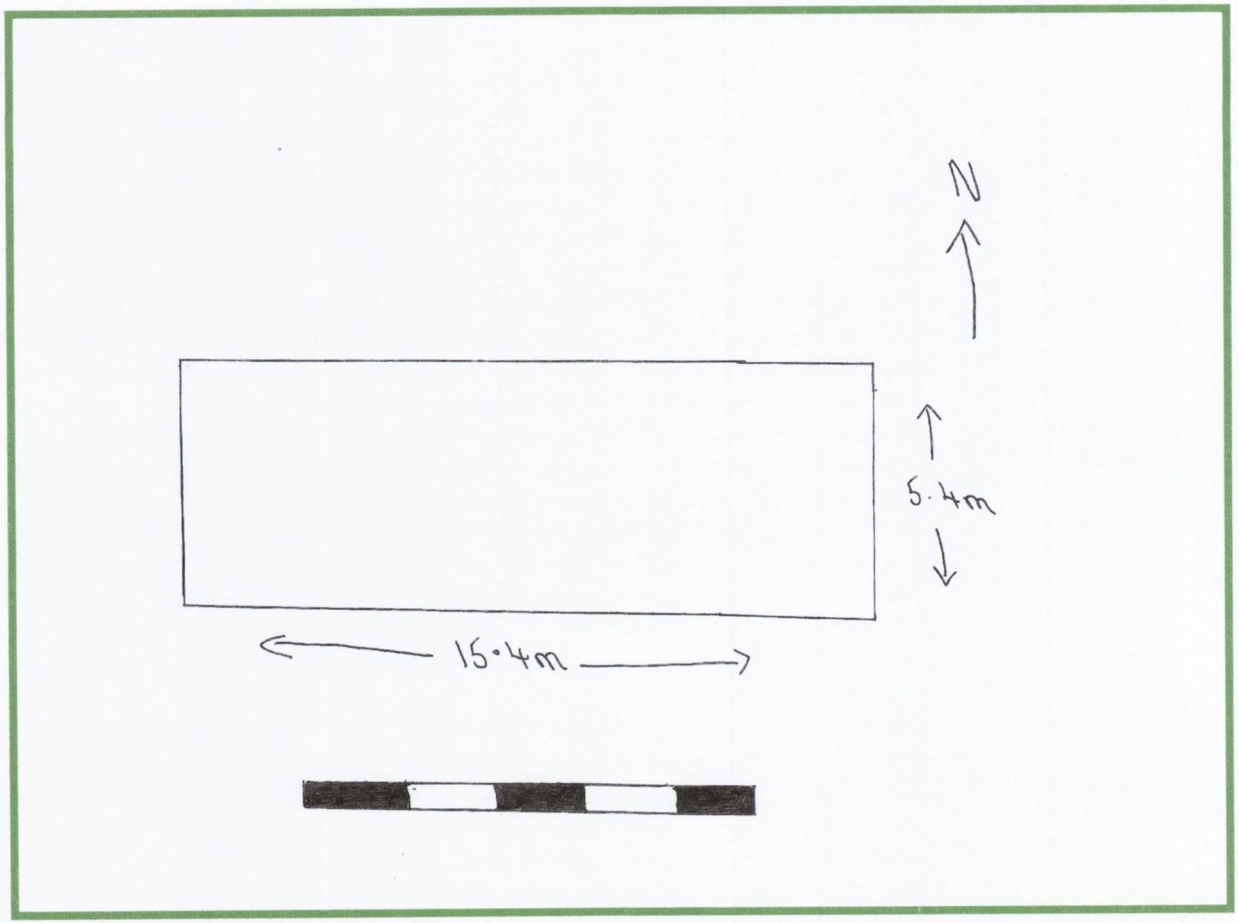


Figure 19: Rough plan of Templetown Church.



Plate 22: Beam holes and corbels projecting from the inner face of the south wall at Templetown Church.



Plate 23: Western gable of Templetown Church.



Plate 24: Exterior view of the east window at Templetown Church.

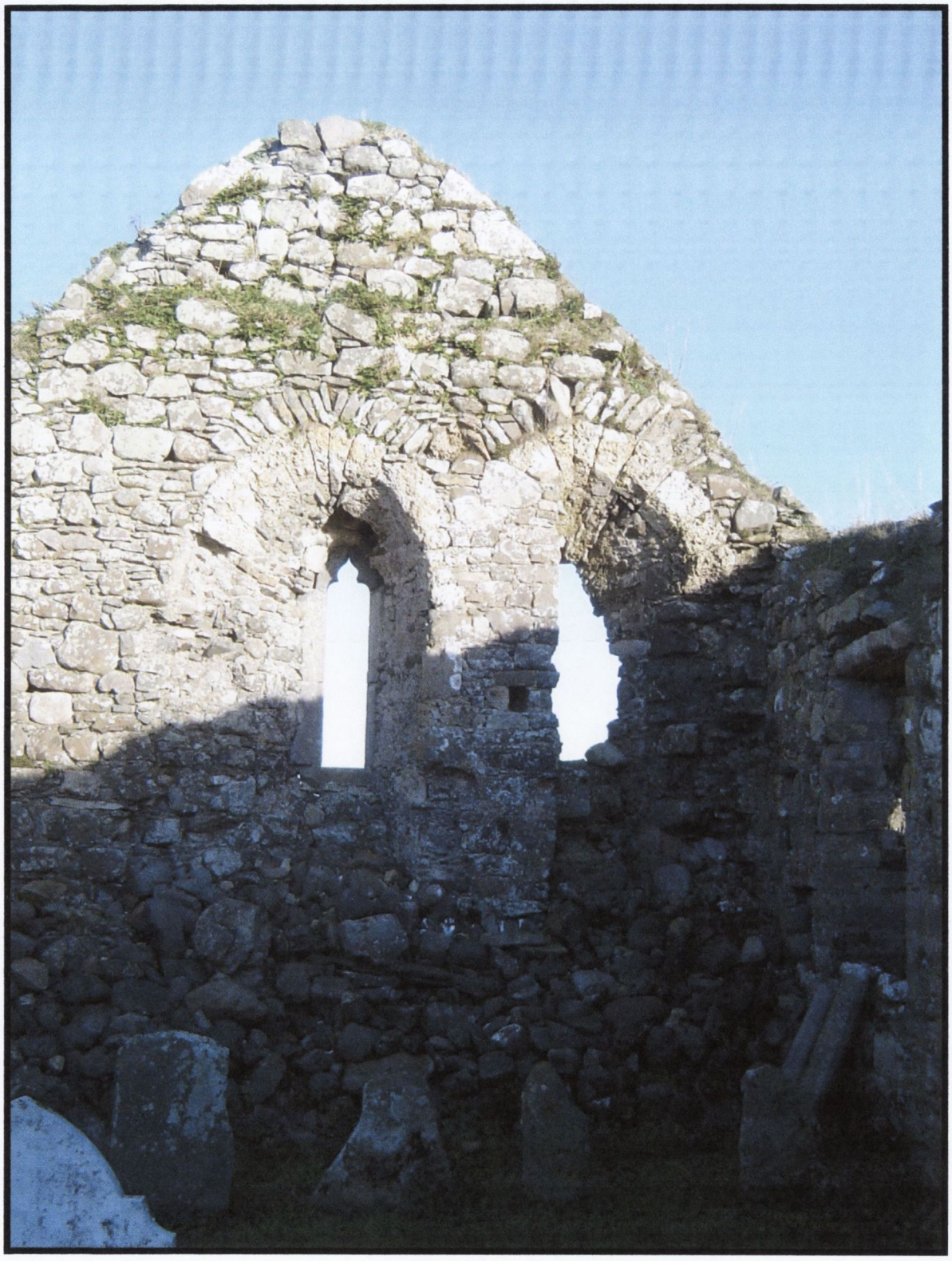


Plate 25: Interior view of the east window at Templetown Church.

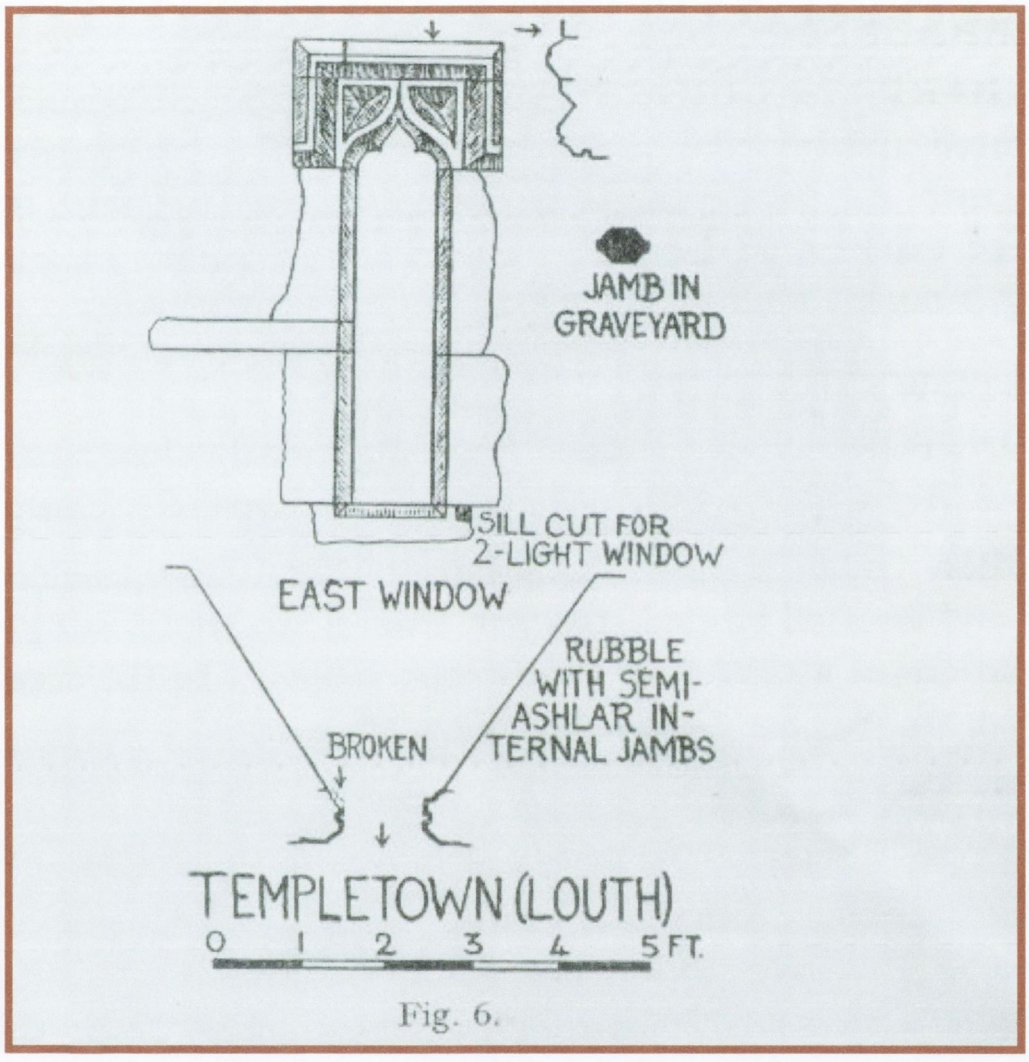


Figure 20: Plan of east window of Templetown Church.
(DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), pp. 7-23).

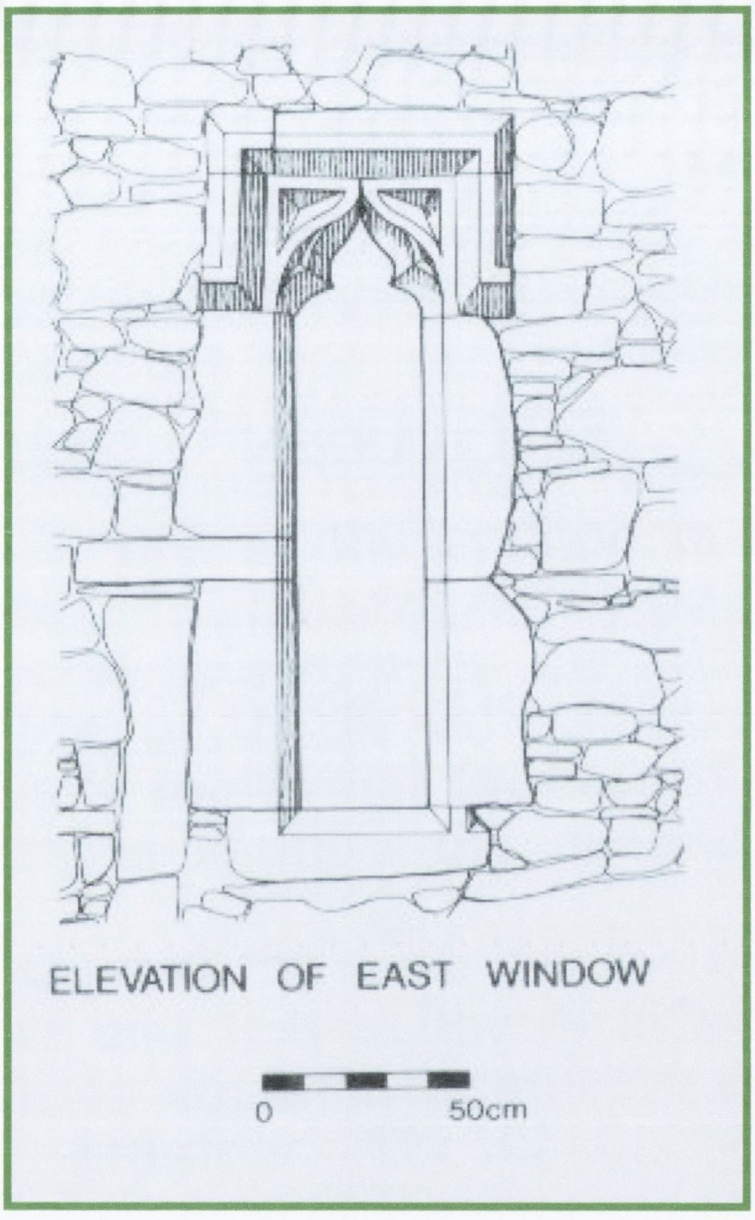


Figure 21: Plan of East Window of Templetown Church.
(BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991)).

The inner face of the window embrasure has a round arch consisting of dressed tufa stone. The south jamb is also built with tufa, while the north one has been destroyed by the narrowing of the window embrasure. At the south side of the window there are three quarters of an arch and embrasure of tufa stone, similar to that of the central window, only newer in composition. However, there is no evidence whatsoever of a corresponding arch at the north side. It would appear that three window embrasures were planned for this east gable but only the central one was built and later narrowed and reconstructed. The reason for this architectural anomaly remains unknown. One piece of tufa in the arch of the blocked window of the east wall appears to have been diagonally tooled but the rest of the stone is too worn to identify a method of dressing. These arches are asymmetrical as there is no third to the north, nor is the gable sufficiently high enough for them to have belonged to tall lancets; the long and narrow form of elongated window which most often displayed a pointed head.

The best preserved of the windows in the north and south walls of the church is located in the centre of the south wall and is constructed of roughly punched limestone. Closer inspection reveals sea shells embedded in the stone.[281] This window has a narrow slit with a single stone which is used for a semicircular arch, a type normally associated with early rather than late medieval church building in Ireland, but in this case Buckley and Sweetman are of the opinion that the type of stone used and the method of dressing suggests a later date.[282]The westerly window is covered by a lintel arch. The window at the east end of the south wall has no dressed stone remaining but the embrasure is of similar shape and size to the complete one in the centre of the wall.[283] The window in the east end of the north wall has no dressed stone remaining and only a portion of its embrasure intact.[284] It was possibly of the same type as those windows in the south wall. There are also unidentified beams to be seen below the east window in the south wall.[285] Buckley and Sweetman state that the part of the mullion which was removed from the east window can be seen in two pieces used as grave markers to the east side of the church.[286]However, Davies stated in 1941 that he had located two fifteenth century stones of a central mullion in the graveyard, which could only have stood in the ruined west

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[281] See Plates 26 & 27.
[282] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 258-60.
[283] See Plates 28 & 29.
[284] See Plate 30.
[285] See Plate 29.
[286] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 258. See also LH 009-011002, Templetown Architectural Fragments.

wall. He describes them as chamfers, which would mean that they would display a splayed or beveled surface made by cutting off a square edge. He further stated that they were slightly concave, unglazed but with bar holes.[287] He thus hypothesized that the west wall had contained a fair sized window with more than one light. He further speculated that as the west window in a church was seldom larger than the east, then the west wall may have been entirely rebuilt, while on the east side it was necessary to fit a slit window into a pre-existing opening. The present writer could only identify two possible mullion fragments in the graveyard to the east of the church.[288]

b. DOORWAYS

The absence of any decorative sculpture at Templetown however does not mean that the edifice is undateable. There are the remains of what initially appear to be two opposing doorways in the nave of the church. Upon closer examination it can be seen that they do not strictly oppose each other, the doorway in the north wall has been broken out and is visibly wider than that in the south wall, leading Buckley and Sweetman to speculate that it may therefore be a later insertion.[289] There are also the clear remains of an internal masonry arch above this northern doorway, which was noted briefly by Davies, but not mentioned by Buckley and Sweetman.[290] The building work directly below this masonry arch at ground level on the right hand side could possibly indicate that the doorway was blocked up at a later date, although this was not mentioned in either of the earlier surveys.

The south doorway is in a much better state of preservation than its northern counterpart.[291] It is constructed of punch-dressed limestone and has a semicircular arch, reveals and boltholes extant.[292] The external jambs are unbevelled; the masonry jambs behind them have no splay and end in rough square finely finished ashlar quoins, supporting a nearly flat masonry arc. The external arch takes its form from three stones, two on one side and one on the other. The interior of this doorway is also very well preserved and it is clear from a comparison with the interior of the north doorway that they are of different architectural forms, lending credence to the theory that the northern

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[287] DAVIES, (1941), p. 13.
[288] See Plates 31 & 32.
[289] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 258; see Plate 33.
[290] DAVIES, (1941), p. 12.
[291] See Plate 34.
[292] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 258.



Plate 26: Exterior view of the central south wall window.



Plate 27: Interior view of the central south wall window.



Plate 28: Exterior view of the east south wall window.

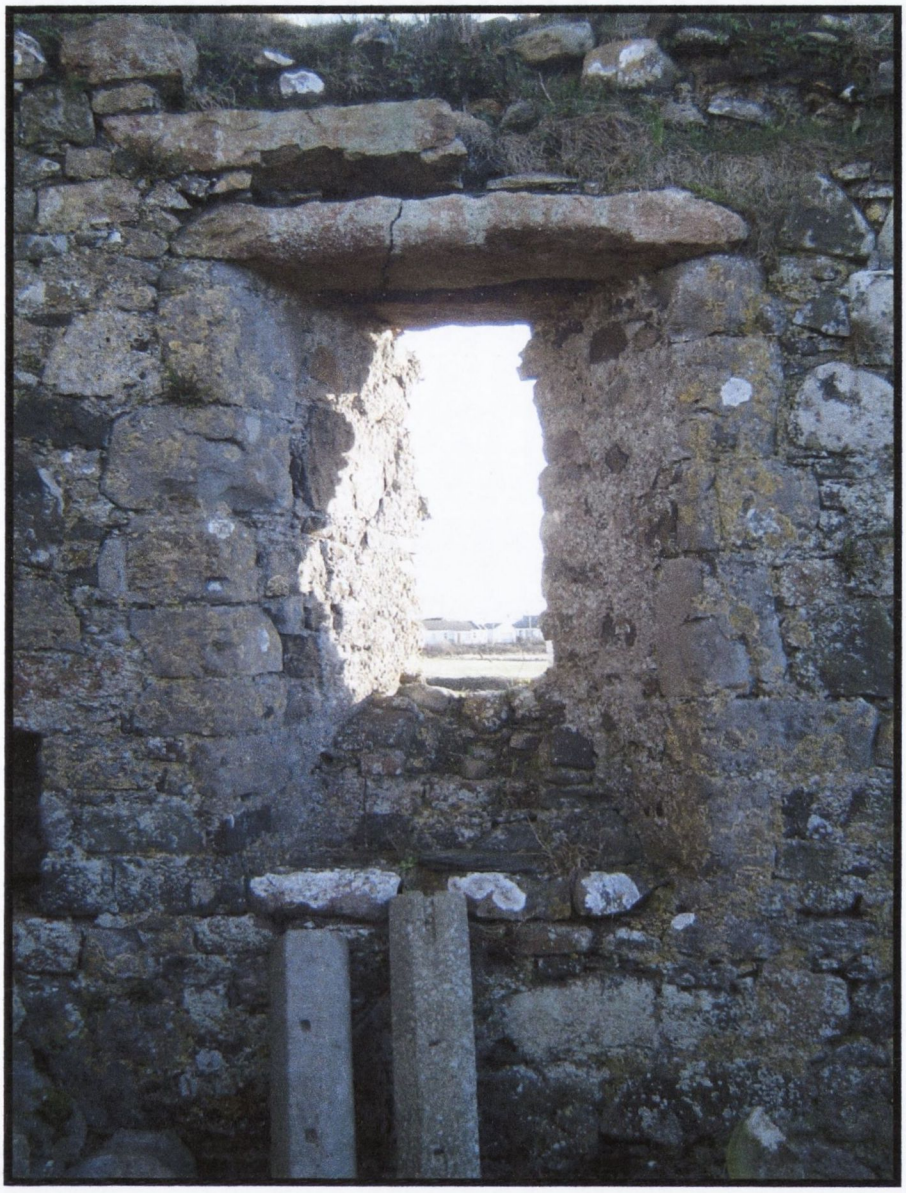


Plate 29: Interior view of the east south wall window.

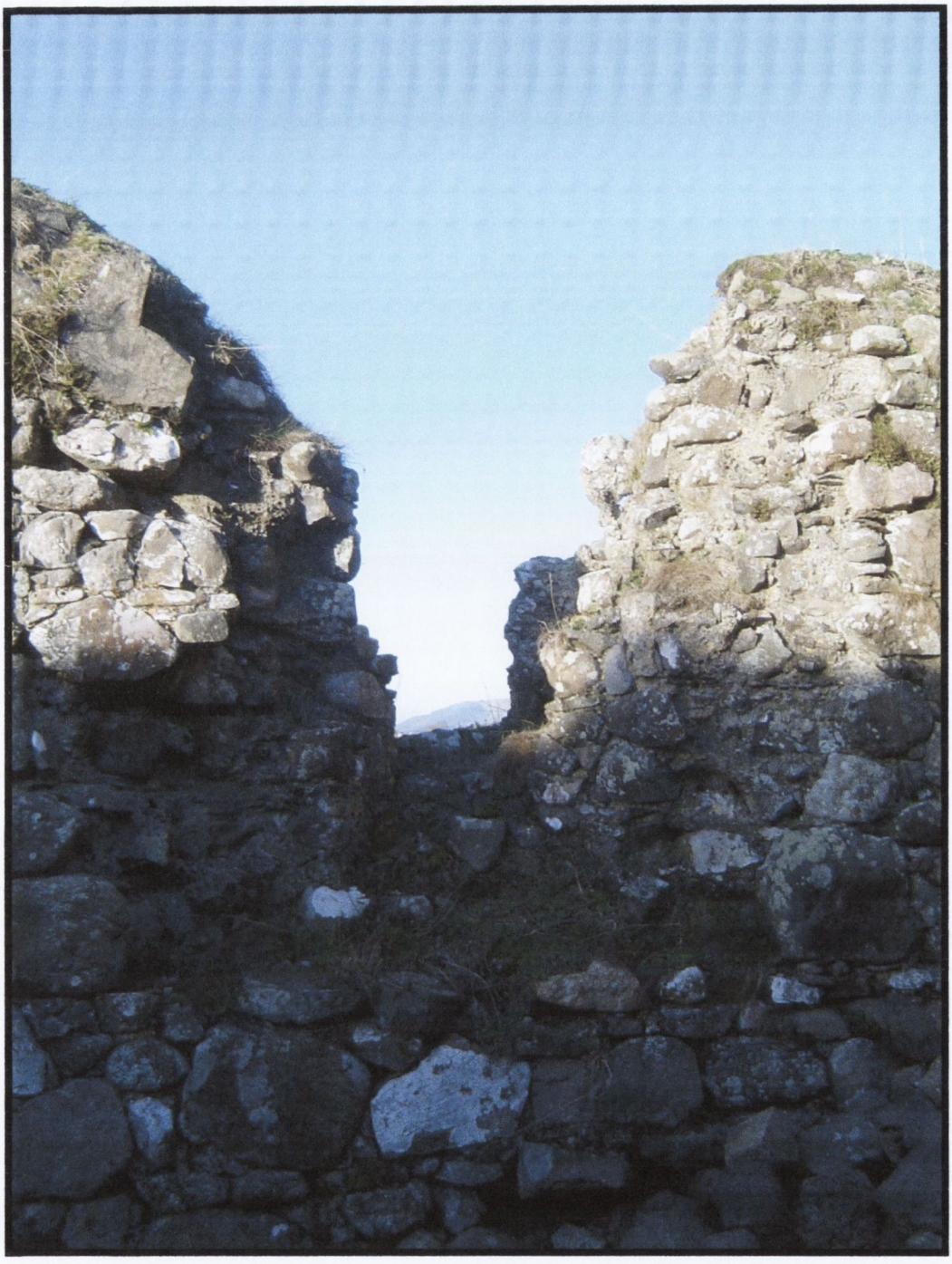


Plate 30: Interior view of the east north wall window.



Plate 31: Possible mullion fragment I.



Plate 32: Possible mullion fragment II.

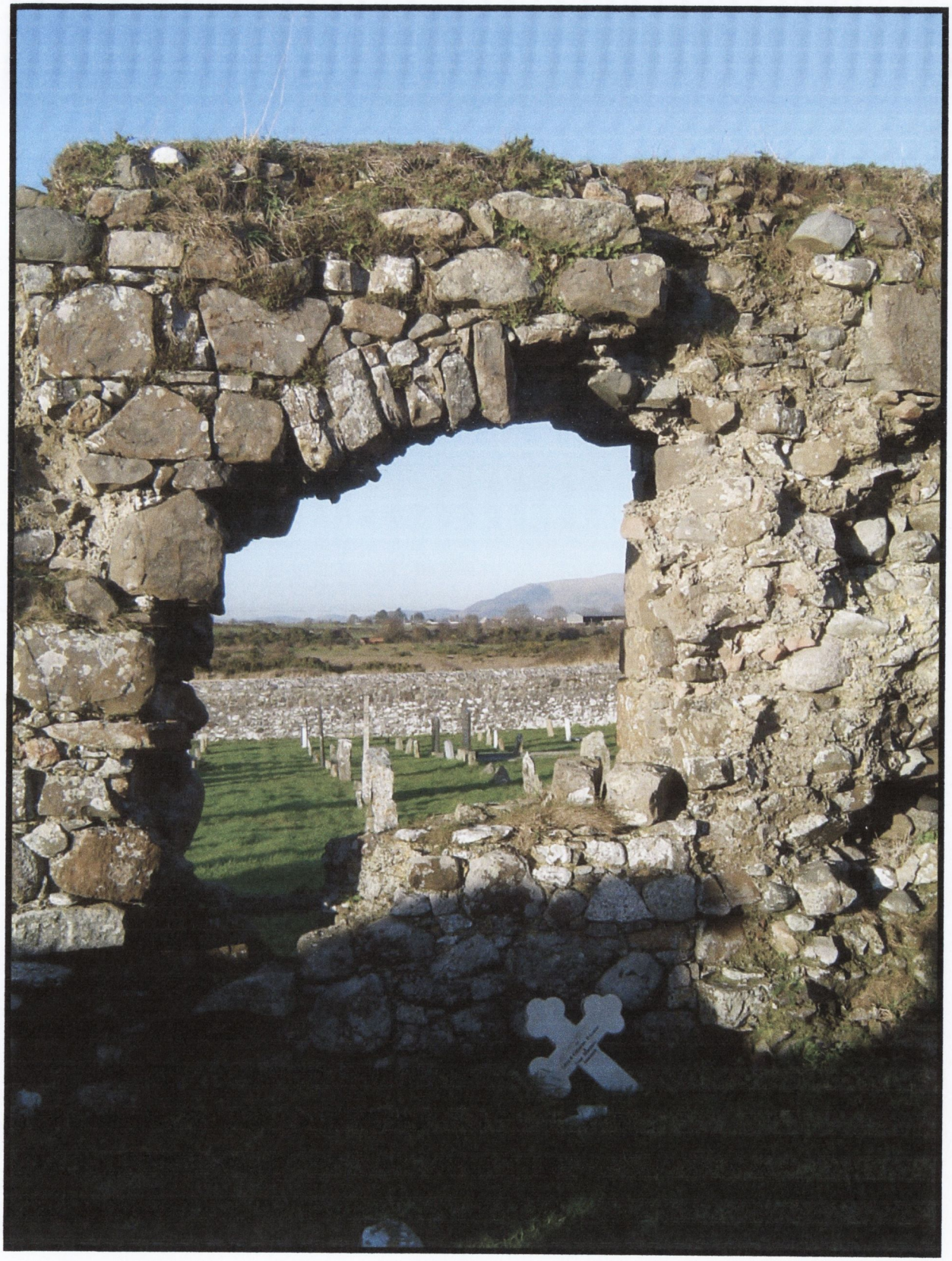


Plate 33: Interior view of the north doorway.



Plate 34: Exterior view of the south doorway at Templetown Church.

doorway was inserted possibly at a later date than that in the south wall.[293] While Buckley and Sweetman thought this church to be of a fifteenth or sixteenth century date, the doorways, especially that on the south wall do not correspond to the accepted form of doorway design for the 1400-1600 period. During this period medieval Irish churches generally displayed one of the following: a doorway with the pointed arch made of just two stones cut to the curve, a wider doorway with three moulded orders or finally the head being rectangular framed in the Tudor fashion by a level hood returning down to the springing.[294] The south doorway at Templetown church would appear to be of a much earlier date.

c. AUMBRIES, PISCINAS, CREDENCES & NICHES

There are a piscina and recess located in the southeast angle of this church.[295] Many of these small niches in Irish medieval parish churches are of the simplest form with pointed arches: plain, cusped, ogee-arched or even lintelled. All have the piscina (the bowl with its drain into the wall) and in some cases there remains a shelf or credence table within the arch.[296] The recess at Templetown is very plain in design and, as there are no signs of a bowl or drain into the wall of the church, this feature could in fact be a credence table or shelf for the washing of the utensils of the Mass.

d. ROODSCREEN

As previously discussed, it appears that there was a wooden roodscreen positioned approximately 5m from the east gable; the evidence for this has survived in the form of two beam holes which can be seen on the inner face of the north wall, as well as two corbels which project from the inner face of the south wall.[297]

e. CORBELS & BEAM HOLES

These corbels are quite crude in design which could indicate a pre-1400 date of construction, as many corbels of the period 1400-1500 were elaborated upon by church masons who tended to make quite a feature out of corbel design by spreading them out

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[293] See Plate 35.
[294] LEASK, H.G., *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings Vol. III: Medieval Gothic: The Last Phases,* (Dundalk, 1960), pp. 157-58.
[295] See Plate 36.
[296] LEASK, (1960), p. 161.
[297] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12; BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 79-80; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 260; see Plate 22.

into leaf or other sculpture in low relief. [298] Alternatively, however, it could just mean that these corbels were used for supporting heavy timber beams and indeed this would seem to be the most likely scenario at Templetown as there are no decorative carvings extant in any form at this church; no capital or figure sculpture, no tomb niches, no sedilia and no inscriptions to assist in the dating process. There are also unidentified beams to be seen below the east window in the south wall.[299]

9. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERY

As previously discussed, the cemetery at Templetown is well maintained and in a good state of preservation. With the exception of the two possible mullion fragments which are located to the east of the church, this cemetery does not appear to have any distinguishing medieval features or burials extant.

a. HOLY WELLS

The evidence for the holy wells at Templetown serves as an indicator of the Gaelic-Irish traditions which are entwined with the history of the church. In 1908 Stubbs recorded the existence of two holy wells in the townland of Templetown: Lady's Well in the townland of Templetown, and *Tober Meen*, on the shore at Templetown, which he translated as 'well of the plain.'[300]According to some other sources Lady's Well is also known as *Kilwirra* and is located to the north-west of Cooley Point, in marshy ground adjoining the graveyard of Templetown Church. It is further described as being enclosed by a fence, with stone steps down into the well. There is a statue of the Virgin Mary on display here and the pattern day is 15th August. A visit to the well especially on the pattern day is reputed to result in a cure for pains in limbs, and it is still visited by local residents of the surrounding area.[301] In a study conducted by O'Danachair for Co. Limerick he found that the custom of holding a 'pattern' or a day of special devotion at the well on the feast day of the patron saint was observed at 52 wells in co. Limerick.[302] Many of the wells are situated close to churches or church ruins; three of them are

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[298] LEASK, (1960), pp. 155-56.
[299] See Plate 29.
[300] STUBBS, (1908), p.40
[301] http://www.slaine.ie/print.php?sid=91
[302] O'DANACHAIR, C., 'The Holy Wells of Co. Limerick', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. LXXXV, Part II, (1955), p. 195.



Plate 35: Interior view of the south doorway at Templetown Church.



Plate 36: Piscina and recess.

situated in graveyards and three in ringforts although many others were not associated with ancient remains. Most of them are strong clear springs of good water.[303]

It is important to acknowledge that holy wells, pilgrimages and patterns have been an important and central part of Irish culture, society and church history. With the intensive residential construction which has taken place in Templetown in recent years it is very fortunate that this holy well has survived for as long as it has because it can reveal significant information about local religious observances which may owe their origins to medieval antecedents. The background to hydrolatry and well worship generally and the tradition of holy wells in Ireland in particular serves to demonstrate the importance of holy wells in an historical sense, and the significant role they played in Irish society.[304] The drinking of water from the well is part of the ritual. Cups and other drinking vessels are to be found at most wells where devotions are still carried out. When a well was visited to obtain the cure of an illness or bodily ailment the afflicted part of the body was bathed with water from the well.[305]

It is also relevant for the study of the church at Templetown that it has been found by Manning that in many parts of Ireland the saints associated with the early monastic and church sites are still revered locally. The holy well, often a short distance from the ecclesiastical site, is often still resorted to for devotion and cures, showing how the living tradition survives even when little else remains.[306]As of yet no general survey of the holy wells of Ireland has appeared which is not surprising as so little has been done in the form of the local or regional surveys which are a necessary preliminary to any general treatment of the subject.[307]

10. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

There are three additional archaeological sites which are located in the general vicinity of Templetown Church; a flint scatter, a promontory earthwork and a tower house.[308] The promontory earthwork is located at Cooley Point, approximately 1km to the south-east of Templetown Church. The flint scatter was located approximately 0.43km from the church and 0.29km to the north of the coastline. Finally, the tower house,

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[303] IBID, p. 196.
[304] CONLON, L., 'The Holy Wells of County Louth, Part 2', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XXIV, Number 4, (2000), p. 471.
[305] O'DANACHAIR, (1955), p. 194.
[306] MANNING, C., *Early Irish Monasteries,* (Dublin, 1995), p. 44.
[307] O'DANACHAIR, (1955), p. 193.
[308] See Figure 22.

located at Ballug, is positioned approximately 1km to the north of the church. These associated archaeological sites at Templetown are indicative of a trend of continuity of settlement in the vicinity which spanned many centuries, and the flint scatter, in particular, indicates some level of prehistoric activity in the region.

11. ETYMOLOGY

The next question which must be asked is how the available historical sources can aid in the dating of Templetown church, either by supporting the archaeological evidence or by providing some new lines of enquiry. Before an examination of the various medieval sources that mention the church of Templetown it is well worth assessing the evidence posed by the name *Templetown* itself. This may not seem like a very important route to take, and yet it is useful in determining the likelihood of the existence of a church at Templetown before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in the barony of Lower Dundalk. Not only would this throw the association of the church with the Order of the Knights Templar into question, but it would also support the evidence for building construction at Templetown in the Romanesque period.

Firstly, it is no secret that the church is still known locally as *Kilwirra*, or in its anglicized form, *Kilmore*, and indeed this is a local name which appears in the medieval manuscripts for Templetown, so it is clearly not a placename of modern origins. If the phonetics of the name *Kilwirra* are matched to the identical sounding Gaelic-Irish words *Cill* meaning *church*, and *Mhuire* meaning of Mary, then it becomes obvious that this name denotes the Church of Mary, or possibly St. Mary's Church. However it must not be forgotten that this church is also sometimes referred to in the medieval sources as *Templeton* or *Templetown.* Before any conclusions are made about Templar activity in the Cooley area, it must be stated that the Gaelic-Irish translation of Templetown is *Baile an Teampaill* and this was recorded in numerous sources, even as late as 1851 in the population census of that year. [309] The Irish word *teampall/teampull* can obviously be taken to mean a temple but it is also known to denote a specifically medieval church, as well as a Protestant Church or a churchyard.[310] So in fact the *temple* element in the placename Templetown or *Baile an Teampaill,* may have nothing whatsoever to do with the activity of the Knights Templar in the vicinity. Indeed, it has long been recognised

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[309] http://www.mc-reserach.com/County_Louth/Place_Names/Names/t.htm.

[310] FOCLOIR POCA, *The English/Irish, Irish/English Dictionary,* (Dublin, 1994), p. 489; http://www.crannog.ie/focloir.htm.

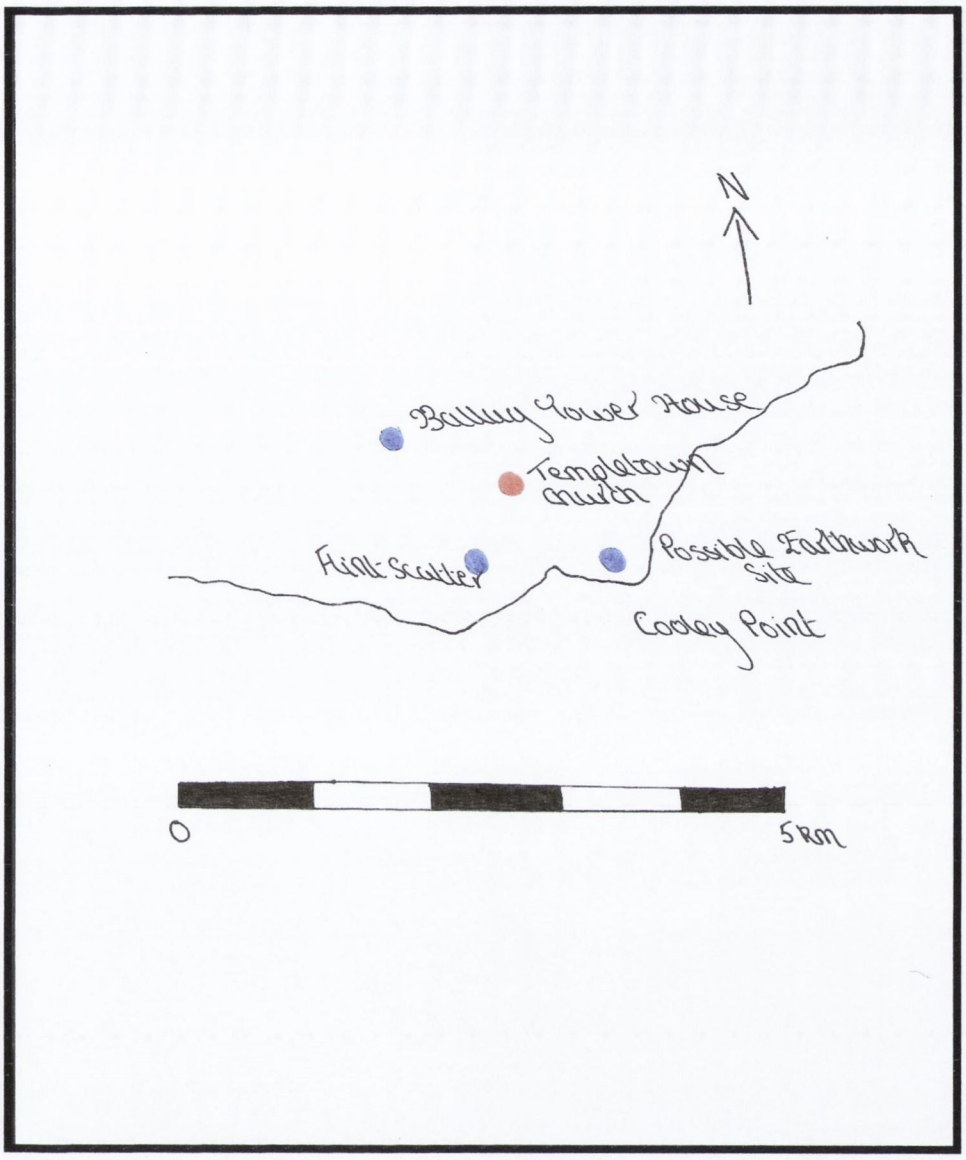


Figure 22: Rough map of the associated archaeological sites at Templetown. The church is indicated in red, the other sites in blue.

that there are many placenames incorporating the word temple in Ireland that have nothing to do with the Templars, but rather stem from the Irish word *teampall/teampull*, or church.[311] Although, needless to say, the local tourist industry often emphasizes and exaggerates this link between the Knights Templar and Templetown Church, with some sources stating blatantly and unequivocally that the placename comes directly from an association with the Templars.[312] Faughart also has close associations with two early saints, St. Monenna and St. Brigid, being recorded as 'Teampull Brighide na hAirde Maire' in early records. The use of the term 'teampull' or anglicized 'temple' in association with a townland name or early church site usually denotes a primary monastic foundation. Thus the combination of 'teampull' with Brigid may denote a very early foundation indeed.[313]

Another indication of a possible pre-Norman date of construction for the church at Templetown lies in a saint's dedication. Isaac Butler in 1744 stated that the church in the townland of Templetown was named Kilwirry and that it was associated with St. Sillean.

> *Templetown is along the shore right down from Grange. Kilwirry is just beside it, (where St. Sillean is said to have resided) the church is in ruins.*[314]

St. Sillean, or St. Sillan of Imbliuch Cassain, is most definitely a saint of Gaelic-Irish origins. The earliest recorded reference to St. Sillan was apparently made by an individual named Oenghus the Culdee, in his Martyrology, which he composed about the end of the eighth century, and according to which the feast day of St. Sillan was September 11th. The Martyrology of Donegal, a composition of the seventeenth century, also notes that the saint was known as; 'Siollan of Imleach Cassain in Cuailgne: or of Imleach caon in Tír Aedha; and he is at Innis Coimeda in Loch Erne.'[315] According to Lawless, the word *Sillan* can be taken to mean either hair or death. The reason for this rather bizarre double-play on the word is explained by a grim myth associated with this saint whereby the first person to meet Sillan each day and see a particular hair on his head would promptly fall down and die. He apparently used this to good effect and went visiting the terminally ill of eighth century Ireland to give them a quick respite from their

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[311] LORD, E., *The Knights Templar in Britain,* (Harlow, 2004), p. 316.
[312] See for example http://www.irelandforvisitors.com/articles/louth_land_of_antiquities.htm.
[313] BUCKLEY, V.M., 'From the Darkness to the Dawn: The Later Prehistoric and Early Christian Borderlands', in *The Borderlands. Essays on the History of the Ulster-Leinster Border,* ed. by R. GILLESPIE & H. O'SULLIVAN, The Institute of Irish Studies, (Belfast, 1989), p. 32.
[314] DEANE, (1922), p. 102.
[315] LAWLESS, N., 'St. Sillan of Imbliuch Cassain in Cooley', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society,* Volume IV, Number 4, (1920), pp. 298-99.

sufferings. He is believed to have lived in the eighth century because the sources record him as being a contemporary of St. Molaise of Leighlin in County Carlow who died in 738 A.D. From the reference to Leighlin in Carlow, an attempt could be made to locate Sillan in Cualann, the well-known territories in Counties Dublin and Wicklow. But the spelling in Oenghus –Cuailngiu- seems to settle the question in favour of Cooley in Louth, Besides Cualann has its St. Sillan on a different date, 21st July.

Interestingly, there was a St. Silin, or Sulian, revered as a sixth century founder and abbot of Luxulgan in Cornwall. This St. Silin is thought to be identical with a St. Sulien, who was a Breton saint worshipped in Cornouaille and Domonee, and whose feast day is 29th July. Much confusion has arisen with another Breton saint, Sulinus of East Brittany who celebrates his feast day on 1st October, and also with a Welsh saint Tysilio (or Suliau), whose feast day occurs on 8th November. It is certainly striking that the traditions of a St. Sillan/Sillin/Sulien/Sulinus/Suliau, have all occurred in Ireland, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany, regions often compared to each other for their individual Celtic traditions and histories. And indeed, even in the later Middle Ages it has been proven that these Celtic areas had shown persistent tenacity to local tradition and had often been less susceptible to Roman influence than England, which was less geographically isolated.[316] Disappointingly, according to Farmer it is likely that the three feasts in Cornwall, Brittany and Wales represent three different persons.[317]

If the dedication to St. Sillan did survive locally at Templetown in the decades and centuries following the Anglo-Norman incursion into Cooley then it was probably as an unauthorized cult. Unauthorized cults in many parts of the Anglo-Norman kingdom did not entirely cease in the later medieval period, but in the long run they were unlikely to survive if they lacked papal approval. It is unlikely that the cult of Sillan at Templetown would have had such approval in the years following the Anglo-Norman settlement in the region.[318] It is also possible that after the coming of the Anglo-Normans to Templetown the church was rededicated to the Virgin Mary, and indeed this is supported by evidence in the form of holy wells.

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[316] FARMER, D., *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints,* Fifth Edition, (Oxford, 2004), p. xviii.
[317] FARMER, (2004), p. 489.
[318] IBID, pp. xii-xiii.

12. CHRONOLOGY

Templetown is one of the few sites under review in this study where a chronological analysis of the church is not solely dependant upon documentary sources. The shape and form of the inner arch of the east window and embrasure and the semicircular arch of the almost complete south window suggest an early medieval date for this church. However, Buckley and Sweetman were of the opinion that the punch-dressed limestone outer portions of the east window and doorways must be considered as fifteenth or sixteenth century in date.[319] In contrast to this viewpoint, Davies was of the opinion that the good workmanship and wide splay of the arches at the east window suggested a Romanesque date which would correspond to the window and door on the south. The arrangement of this east window is certainly difficult to understand, unless the northern end of the east wall had been rebuilt at some stage, and there is no evidence for this.[320] When the term Romanesque is used like this in reference to Irish ecclesiastical building, it is generally taken to mean the period between two momentous dates in Irish history: the Synod of Cashel of 1101 and the onset of the Anglo-Norman invasion in 1169.[321] Unlike the situation in England following the Norman invasion of 1066 where the Normans sought to impress upon the natives their military might and fervour with what Stalley has described as "an unparalleled spate of ecclesiastical building"[322] there is no evidence to support any ecclesiastical building on a similar scale in Ireland in the years after 1169.However, it is possible that sometime after 1195 when the barony of Lower Dundalk came effectively under the remit of Anglo-Norman control that the church at Templetown underwent some rebuilding. For example it is known that in the neighbouring county of Meath a large number of churches were built following the arrival of the Anglo-Normans, and in 1306 about 115 were recorded in the Ecclesiastical Taxation of Pope Nicholas.[323] However, it must also be acknowledged

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[319] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 260-61.
[320] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 13.
[321] O'KEEFFE, T., *Romanesque Ireland: Architecture and Ideology in the Twelfth Century*, (Dublin, 2003), p. 15.
[322] STALLEY, R. A, 'The Medieval Sculpture of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin', *Archaeologia,* Volume CVI, (London, 1979), p. 107; BRABBS, D., *Abbeys and Monasteries,* (London, 1999), p. 11; COLE, E., (ed), *A Concise History of Architectural Styles*, (London, 2003), p. 192.
[323] GRAHAM, B., 'Medieval Settlements in County Meath', *Riocht na Midhe,* Volume V, Number 4, (1974), p. 46.

that the work at Templetown which Davies ascribed to the Romanesque period can alternatively be dated to the thirteenth century.[324]

That the church at Templetown continued into use until at least the fifteenth century is apparent from the later alterations on site as well as from the historical evidence. In Ireland the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries witnessed a considerable upsurge in building activity in which there emerged an architectural style bearing native characteristics. A large number of churches were built and the addition of features in the current fashion of churches of earlier date was extremely common, and this is clearly in evidence at Templetown in the remodelling of the east window and perhaps also in the insertion of the north doorway.[325] As in the twelfth century it can be seen that the architectural trends of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries assimilated into a largely homogenous style, and 'all the more easily because they were not thrust upon the nation.'[326] In this sense the medieval church architecture of the period can be described as partly eclectic; incorporating a deliberate imitation of foreign architecture whilst also embracing some indigenous building techniques.[327]

The evidence for this period of rebuilding in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is certainly not peculiar to Louth. In County Offaly, for example, Fitzpatrick and O'Brien found that the architectural evidence from at least 35 of the designated 50 late medieval parish churches, chapels with cure and sinecure chapels in the county, indicates some rebuilding or refurbishment in this period. The majority of these churches are very badly ruined, but from what survives it is possible to reconstruct their essential form and features. Unlike their counterparts in England, which had a distinctive character and design, Irish parish churches often tended to consist of little more than crude, piecemeal extensions to and refurbishment of pre-existing churches. In order to meet the needs of their new status as centres of divine ministry, the chancel, or more usually the nave of an existing church was simply lengthened. Then quarters for the incumbent priest-containing a vault with a room placed overhead- were added, and doorways and windows were replaced.[328]Unfortunately, the only evidence for this at Templetown survives in the apparent changes which were made in the doors and windows.

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[324] FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009).
[325] LEASK, (1960), p. 1.
[326] IBID, pp. 4-5.
[327] ALLSOPP, B., A *General History of Architecture from the Earliest Civilizations to the Present Day,* Second Edition, (London, 1960), p. 82.
[328] FITZPATRICK, E. & O'BRIEN, C., *The Medieval Churches of County Offaly,* Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1998), p. 126.

The piece of tufa in the arch of the blocked window of the east wall which appears to have been diagonally tooled is important because diagonal tooling of this type would indicate a thirteenth century, or even an earlier date. The chamfered mullions in the graveyard could suggest anything from a fourteenth century date onwards, as would the punch dressing and the use of limestone, while the style and form of the remodeled east window would suggest some fifteenth century work at the church. This is an excellent example of an Irish medieval parish church displaying building forms possibly from the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and apparently the rebuilding did not conclude there.

The use of tufa alongside limestone and greywacke, could suggest some sixteenth century building at the church. The horizontal tooling in the east window could be representative of the fact that by the end of the sixteenth century a new style of dressing had appeared in that the margins of the stones were finely tooled horizontally, a process called drafting. [329] This finish can be seen emerging on the mid-sixteenth century stonework and becoming very pronounced in the seventeenth century. Indeed, the nearby Ballug tower house, which along with Templetown Church came into the possession of the Plunkett family *c.* 1540, also displays some archaeological evidence of mid-sixteenth century reconstruction, even though post-dissolution ecclesiastical architecture shows little notable work.[330]

The apparent confusion over the placing of later medieval stone features in the Romanesque-style doorway, for example, could be accounted for by the fact that window mullions, jambs etc. are often interchanged and replaced in medieval buildings so extreme caution has to be exercised when using them as a dating tool. According to Sweetman, the study of arch and window forms combined with the use and method of dressing the stonework is normally a very good guide to the dating of stone structures of medieval and late medieval date, especially in a case like Templetown where there will never be any hope of extracting a dendrochronological date from the site. [331] Even so, at this stage it seems impossible to arrive at a definite date of initial construction for the church at Templetown. Nevertheless, the archaeological remains at Templetown are much more informative when it comes to dating individual features than many of the other Louth churches, where in some cases only minimal remains and foundation courses

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[329] SWEETMAN, P.D., 'Dating Irish Castles', *Archaeology Ireland,* Volume 6, Number 4, (1992), p. 8.
[330] LEASK, (1960), p. 13. See also BUCKLEY, (1986), p. ; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. ; RMP LH 024-016001, Ballug Tower House.
[331] SWEETMAN, P.D., 'Dating Irish Castles', *Archaeology Ireland,* Volume 6, Number 4, (1992), p. 8.

have survived. In common with the vast majority of Irish medieval churches, all perishable and moveable ornamental hangings and woodwork have long since disappeared leaving only the bare bones of the original structure.[332]

What is certain is that the surviving documentary sources relevant to this site confirm that the church was in being used throughout the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, although at various points it fell into ruin, which could account for the different periods of construction evident at this church. Furthermore, its inclusion on both Wrenn's map of 1766 and Taylor and Skinner's map of 1777 would seem to indicate that Templetown Church was still being utilized in the eighteenth century. It is more difficult to define what the status of this church was during the medieval period was, or indeed what its exact role was in the surrounding archaeological landscape. As previously mentioned,[333] Templetown, is currently included in the modern parish of Carlingford. In 1658 Carlingford, Castletowncooley, Grange, Corbally (which is part of Willville) and Muchgrange were all listed as being part of the parish of Carlingford which at this point was conjoined with the parish of Omeath[334] The only churches not mentioned in 1658 were Ballymascanlan, Faughart and Mountbagnall, which were at this point still functioning as individual parishes. This leaves only the church at Templetown to be accounted for and it seems likely that it either formed part of the extensive parish of Carlingford, operating as a chapel of ease, or alternatively, functioned as a parish church on its own, indeed, considering the size and architecture of Templetown Church, this seems to be the more likely scenario, although it must be admitted that there are no surviving documentary references to a 'parish' of Templetown for the medieval period.

VI. WILLVILLE CHURCH

1. INTRODUCTION

The exact site of Willville Church[335] is unknown, but it is thought to have been located on the site of Willville House which is situated in a vast expanse of agricultural land approximately 1km to the north of Templetown Church, in the civil parish of

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[332] CHAMPNEYS, A., *Irish Ecclesiastical Architecture*, (London, 1890), p. 100.
[333] See Chapter I: Introduction, VII. Methodology & Structure, 6. Barony and Parish Boundaries.
[334] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* (1929), p. 37.
[335] This placename is also sometimes also printed as *Wilville,* however, the more common spelling *Willville* will be used throughout this study.

Carlingford.[336] In fact, there is a clear view of Templetown Church, constructed as it was on a raised mound, from the entranceway to Willville House. Willville Church was not included by Buckley in the 1986 *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth,* nor by Buckley and Sweetman in the 1991 *Archaeological Survey of County Louth.*[337] Its inclusion here stems from the fact that it was discussed by Leslie in his study of *Armagh Clergy and Parishes* in 1911, [338] as well as by Davies in his 1941 survey of the churches of Co. Louth.[339] It was also recorded as a church site in the preliminary survey of Louth which preceded the *Inventory* and the *Survey* in 1984.[340] Any archaeological excavation at the site of Willville Church will, of course, be prevented by the fact that there is now a large residence, in the form of Willville House, as well as numerous outbuildings and stables on this site. Indeed, the only archaeological investigation to ever have taken place in the townland of Willville itself was conducted in 2002 by O'Connor at the site of a proposed private residence which was located on the periphery of a complex of cropmarks.[341]

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

As was the case with the majority of the medieval churches located in the barony of Lower Dundalk, the townland within which the church of Willville would have been located was included in the 1301 list of royal amercements, or fines, for the region. In this document MacIomhair has identified two placenames as being relevant to Willville. The first, *Corbaly of Coly,*[342] he identified as the 'east half of Willville', while the second, *Gilronan,* he associated as being 'part of Willville' and he also queried the spelling of *Gilronan* and suggested that it may in fact have derived from *Kilronan*, which

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[336] See Figure 1.
[337] BUCKLEY, (1986); BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991).
[338] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.
[339] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.
[340] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 15.
[341] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8712
O'CONNOR, D.J., Excavation Report, Willville, 2002:1367.
[342] The modern placename *Corbally,* which is located within the townland of Willville, is an obvious derivative of *Corbaly* and is mentioned in numerous sources, primary and secondary, in various formations as *Corbally, Corbaly, Corballies, Corwally.* In 1909 Stubbs identified it with Whitestowne; see STUBBS, (1909), p. 133. This however appears to have been an error, and both Leslie and Murray have noted that Whitestown, which borders Willville, was a completely separate townland to Willville, as is indicated by the surviving primary sources. See LESLIE, (1929), p. 39 & MURRAY, L.P., 'Notes to "Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658" ed. by J.B. LESLIE', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 1, (1929), p. 40.

would suggest an obvious ecclesiastical functionality.[343] Once again, in common with several of the other sites under review in this study, the next chronological documentary reference to an Anglo-Norman settlement at Willville occurred in the 1378 list of names and addresses of the persons who paid ecclesiastical dues in kind which has been preserved in the archiepiscopal *Register of Milo Sweteman.* In this entry it is recorded that Nicholas Hendy of *Corbaly* paid one crannock of wheat and two crannocks of oats and that his payment was sworn in the presence of Thomas Whyte and Henry Broke[344]

The next reference to a medieval settlement at Willville did not occur until almost two-hundred years later, in the rent roll of the Bagnall estate which dates to 1575. In this instance one James White was listed as a freeholder of *Coball*, which O'Sullivan has identified as *Corballis*, or *Corbally*, in Willville.

> *James White. Coball, James White's town payeth as follows: Four beeves at 20s.0d. the piece £4. 0s. 0d. Eight muttons at 2s. 0d. the piece 16s. 0d. The keeping of four horses and two horseboys, yearly worth £10.0s.0d. Two garrans and a leader for necessary carrying out of the English Pale, and otherwise to use, as, it shall please you for a space of forty days at 12d. per diem, the garrans and leader £10 0s. 0d.*[345]

One of the most striking elements of this record is that it appears to describe *Coball* as a town, and while it is obvious that this description does denote an extensive urban settlement, such as the one which developed at Carlingford, it could indicate quite a substantial nucleated rural settlement, where it is not unlikely that there was a church. The subsequent inquisition into the Bagnall estate, which was conducted in 1608, does not make any reference to Corbally but does significantly mention 'Kilcoronan, 12 acres' for Willville.[346]

Despite the description of Corbally as a town in 1575, there is no evidence to suggest that the church at Willville ever functioned as an independent parish church; rather, it is more likely to have been a chapel of ease in the large parish of Carlingford. This is supported by the 1658 inquisition into the parishes of Co. Louth, which recorded the *towne* of *Corballies* as being part of the parish of Carlingford:

> *The said jurors being upon their oath doe also say that the parrishs of Carlingford and Omeath consist of several townes following*

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[343] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 43.
[344] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1378.
[345] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District*, pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 72-75.
[346] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 76-77.

vizt.:...Corballies....[347]

3. CARTOGRAPHY

The settlement at Willville is depicted on four cartographical sources. The first of these is Baptista Boazio's *Map of Ireland: County Louth and District in 1599* which depicts the settlement of *Corbeley* as an indeterminate spot to the north of Ballagan.[348] In 1602 Richard Bartlett illustrated a settlement which he described as *ne of the Corbellies Whitestowne,* and which illustrates a tower surrounded by six houses.[349] It is not clear whether this settlement is supposed to denote Corbally in Willville or the neighbouring settlement of Whitestown. However, unlike, Boazio, its location appears to be accurate and he has placed it to the north of Templetown Church, recorded on the map as *Kill Merrie.* It is possible that the tower represents either a church or a tower house. However, given the fact that there was no church listed under the name of Willville, Corbally, Kilronan or Whitestown in the *Royal Visitation of 1622,*[350] it is likely that this tower represents Ballug tower house.[351] The site was represented on both Mathew Wrenn's Topographical *Map of County Louth* in 1766 and Taylor and Skinner's *Map of the County of Louth* in 1777. Wrenn depicted the settlement of *Willville* in its correct location as what appears to be a collection of field enclosures and buildings, while Taylor and Skinner recorded the site of *Willvill* also in its correct position but this time as a single house.[352]

4. LOCATION

As previously mentioned, the only direct references to the location of the ecclesiastical remains at Willville were made by Leslie and Davies. In 1911 Leslie made brief reference to a cemetery site, commenting that it was named Kilronan and located in the townland of Willville:

> *Kilronan in the townland of Willville, a little east of Ballug Castle was a cemetery so-called which no longer exists.*[353]

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[347] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* (1929), pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.
[348] See Figure 23.
[349] See Figure 24.
[350] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,*(T.C.D. MS. E.36), pp. 4-11.
[351] Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Templetown.
[352] See Figures 25 & 26.
[353] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.

The church site at Willville was also briefly discussed by Davies in 1941, although the information he provided was also minimal:

> *Willville Td. Kilronan. Leslie lists this church, but says that it had disappeared before 1835. I was as unsuccessful as he in obtaining information about this site.*[354]

Significantly however, in a footnote accompanying Davies' reference to Willville Church the editor of the 1941 edition of the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* James Quinn, provided the following information on the site:

Note –. Willville Td. Since the above went to press Dr. Evans has informed us of a local tradition that an ecclesiastical building of some sort stood on the site of Willville House. Mrs. J.P. Kearney tells us that she has always heard that it was an abbey and that very many old and thick walls are incorporated in the present stabling. The cross 2'x1' 6'' which appears on one of the outhouses was placed there by a mason to mark a similar cross on a stone, now hidden, which formed part of what was said to have been an old tower.[355]

This description gives no indication whatsoever of the size, morphology or masonry style of Willville Church. It can only be presumed that the *Dr. Evans* who provided the information about the local tradition of a church at Willville was Dr. Estyn Evans. On a recent visit to Willville House it proved impossible to examine the walls of the stables and outbuildings as they are now completely enveloped with ivy.

5. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Apart from the oral evidence apparently recorded by Quinn in 1941 from Mrs. J.P. Kearney,[356] there is no surviving evidence, either archaeological or historical, to support the theory that Willville House was once the site of a medieval abbey.

a. STONE CARVINGS

The only surviving architectural feature of Willville Church was the possible masons' mark described by Quinn in 1941 as measuring *2'x1' 6''*and located on one of

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[354] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12. The only reference which Leslie makes in *Armagh Clergy and Parishes* occurs on page 164 and does not state that the church had disappeared before 1835; see LESLIE, (1911), p, 164. Presumably then Davies is referring to a pers. comm. with Leslie regarding the church. Leslie's reasoning for stating that the church had disappeared before 1835 is possibly the fact that the church is not included on the 1835 OS six inch map.

[355] QUINN, J., 'Note on Kilronan Church, Willville', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941), p. 12.

[356] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.

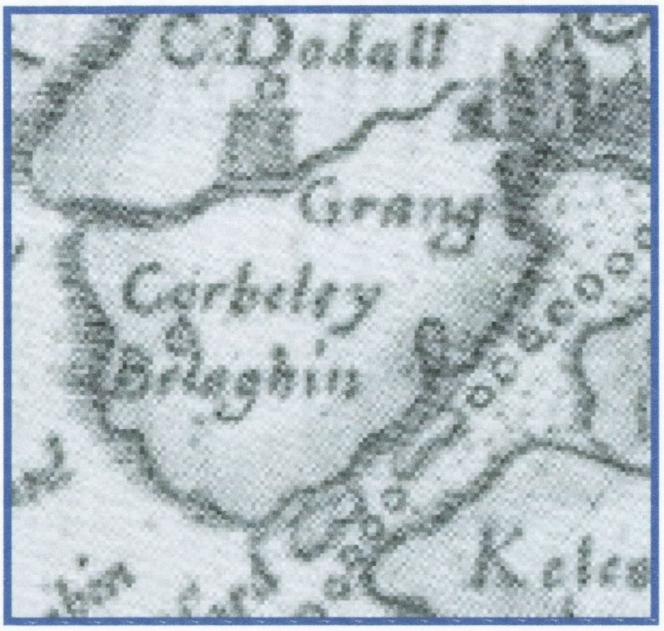


Figure 23: The settlement of *Corbeley* as illustrated on Baptista Boazio's *Map of Ireland: County Louth and District in 1599.*
(TEMPEST, H.G, 'Boazio's Map of Ireland, 1599', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XII, Number 4, (1952a)).



Figure 24: The settlement of *Corbellies/Whitestowne* as depicted on Richard Bartlett's *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602.*
(O'SULLIVAN, H., *Irish Historic Towns Atlas No. 16, Dundalk,* Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 2006)).

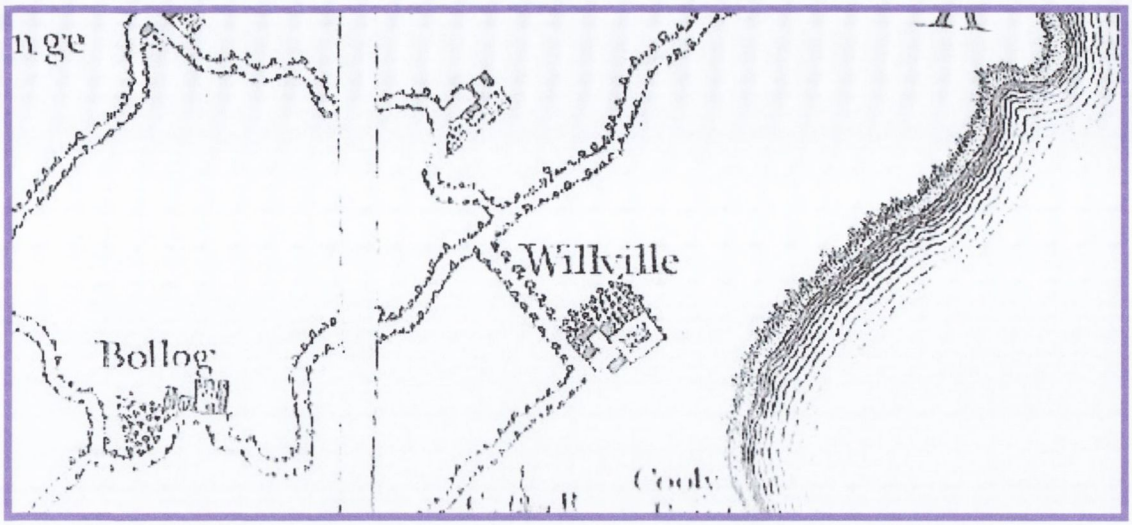


Figure 25: The settlement at Willville as depicted on Mathew Wrenn's *Topographical Map of County Louth, 1766.*
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).

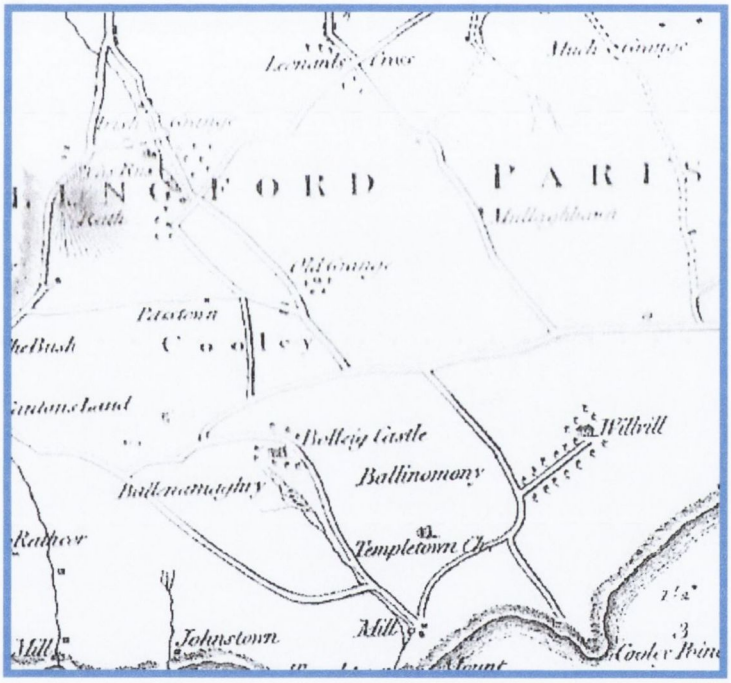


Figure 26: The settlement at Willville as depicted on Taylor & Skinners', *Map of the County of Louth, 1777.*
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).

the outhouses which reputedly formed part of an old church tower. [357] Although the reasoning that it was 'placed there by a mason to mark a similar cross on a stone, now hidden', [358] does not seem logical. It is certainly unfortunate that Davies did not see and sketch this carving in 1941, as, even though he was working alone to survey the churches of Louth, his descriptions and drawings of the sites, when compared to the *Inventory* of 1986 and the *Survey* of 1991, were, in most cases, remarkably accurate. There is only one other possible mason's mark located at a church in Lower Dundalk, and it is to be found on a gate pillar at Mountbagnall Church.[359]

6. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERY

There is now no surviving trace of a medieval cemetery extant at Willville and the only known reference to it was made in 1911 by Leslie:

> *Kilronan in the townland of Willville, a little east of Ballug Castle was a cemetery so-called which no longer exists.*[360]

7. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

In 1984 the preliminary survey of Co. Louth recorded an enclosure site and a church site for the townland of Willville, and a ringfort and a souterrain for the neighbouring townland of Whitestown.[361] The *Inventory* of 1986 and the *Survey* of 1991 both omitted the church site, presumably due to lack of evidence, and listed just the enclosure site for Willville, along with one flint scatter, one souterrain, and one ringfort for Whitestown.[362] Whitestown ringfort is located approximately 1km to the north-east of Willville, the flint scatter is located about 1.75km away, while the souterrain is located at a distance of 2.5km to the east of Willville. The only other site of archaeological significance which is located in any proximity to Willville is an enclosure site which is located approximately 0.4km to the west of Willville at Ardtully More.[363]

The enclosure site at Willville was briefly described by Buckley and Sweetman as:

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[357] QUINN, (1941), p. 12.
[358] IBID, p. 12.
[359] See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, III. Mountbagnall Church.
[360] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.
[361] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 15.
[362] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 1, 37 & 58. 16, 144, 187.
[363] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 59; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 188. See Figure 27.

Enclosure site, cropmark indicating sub-circular enclosure, max. dims. 48m E-W, 43m N-S, on aerial photograph...No visible surface trace.[364]

It is possible that this enclosure site was once the site of a medieval ringfort. However it is impossible to make any definite observations upon the functionality of this enclosure. Buckley and Sweetman, in the introduction to the chapter of the *Survey* entitled *Earthworks and Enclosures* explained the classification of these sites, including Willville as follows:

This category of sites comprises firstly monuments which were represented on early maps, such as estate maps and the Ordnance Survey 1st edition of the 6" sheets, by the same notation as for ringforts. These sites have been levelled in the interim, with no visible surface trace on the surface trace on the surface at the time of field survey, it is impossible to define their exact nature...The second type of site is that of 'Enclosure'. This category covers enclosed areas which are still extant but which do not fall easily within the classification of other known monument types, such as ringforts. It also includes sites discovered by aerial photography.[365]

As previously indicated the only archaeological investigation ever to have taken place at was conducted by O'Connor in May and July 2002 and involved the monitoring of all ground works associated with the development of a dwelling house, septic tank and percolation. At the time of this examination O'Connor noted that although the site was located 'just on the edge of the constraint ring for a cropmark...nothing of archaeological interest was noted during the site visit. However, two additional cropmarks...lie two fields away, giving the impression of a complex of archaeological features in the surrounding area.'[366]

8. ETYMOLOGY

The name of the townland within which this church was located, Willville, appears to be a derivative of an Anglo-Norman placename. Although the significance of the *Will* component of the name has been lost, the *ville* element seems to correspond to the description of a *town/towne* in Willville in various documentary sources between

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[364] BUCKLEY, (1986), p, 68; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 207.
[365] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 188.
[366] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8712
O'CONNOR, D.J., Excavation Report, Willville, 2002:1367.

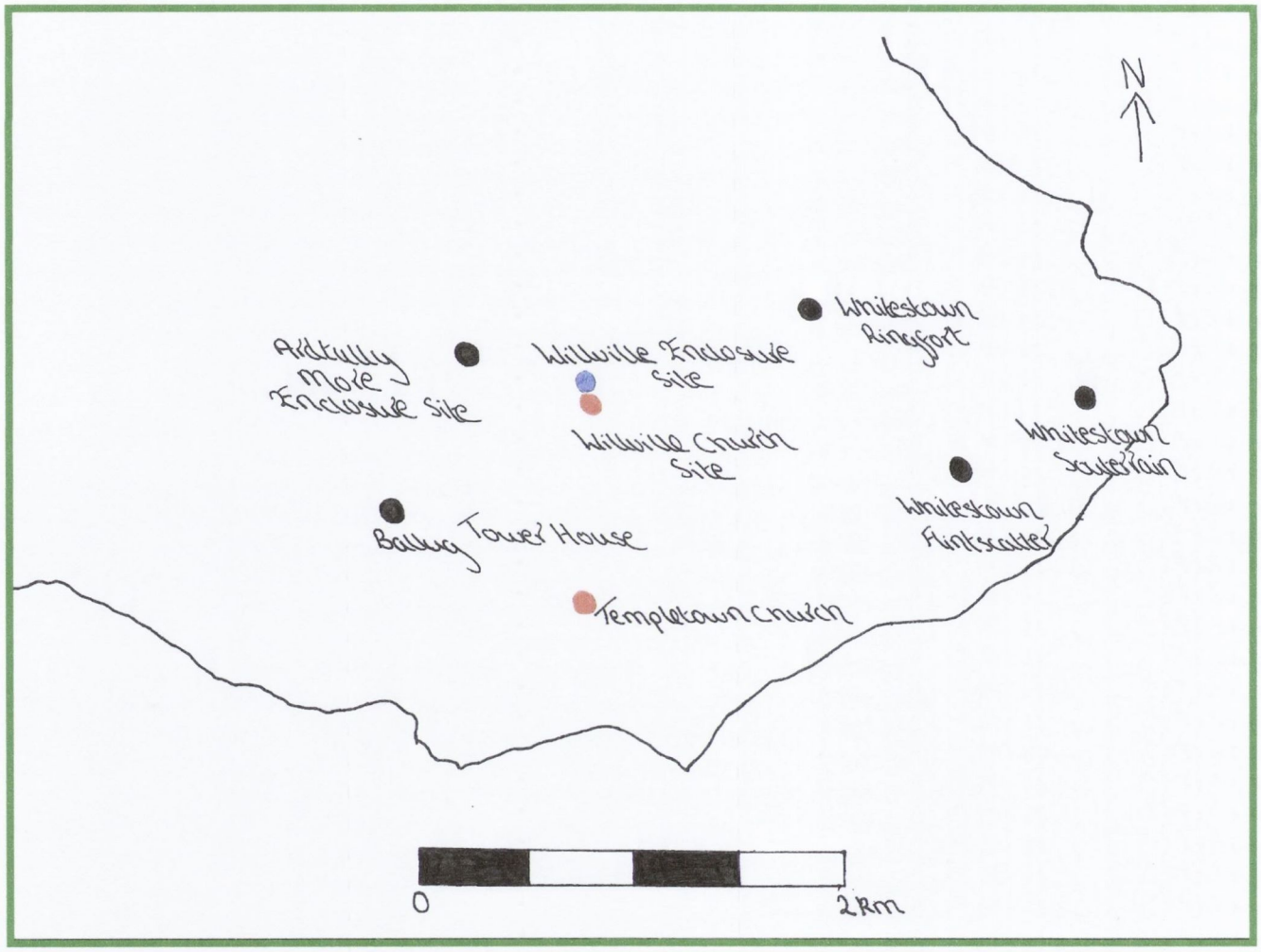


Figure 27: Rough map of the associated archaeological sites at Willville. The ecclesiastical are indicated in red, the enclosure site in blue, and the other sites in black.

1575 and 1658.[367] Disappointingly, Stubbs, in his detailed study of the placenames of Co. Louth offered no additional information about the provenance of the name *Willville* apart from recording that it was located in Carlingford parish, to the south of Greenore.[368] The exact provenance of the placename *Corbally* has is similarly obscure, although the *bally* element of the name suggests a Gaelic-Irish origin. The provenance of the name *Gilronan* or *Kilronan,* the name which the church seems to have been specifically referred to, is much more straightforward and would appear to be a direct derivative of *Kil/Cille Ronan*, the *Church of Ronan,* and was, most likely, the *Church of St. Rónan.*

9. CHRONOLOGY

Due to the scarcity of archaeological remains at the site of Willville Church it is impossible to construct an archaeological chronology based upon the physical evidence. However, it is possible to piece together a partial chronology for the development of the settlement within which the church was located. The earliest reference to this settlement was recorded in 1301 and significantly mentioned the placename *Gilronan,* which possibly referred to a medieval church in Willville.[369] The placename, *Corbaly,* which is located within the townland of Willville was mentioned in the *Register of Milo Sweteman* in 1378.[370] After this reference their appears to be a considerable gap in the historical record for Willville and the next mention of this settlement was not recorded until 1575 when Corbally was once again listed in a rent roll of the Bagnall estate.[371] Following on from this, a subsequent inquisition of 1608into the Bagnall estate referred to a place named 'Kilcoronan' in Willville.[372] This is perhaps the most important historical reference to Willville on record as it confirms that this place was still being referred to as *Kilcoronan/Kilronan* three hundred and seven years after the site was initially recorded as *Gilronan* in 1301, perhaps indicating the continuous presence of a medieval church in the area during this period.

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[367] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District*, pp. 31-47; *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* pp. 37-38.

[368] STUBBS, F.W., 'Place Names in the County of Louth [E-Y], *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume II, Number 4, (1911), p. 362.

[369] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 43.

[370] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1378.

[371] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District*, pp. 31-47.

[372] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608.

The final reference to Willville in the documentary record occurred in 1658 when the site of *Corballies* was listed as a *towne* of the parish of Carlingford,[373] which confirms that there was probably never an independent parish of Willville, but rather that the church here possibly functioned as a chapel of ease in the parish of Carlingford, which was quite extensive.

VII. GRANGE CHURCH

1. INTRODUCTION

The site of Grange Church is located in the south eastern portion of the Cooley Peninsula, in the parish of Carlingford, and approximately 2.3km to the north-west of Willville.[374] The church site is located in the small village of Grange which consists of several residential and commercial premises, a pub, and St. James' Church, established in 1763,[375] all of which are located at a crossroads. Grange Church, although located within the townland of Grange, is also referred to in some primary and secondary sources as being situated in Irish Grange, a neighbouring townland which is located to the north of Grange.[376] Grange Church is one of the few ecclesiastical sites of Lower Dundalk to have been described in the mid-eighteenth century by both Butler and Wright, in 1744 and 1748 respectively. [377] Indeed its inclusion in these two volumes, as some form of fortified 'abbey' indicates that it was once a site of some importance, something which is borne out by the physical descriptions recorded in both these publications. In fact, without the information provided by Butler and Wright, the scarcity of physical remains now evident at Grange, coupled with the scant primary references to this church would have meant that its significance as a fortified ecclesiastical site would have been irretrievably lost. By the time Davies was conducting his survey of the ecclesiastical sites of Lower Dundalk in 1941 he noted that there were no surviving remains of Grange Church to be seen.[378] The site was not included in the preliminary archaeological survey of 1984, but was surveyed

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[373] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, pp. 37-38..
[374] See Figure 1.
[375] See Plate 37.
[376] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 34-105; http://creggan.armagh.anglican.org/firsta1.html. The medieval settlement of Grange is also sometimes referred to as Rath Lower. See BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 93; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256; see Figure 28.
[377] DEANE, (1922), pp. 101. WRIGHT, T., *Louthiana: or, An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland,* Millennium Reprint of the First 1748 London Edition, (Dundalk, 2000), Book I, p. 7. plates xv-xvi; GOSLING, P. (ed), 'Summary Catalogue of the Monuments and Artifacts Illustrated in *Louthiana*', in *Louthiana: or, An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland, Books I, II & III*, by T. WRIGHT, (Dundalk, 2000), p. ix
[378] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.



Plate 37: St. James' Church, Grange.

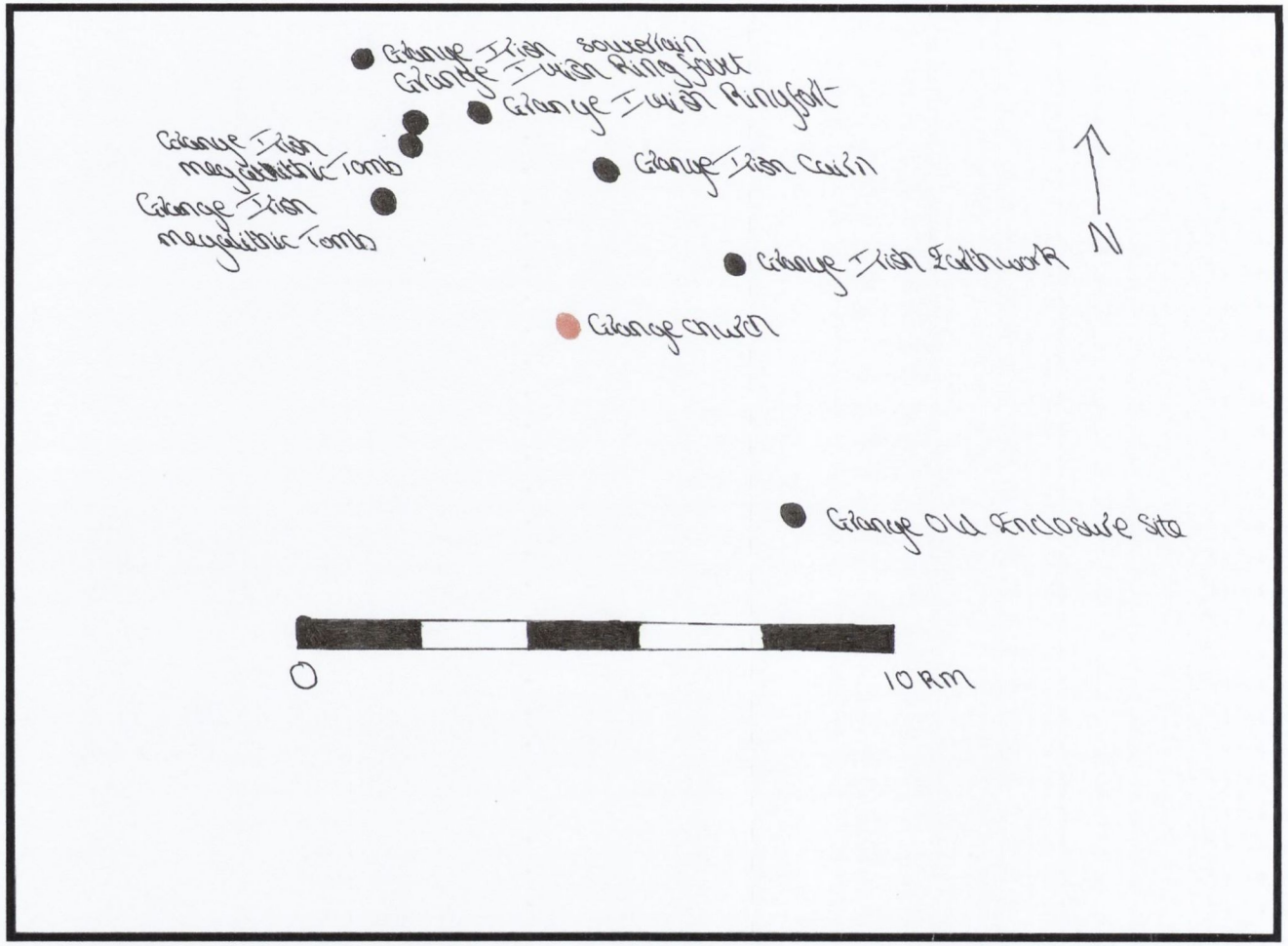


Figure 28: Rough map of the associated archaeological sites located at Grange. The church is indicated in red, the other sites in black.

by Buckley in the 1960s and included in the 1986 *Inventory* as 'Grange Abbey, Rath Lower, in ruins', although he categorized it as a tower house site with no visible remains.[379] In the subsequent *Survey* of 1991 it was re-categorized as a church site,[380] and was also briefly included in O'Sullivan's 2005 study of the parishes of Cooley. [381] The site of the medieval church at Grange has undergone three separate archaeological investigations in recent years; the first was overseen by O'Carroll in 2000,[382] and the second and third were undertaken by Clutterbuck in 2002.[383]

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

The earliest possible reference to Grange was recorded in the 1301 list of amercements, or fines, which listed the townland of 'Irish Grange',[384] and, although Irish Grange, or Grange Irish, is now a separate townland from Grange, in the medieval period these boundaries were certainly not as clear-cut and it is possible that this reference indicates the settlement where Grange Church was located. Of course, it is impossible to know if there was a church established here at such an early date, although the inclusion of Irish Grange in this document suggests that some degree of Anglo-Norman sub-infeudation had been achieved in the area at this point.

O'Sullivan has conducted an in-depth study into the history of the evolution of the Anglo-Norman settlements of Grange, Muchgrange and Irish Grange through an examination of the relevant primary documentation, particularly the rent roll of the Bagnall estate which dates to 1575.[385] In summary, he has analyzed the pertinent historical evidence as follows; in *c.* 1157-8 Donnchad Ua Cearbhaill, the Gaelic-Irish

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[379] BUCKLEY, (1986), 93.

[380] BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256. See also RMP LH 008-056, Castletowncooley Tower House Site where a note in the file, dated 20th July 1967states that: 'Captain, Mr. Giles, lived at Castletowncooley House in the mid-nineteenth century. OS map shows site of Cooley Castle, also known as Castle of Rath and Castle Giles...This is believed to be the same as the castle which Wright in his Louthiana calls the Castle of Rath.' Although all of the other details pertaining to Castletowncooley tower house contained within this file appear to be correct, the identification of this site with the 'Castle of Rath' described by Wright must be an error, as it is now certain that Wright was describing Grange Church. See Chapter II: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, IV. Castletowncooley Church.

[381] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 52-3.

[382] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=4982
O'CARROLL, F., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2000:0707.

[383] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8704
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1359; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360.

[384] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 43.

[385] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District*, pp. 31-47. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 73-75.

king of Airgialla, granted lands in eastern Cooley, for use as a monastic grange, to the newly founded Cistercian abbey of *Virido Ligno* in Newry.[386] In the period after the confiscation of the lands of the lands of the Cistercian abbey of Newry[387] by the English government in 1404,[388] these lands were subsequently incorporated into the 'manor of Carlingford' and the 'town of Irish Grange.' Originally granted to the Sedgrave family,[389] this manor was later allocated as the 'Lordships of Carlingford and Cooley' to Nicholas Bagnall in 1552.[390] According to O'Sullivan, in the years prior to 1404, these lands, represented by the modern townlands of Grange, Muchgrange and Irish Grange, originated as native Irish betagh settlements under the jurisdiction of Newry Abbey, and later evolved as two distinct Granges of the abbey. The first of these granges was *Anglia Grangia* or English Grange, located in the south-east of the peninsula and which extended from Muchgrange on the north right down to the hinterland of Whitestown and Willville on the south, and which included the modern townlands of Monksland, Old Grange and Mill Grange.[391] O'Sullivan's research has indicated that *Anglia Grange* appears to have been alienated from Newry Abbey by the fourteenth century, when it was then subjected to sub-infeudation by the Anglo-Norman colonists on the peninsula. [392] The second grange in question incorporated the smaller, more northern settlement of Irish Grange, which also included the modern townlands of Rath and Rath Lower, and which was based around the modern village of Grange and which included a native Irish betagh settlement known as late as the seventeenth century as Betaghsrath, now the townland of Monksland.

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[386] These lands included the modern townlands of Muchgrange, Millgrange, Old Grange, Monksland and Irish Grange. Newry Abbey was located approximately 40km to the north-west of these territories.

[387] Newry Abbey was originally of native Irish foundation and, according to O'Sullivan, was established at some stage after the demise of the Viking settlements on Carlingford Lough and prior to 1157, when Muirchertach McLoughlin granted it to the Cistercians who founded the abbey of *Virido Ligno,* a daughter house of Mellifont, on the site. Although obviously not located in the barony of Lower Dundalk, O'Sullivan has described Newry Abbey as the 'fifth religious institution to have a presence in the Cooley area at this period'; the other four presumably being the Order of the Knights Templar, the Order of the Knights Hospitaller, the Dominicans and the Cistercians of Mellifont. See O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 41-43 & 77. See also Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Ballymascanlan & V. Templetown. See also Chapter IV: Urban Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford, V. The Dominican Abbey.

[388] See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Ballymascanlan Church.

[389] Also commonly referred to as the Seagrave family in some sources. See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, VII. Grange Church.

[390] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 77; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 11. See also Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, III. Mountbagnall.

[391] See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, VIII. Muchgrange Church.

[392] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 41-43.

According to O'Sullivan, Irish Grange survived as a Grange until it was eventually subsumed into the English settlement by the government in 1404.[393] These monastic confiscations had begun back in 1373 when all of the properties of the Cistercian Abbey of Newry were seized by the Crown, having been found to be 'of the mere Irish' and 'conversing only with such and spending their rents and profits in abetting the said Irish.'[394] By 1404 the lands of Irishgrange and Aghebillelobegan in the lordship of Cooley, comprising two carucates, were also found to be in the possession of the Abbey of Newry, and were confiscated and granted by letters patent to a Richard Sedgrave, or Seagrave.[395] These lands were to remain in the possession of the Sedgrave family until the seventeenth century Commonwealth confiscations.[396] Confusingly however, an entry in the archiepiscopal register of Primate Swayne for 1431 records 'Irish Grange, property of the pre-Norman Cistercian Abbey of Newry'.[397]

The first documentary reference to a church at Grange did not occur until the sixteenth century when the O'Neills of the Fews and the O'Hanlons of Orior raided the barony of Lower Dundalk and were reported as having destroyed the castles and churches of Grange and Templetown and wasted the lands of the area in 1529.[398] Probably as a result of this attack, the churches of Grange and Templetown were not included in the 1535 Order of Visitation of Churches which is preserved in the archiepiscopal register of George Dowdall,[399] indicating that six years after the raid they were still ruinous. The 'town' of Irish Grange was mentioned in the 1575 rent roll of the Bagnall estate as follows:

> *The chief rent of Sedggdun* [Seagrave] *(Irish Grange) his Relloche is 5s.0d. Richard Sedgrene* [Seagrave]. *The town called the Irish Grange, containing forty*

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[393] O'Sullivan has remarked that Irish Grange 'included a native Irish betagh settlement known as late as the late seventeenth century as Betaghsrath, now the townland of Monksland.' He has also commented that there is a ringfort located in each of the modern townlands of Irish Grange, Rath, Rath Lower and Monksland. According to O'Sullivan, 'betagii settlements originated with the Anglo-Norman settlements of the twelfth-thirteenth centuries in mainly corn growing areas where the availability of labour was an important consideration. They were comprised into kin groups of native Irish, and reduced to villain or serf status with little or no rights. They were tied to the land which they cultivated for their Norman overlords. In time their status was relaxed and they paid a money rent instead of a service. By the beginning of the 15th century the practice had died out, possibly as a side-effect of the plague.' See O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 41-43 & 77.

[394] GWYNN, & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 142. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 51-53.

[395] *Rotulorum Patentium et Clausorum Cancellariae Hiberniae Calendarium, Volume I, Pars. I: Henry II-Henry VII,* (Dublin, 1828), 1404.

[396] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 51-53.

[397] *The Register of John Swayne,* 1431; MACIOMHAIR, (1959a), pp. 370-74.

[398] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions*, p. 108; JEFFERIES, (1997a), p. 21; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 51-53

[399] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall*, 1535. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 64-67.

> *acres. Set to Richard Sedgrene* [Seagrave] *who payeth for the same 12d. an acre aforesaid, which is for forty acres £2.0s.0d. Two muttons at 2s.0d. the piece 4s.0d. One beef 20s.0d.One custom mutton 2s.0d.One dish of butter 12d. Richard Sedgren* [Seagrave]. *The Irish Grange called Richard Sedgren's* [Seagrave] *which payeth as follows: Yearly two beeves, at 20s.0d. the piece 40s.0d. Four muttons at 2s. 0d. the piece 8s.0d.The keeping of two horses and a horseboy £5.0s.0d. One garran, and a leader, for forty days at 8d. per diem, the garran and a man 26s. 8d.*[400]

Following on from this, there are two surviving seventeenth century references to the settlement at Grange. The first, preserved in the *Dowdall Deeds,* survives as a list of recusants which was recorded in 1613 as follows:

> *And in both the Grainges 20 paid. In the Irish* [?Grange] *Margrett Hanlon, George Mi ...John Multaugh, Patrick Karan, Robert Maga.... his corn paid for it, Bren Macfnrattie, Thomas Whit his corn paid for it, Thomas 0 Hauran, Rorie 0 Hiree, Patrick MacIlcallen his corn paid, Patrick 0 Koy, Patrick Kelly, Laurens Segrave (in margin Laurens is not paid as yet), Philip Wackly, Torlagh MacCauill, Bren MacCauill, Gillmiall MacQuigi, Owen O Hier, Bren MacManes, Laughlen MacCramee, William MacIleuy, Margrett Wackly paid.*[401]

While in 1658 Irish Grange was listed as a 'towne' of the parish of Carlingford:

> *Carlingford and Omeath Parish: The said jurors being upon their oath doe also say that the parrishs of Carlingford and Omeath consist of several townes following vizt.:...Old Grange... Muckgrange...Irish Grange...*[402]

In 1744 Isaac Butler recorded the site of a ruinous 'abbey' in Grange which was presumably the site of the medieval church:

> *Grange Abbey, two miles* Southward *of Carlingford in ruins, nothing here remarkable but a well dedicated to St. James on which day is a great Patron...A small distance from the Abbey near the road side there is a great altar stone, it is four yards long, 2 broad, and 18 inches in thickness, it stood upon three flatt stones erect, by which the great weight have slipped from under the former, which now lies upon the ground, although the others were still in their erect order. Near it is a circle of stones of 4 paces broad.*[403]

The editor of Butler's journal, Deane, added his own footnote in the text at this point which recorded that:

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[400] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District,* (1985), pp. 31-47 ; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 72-75.
[401] *Dowdall Deeds*, 1613. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 84-86.
[402] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.
[403] DEANE, (1922), pp. 101.

Grange Abbey stood in Irish Grange; the ruins are yet to be seen in a garden there, as also is the standing stone.[404]

Four years after Butler had passed through the village of Grange, another visitor to the area, Thomas Wright, also recorded the site of Grange church as a 'castle':

> *Castle Rath: This Castle belongs to Thomas Tipping, Esq., appears to have been an antient dwelling of some Person of Distinction, and probably that of a Bishop or Abbot, if we may judge by the Chapel adjoining to it. 'Tis situated on the Plains betwixt the Sea and the Mountains of Carlingford, and near it are several old Forts or Raths, such as the first Invaders, or prime Planters, of the Island are supposed to have inhabited. A few Roods from it is the remains of a Tumulus, or Sepulchral Mount; and about a Mile farther, towards the Sea, stands the Tower or Castle of Ballug.*[405]

3. CARTOGRAPHY

The placename 'Grang' was recorded on Boazio's map of 1599 although there is no architectural detail for this site depicted on the map.[406] The settlement was also subsequently illustrated on Bartlett's map of *c.* 1602 as 'Grange, Segereves town' along with what appears to be a tower house and some small residential buildings.[407] Considering the fact that the church at Grange was known locally as the 'Castle of Rath' and was described by both Butler and Wright as being some sort of fortified abbey it is possible that this is a representation of the church. The settlements of 'Upper Grange' and 'Rath' were depicted upon Wrenn's map of 1766 alongside a site marked 'C.R.', possibly the 'Castle of Rath', or 'Castle Ruins' although there is no distinguishing architectural detail evident on the accompanying structure.[408] Finally, the settlements of 'Irish Grange' and 'Rath' are recorded on Taylor and Skinner's map of 1777 and there is also a third place marked as 'Cas. Ruins,' although once again, there is no discerning architectural detail to be seen.[409] The site is also marked as an 'Abbey' on the current OS six-inch map

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[404] IBID, pp. 101.
[405] WRIGHT, (2000), p. 7. Plates 15-16. GOSLING, P. (ed), 'Summary Catalogue of the Monuments and Artifacts Illustrated in *Louthiana*', in *Louthiana: or, An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland, Books I, II & III*, by T. WRIGHT, Millennium Reprint of the First 1748 London Edition, (Dundalk, 2000), p. ix.
[406] See Figure 29.
[407] See Figure 30.
[408] See Figure 31.
[409] See Figure 32.

but illustrated as a tower house with two rectangular towers on one side and at the opposite side a long rectangular buildings with high gables.[410]

4. LOCATION

In 1910 Stubbs stated, apparently without any sources, that:

> *Nearer to grange Cross the map records Shankill – apparently the site of an old church. Oral tradition tells of an old font, somewhere hereabouts.*[411]

Over thirty years later, in 1941, Davies described the location of this site as follows:

> *A field near the village is called Shankill, though there are now no traces; it lies in a hollow on the undulating piedmont. There are slight traces of monastic buildings in the village. The church was still roofed in 1609. The chapel is a pleasing edifice, dated 1762.*[412]

Unfortunately he provided no source of information for the fact that the church was still roofed in 1609, and there are currently no traces of monastic buildings to be seen in the village of Grange. When the site was surveyed in the 1960s, for inclusion in the *Inventory,* Buckley remarked that there was 'no visible trace [of the church] as site is now built on'.[413] O'Sullivan has hypothesized that the present foundations and walls of Grange Church, which was built in 1763, were originally fashioned from the medieval church.[414] He has based this theory upon evidence contained within a map of 'Grange Irish' dated 1779 which shows only two substantial buildings in the village, one of which is the Catholic Church. Immediately to the west, and separated by the roadway, stood a substantial building which he believes could have been the 'antient dwelling' depicted by Wright in 1748[415] and described in *Louthiana* as follows:

> *Castle Rath: This Castle belongs to Thomas Tipping, Esq., appears to have been an antient dwelling of some Person of Distinction, and probably that of a Bishop or Abbot, if we may judge by the Chapel adjoining to it.*[416]

He is of the opinion that this structure was separated from the medieval church by the construction of the roadway north to Carlingford, and that the present Grange Church was constructed from the remains of the medieval church. However it should be noted

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[410] BUCKLEY, (1986), 93.
[411] STUBBS, (1910), p. 287.
[412] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.
[413] BUCKLEY, (1986), 93; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[414] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 56
[415] IBID, p. 56. See Figure 33.
[416] WRIGHT, (2000), p. 7. Plates 15-16. GOSLING, (2000), p. ix.



Figure 29: The settlement of Grange as illustrated on Baptista Boazio's *Map of Ireland: County Louth and District in 1599.*
(TEMPEST, H.G, 'Boazio's Map of Ireland, 1599', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XII, Number 4, (1952a)).



Figure 30: The settlement of Grange as depicted on Richard Bartlett's *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602.*
(O'SULLIVAN, H., *Irish Historic Towns Atlas No. 16, Dundalk,* Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 2006)).

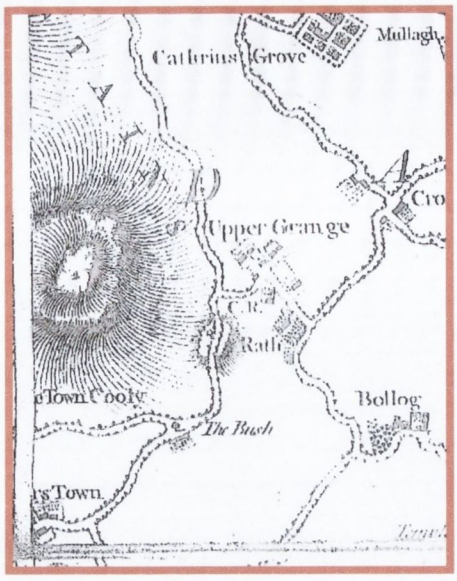


Figure 31: The settlement at Grange as depicted on *A Topographical Map of County Louth, 1766,* by Mathew Wrenn.
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).

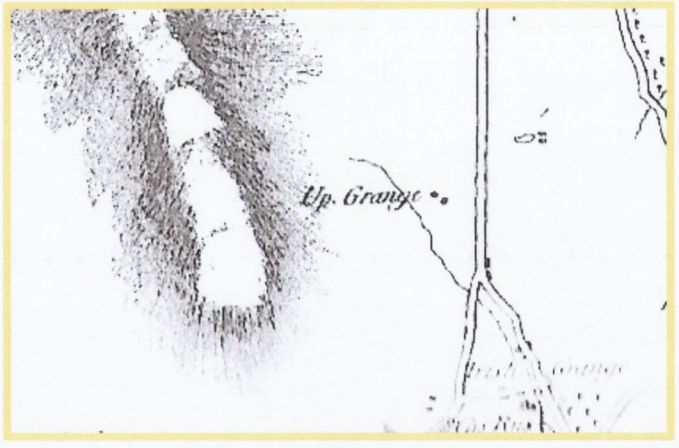


Figure 32: The settlement at Grange as depicted on *A Map of the County of Louth, 1777, by George Taylor and Andrew Skinner.*
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).



Figure 33: Grange Church as depicted by Thomas Wright in 1748.

that there does not appear to be any physical evidence extant at Grange Church to support this theory.

5. SIZE

Although the surviving documentary and cartographic sources relevant to this site would tend to indicate that it was a fortified church of some importance, the complete absence of any physical remains at Grange makes it impossible to accurately calculate the dimensions of this church. In 2002, after three archaeological investigations at the site, Clutterbuck recorded the presence of late medieval walls which represented the remains of a building covering an area of 18m by 14m,[417] which would in turn indicate a structure which measured 252 square metres. If these walls represented the church structure itself, then their dimensions would suggest a church of fairly large size.[418]However, at the time of the archaeological excavation and investigations at this site it was impossible to determine if these walls did once form part of the church structure, and it is possible that they may have formed part of the adjoining tower house, or indeed another unrecorded structure.

6. MORPHOLOGY

The most important sources for determining the morphology of this site are undoubtedly the two eighteenth century descriptions of this site which were made by Butler and Wright and 1744 and 1748 respectively, especially considering the possibility that the church may have been demolished by 1763 to assist with the construction of the new Catholic church at Grange. Butler clearly described the site as 'Grange Abbey' in 1744 [419] while Wright identified it as a castle which was probably the residence of a bishop or abbot, with an adjoining 'chapel'.[420]It is fortunate that Wright illustrated this structure and his drawing appears to depict a long narrow building, adjoining the rear of the "dwelling". If medieval architectural practice was followed, this chapel would have had an east west axis.[421]

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[417] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360.
[418]Ó CARRAGÁIN, (2006), pp. 107-8.
[419] DEANE, (1922), pp. 101.
[420] WRIGHT, (2000), p. 7. Plates 15-16. GOSLING, (2000), p. ix.
[421] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 56

What is certain is that this structure appears to have been substantially fortified, in a similar manner to the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford.[422] From Wright's drawing it would appear that this 'abbey' comprised a fortified tower house, with a church or chapel adjoining the east side. One possible explanation for the fortification of this church has been offered by O'Sullivan who has commented that although this church may originally have formed part of the Grange premises of the Cistercian Abbey of Newry, it was probably converted to a manor house by the Sedgrave family.[423] This was presumably at some date after 1404 when the lands at Grange were officially granted to Richard Sedgrave, and indeed, it is significant that almost two hundred years later, *c.* 1602, the settlement was recorded on Bartlett's map of the region as 'Segereves town'.[424]

In 1986 Buckley reinforced this defensive morphology of the site when he described it, from the Wright's illustration as 'a tower house with two rectangular towers on one side and at opposite side a long rectangular buildings with high gables.' [425] A more detailed discussion of the evolution of this site was given in the *Survey* of 1991 where Buckley and Sweetman remarked that it

> *...would appear to be a fortified ecclesiastical site with towers at its NW and SW angles and the original church at the E side of the structure. Wrights plan of the structure plate 16 would strongly indicate that it was originally a church that was originally fortified. It appears in the Inventory as a castle but is included here as an ecclesiastical building.*[426]

7. MASONRY STYLES

Considering the fact that there are no archaeological remains extant at this site, it is not possible to accurately determine what masonry style was utilized at this church. However, in 2002 Clutterbuck recorded that the wall portions which were uncovered at the site were found to be constructed from hammer-dressed and roughly squared limestone blocks. In addition to this he noted that the presence of the medieval limekiln suggests that a significant amount of lime was produced for lime mortar or lime washes for construction as lime was not produced for agriculture in Ireland until the later seventeenth century. [427] This in turn would indicate that a considerable degree of

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[422] See Chapter IV: Urban Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford, V. The Dominican Abbey.
[423] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 51-53
[424] See Figure 3.
[425] BUCKLEY, (1986), 93.
[426] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[427] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360.

construction took place at this site in the later medieval period, possibly representing several different phases of construction from the fifteenth to the sixteenth century.

8. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

a. WINDOWS

In 1986 Buckley noted that there was a 'decorated lintel incorporated in wall of house in nearby village.'[428] This researcher has been unable to locate this stone in the village of Grange and it would appear that it may have already disappeared by the time of the publication of the *Survey* in 1991, as Buckley and Sweetman remarked that 'a late medieval window lintel stone was to be seen in the wall of a house in the village of Grange in the 1960s.'[429] This lintel stone was also noted by Jefferies in 1997 who commented that,

> *At Irish Grange there are remains of a fortified church which may have had a late medieval window.*[430]

b. ALTAR STONES

The only surviving reference to an altar stone at Grange church was recorded in 1744 by Butler when he stated that:

> *...A small distance from the Abbey near the road side there is a great altar stone, it is four yards long, 2 broad, and 18 inches in thickness, it stood upon three flatt stones erect, by which the great weight have slipped from under the former...*[431]

There is no other surviving description of a medieval altar stone at Grange, and indeed, from the description provided by Butler it seems possible that he may have been describing one of the megalithic tombs at Grange.

9. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

In 1979 two fragments of pottery and a quern stone were discovered by Gosling at above the site of the blocked north end of the souterrain at Grange Irish.[432] In 2000 pre-development test-trenching was undertaken in advance of a sheltered housing

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[428] BUCKLEY, (1986), 93.
[429] BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 256.
[430] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions 1540-42,* (1943), p. 108; JEFFERIES, (1997a), p. 21.
[431] DEANE, (1922), pp. 101.
[432] NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, 1979 :119, Grange Irish : Pottery; NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, 1979 :120, Grange Irish : Pottery; NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND TOPOGRAPHICAL FILES, 1979: 121, Grange Irish : Quern Stone.

scheme, covering three fields, believed to be on the site of 'Grange Abbey' by O'Carroll. At the time of the investigation she recorded that the roadside field had, until recently, contained two cottages, one of which had a fifteenth-sixteenth century carved stone head incorporated into a wall. A large stone kiln, incorporated into a boundary wall at the rear of the site, was also investigated. Ten trenches were opened in 2000 covering approximately 22% of the 3600 square metre site. During the course of this investigation O'Carroll identified forty-one features of archaeological significance. Three appeared to be stretches of foundations for an east–west-running wall, which was set against a natural break of slope. A sherd of twelfth–thirteenth century local cooking ware was found in association with this wall. A series of ash spreads and burning was found at the break of slope surrounding the wall footings in one of the trenches. This was sealed by modern deposits of rubble and stone, which created a level ground surface. A 0.5m-high drystone revetment, which was uncovered in a natural hollow set 3m back from and running parallel to the modern road, for a distance of 2.5m, was undated. Two rubbish pits containing shell and butchered animal bone were also undated. Excavations at the kiln produced modern porcelain and glass and O'Carroll recommended that further archaeological testing and monitoring of the site be undertaken.[433]

Following on from this excavation, monitoring of the removal of topsoil at the site of Grange Church was undertaken by Clutterbuck from April-June 2002 and revealed medieval and early modern features, including the walls of a structure and a medieval limekiln. The features were resolved through preservation by record and, in the case of the walls and the limekiln structure, preservation in situ. The development works were suspended pending a reapplication for planning permission.[434] The third phase of archaeological investigation at this site was also conducted by Clutterbuck in 2002. At the time of this examination he remarked that before the initial test excavations had been carried out in 2000, evidence of medieval activity or buildings on the site was gleaned solely from historical and cartographic sources. He also noted that in the ten years prior to these investigations (*c.*1990-2000),

> *...the demolition of nineteenth-century houses on the site of the proposed development had produced fragments of an ogee-headed window, a typical 15th-*

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[433] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=4982
O'CARROLL, F., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2000:0707.
[434] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8704
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1359.

> *to early 16th-century architectural motif, which broadly agrees in date with the style of building depicted by Wright (1758).*[435]

In 2002 Clutterbuck divided the archaeological features at this site into three phases: late medieval (fifteenth–sixteenth century), early modern (*c.* seventeenth–eighteenth century), and modern (nineteenth–twentieth century). Walls found in the southern sector of the site appeared to be late medieval, representing the remains of a building covering an area of 18m by 14m, and ranged from 1.2m to 0.65m wide. No full length of original wall was uncovered; what survived ranged from 5.4m to 1.7m long. Clutterbuck noted that:

> *The architectural fragments recovered from the site in the past would comfortably fit in a 15th- or 16th-century building such as the Mint in Carlingford. However, no similar worked pieces of stone were recovered during the excavation ...The size of the walls and the extent of their cover suggest that the building of which they were once part was a large structure, such as the building depicted by Wright in 1758; alternatively, there may have been a number of phases of construction....*[436]

Unfortunately, the full extent and ground-plan of the building could not be determined because the site was found to have been heavily robbed of stone over the preceding centuries and the walls could not be completely investigated within the exclusion zone; and Clutterbuck noted that parts of the walls ran into an adjacent property to the south, where further archaeological remains relevant to Grange Church may still survive. In February 2003 the walls were covered with soil, which was grassed over as an open space; the limekiln was preserved beneath an administration/office block. All of the archaeological features which were to be preserved were covered with at least 0.5m of material.[437]

10. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

In 1984 the preliminary archaeological survey of Louth listed two ringforts, a souterrain, a barrow, two megalithic tombs, a ballaun stone, and an uncertain earthwork for Grange Irish,[438] an enclosure site for Grange Old ,[439] a ringfort for Rath and a ringfort

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[435] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360. There is no record of these window fragments at the National Museum of Ireland.

[436] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360.

[437] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360.

[438] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 12-13.

for Rath Lower. [440] Both the *Inventory* of 1986 and the *Survey* of 1991 recorded the site of 'Grange Abbey' as well as a ringfort for Rath Lower,[441] a ringfort for Rath,[442] one unclassified megalithic tomb, one megalithic court-tomb, one cairn, one souterrain, two ringforts, one earthwork and one enclosure site for Grange Irish.[443] Like the ecclesiastical site at Proleek, the existence of the megalithic tombs and the cairn in this region indicates a long continuity of human settlement dating back to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age period.[444] The souterrain, ringforts, earthwork and enclosure site are obviously more relevant for the purposes of this study, and a study of their locations on the distribution map for the Grange are reveals a high concentration of settlement.[445]

11. ETYMOLOGY

The placename Grange has obvious monastic connotations, and, as previously discussed, the lands encompassing the modern townlands of Grange, Irish Grange, Monksland, Muchgrange and Millgrange originated as lands belonging to the Cistercian Abbey of Newry. Stubbs, in his, 1910 discussion of the placename Grange, noted an additional townland, Grange Old, which was separated from Grange by the townland of Monksland.[446] St. James' Well, Millgrange Townland, Carlingford Parish.[447]

12. CHRONOLOGY

Although it is known that the lands surrounding Grange were granted to the Cistercian Abbey of Newry in the twelfth century, the earliest documentary reference to an Anglo-Norman settlement at Grange occurred in the 1301 list of amercements or fines which indicate that at this point some degree of subinfeudation of the area had been

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[439] IBID, p. 14. This enclosure site at Grange Old is listed in both the *Inventory* and the *Survey* under the townland name of Grange Irish. See footnote number 54 below.
[440] IBID, p. 13.
[441] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 57; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p183.
[442] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 56; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 181.
[443] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 6, 33, 51, 100, 174, 197; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 11, 29-32, 53-4, 63,124, 197. See Figure 6.
[444] Ó NUALLÁIN, S. & WALSH, P., 'Megalithic Tombs', in *Archaeological Survey of County Louth*, ed. by V.M. BUCKLEY & P.D. SWEETMAN, The Stationery Office, Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1991), p. 24. See also BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 44.
[445] See Figure 28.
[446] STUBBS, (1910), p. 287. Interestingly, in a separate discussion of the townland of Monksland, on page 296, he noted that it was 'part of the possessions of Carlingford Priory', but did not provided any primary source reference.
[447] STUBBS, (1908), p. 40.

achieved.[448] Archaeological excavations and investigations which were undertaken at Grange from 2000-2002 uncovered a sherd twelfth–thirteenth century local cooking ware which was found in association with foundations for an east–west-running wall.[449]

In 1404 the lands of Newry Abbey in the Grange were confiscated by the Crown and granted to the Sedgrave family and remained in their possession until the Cromwellian Confiscations of the seventeenth century.[450] The only direct reference to a church at Grange occurred in 1529 when it was recorded as having been ruined and wasted but the O'Neills of the Fews and the O'Hanlon's of Orior. [451] The settlement at Grange was recorded on Bartlett's map of *c.* 1602 as 'Segereves town',[452] and was also referred to in 1575 and 1658 as a 'towne'[453] although there is no archaeological evidence to support the classification of this settlement as an urban one, rather it appears to have been a nucleated rural settlement. The church was recorded in 1744 by Butler who described it as an abbey, and also by Wright in 1744 who classified it as a castle with an adjoining chapel.[454] These descriptions, coupled with Wright's drawing of the structure, indicate that the original church was fortified in the later medieval period with an adjoining tower house. The archaeological investigations of 2000-2002 also uncovered evidence of a later medieval wall and a medieval limekiln which he dated to the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. He also recorded the discovery, prior to 2000, of an ogee-headed window in the vicinity which may possibly have originated with the medieval church. O'Sullivan is of the opinion that this church was demolished to assist with the construction of the present Grange Church in 1763.[455]

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[448] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 43.

[449] hhttp://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=4982
O'CARROLL, F., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2000:0707; ttp://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8704
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1359; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360.

[450] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 41-43 & 77.

[451] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions*, p. 108; JEFFERIES, (1997a), p. 21; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 51-53

[452] See Figure 30.

[453] *1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District*, pp. 31-47. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 73-75; *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.

[454] DEANE, (1922), pp. 101. WRIGHT, (2000), Book I, p. 7. plates xv-xvi; GOSLING, (2000), p. ix

[455] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 56.

VIII. MUCHGRANGE CHURCH

1. INTRODUCTION

The site of Muchgrange Church is located within the civil parish of Carlingford, on the south-eastern portion of the Cooley Peninsula, at a distance of approximately 2.8km to the north-east of Grange Church.[456] There has never been any form of archaeological excavation undertaken at this site. The church, however, was included by Davies in his 1941 study of the churches of Co. Louth,[457] listed by the *Preliminary Description of Field Antiquities in the County* of 1984 as a 'cemetery',[458] surveyed by Buckley for the 1986 *Archaeological Inventory of Co. Louth,*[459] and finally, also surveyed by Buckley and Sweetman for the 1991 *Archaeological Survey of Co. Louth.*[460] Davies devoted just a few lines to the description of this site:

> *Muchgrange Graveyard... lies on the undulating piedmont, in fair pasture land with light soil. One can trace the foundations of a rectangular church. Just below it is St. James' Well, a long tank walled with large roughly dressed blocks without mortar; a huge slab at one end may have been thrust off it.*[461]

While Buckley & Sweetman's treatment of the church was equally brief:

> *Site of church and disused graveyard... Foundations of a rectangular structure (max. dims 11m by 5m), aligned E-W situated on top of slight flat-topped mound. 'St. James' Well' to NW of church site.*[462]

Therefore, due to the paucity of physical remains at this site it has been necessary, to depend to great extent upon the surviving historical references to the medieval settlement of Muchgrange itself.

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Throughout the medieval period the townland within which this church was situated was referred to alternately in the primary record as *Muchgrange, Much Grange, Anglia Grangia,* and *English Grange*. As with so many of the churches under review in

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[456] See Figure 1.
[457] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.
[458] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 15.
[459] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 77.
[460] BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 249.
[461] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.
[462] Both the *Inventory* of 1986 and the *Survey* of 1991 contain identical descriptions of this church site. See BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 77 & BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 249.

this study, the earliest known reference to the site was made in the 1301 list of royal amercements, or fines, which included the townland of *English Grange* for the barony of Lower Dundalk.[463] The settlement was also subsequently included in the 1378 entry from the archiepiscopal *Register of Milo Sweteman* which listed two residents of *Anglia Grangia,* Walter and Richard Dowdall, who made their respective payments of dues[464] to the archbishops' agents.[465]

O'Sullivan has conducted an in-depth study into the history of the evolution of the Anglo-Norman settlements of Grange,[466] Muchgrange and Irish Grange[467] through an examination of the relevant primary documentation, particularly the rent of the Bagnall estate which dates to 1575.[468] In summary, he has analyzed the pertinent historical evidence as follows; in *c.* 1157-8 Donnchad Ua Cearbhaill, the Gaelic-Irish king of Airgialla, granted lands in eastern Cooley, for use as a monastic grange, to the newly founded Cistercian abbey of *Virido Ligno* in Newry.[469] In the period after the confiscation of the lands of the lands of the Cistercian abbey of Newry[470] by the English government in 1404,[471] these lands were subsequently incorporated into the *Manor of Carlingford* and the *Town of Irish Grange*. Originally granted to the Sedgrave family,[472] this manor was later allocated as the *Lordships of Carlingford and Cooley* to Nicholas Bagnall in

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[463] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 42; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 43.

[464] Walter Dowdall paid six crannocks of wheat, seven of barley and seven of oats and his payment was sworn in the presence of Thomas Whyte and Richard Dowdall. Richard Dowdall then paid four crannocks of wheat, four of barley and four of oats and his payment was sworn before two anonymous individuals referred only to as the 'Vicar of Carlingford and his father'.

[465] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1378. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 45-46.

[466] See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, VII. Grange Church.

[467] This settlement is also sometimes referred to Grange Irish in some sources.

[468] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District*, pp. 31-47. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 73-75.

[469] These lands included the modern townlands of Muchgrange, Millgrange, Old Grange, Monksland and Irish Grange.

[470] Newry Abbey was originally of native Irish foundation and, according to O'Sullivan, was established at some stage after the demise of the Viking settlements on Carlingford Lough and prior to 1157, when Muirchertach McLoughlin granted it to the Cistercians who founded the abbey of *Virido Ligno,* a daughter house of Mellifont, on the site. Although obviously not located in the barony of Lower Dundalk, O'Sullivan has described Newry Abbey as the 'fifth religious institution to have a presence in the Cooley area at this period'; the other four presumably being the Order of the Knights Templar, the Order of the Knights Hospitaller, the Dominicans and the Cistercians of Mellifont. See O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 41-43 & 77. See also Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Ballymascanlan & V. Templetown. See also Chapter IV: Urban Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford, V. The Dominican Abbey.

[471] See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Ballymascanlan Church.

[472] Also commonly referred to as the Seagrave family in some sources. See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, VII. Grange Church.

1552.[473] According to O'Sullivan, in the years prior to 1404, these lands, represented by the modern townlands of Grange, Muchgrange and Irish Grange, originated as native Irish betagh settlements under the jurisdiction of the Newry Abbey, and later evolved as two distinct Granges of the abbey. The first of these granges was *Anglia Grangia* or *English Grange*, located in the south-east of the peninsula and which extended from Muchgrange on the north right down to the hinterland of Whitestown and Willville on the south, and which included the modern townlands of Monksland, Old Grange and Mill Grange. O'Sullivan's research has indicated that *Anglia Grange* appears to have been alienated from Newry Abbey by the fourteenth century, when it was then subjected to sub-infeudation by the Anglo-Norman colonists on the peninsula. [474] The second grange in question incorporated the smaller, more northern settlement of Irish Grange, which also included the modern townlands of Rath and Rath Lower, and which may have endured for a more lengthy period as a betagh settlement until it was eventually subsumed into the English settlement by the government in 1404.[475]

Following on from this, the next chronological reference to the settlement of Muchgrange was made in the 1575 rent roll of the Bagnall estate, which includes an extensive list of the rents due from the townlands which were integrated within the boundaries of the manor of Carlingford,[476] and which describes the rents of the *town of Muchgrange* as follows:

Collo O'Hanlon: The town of Muchgrange, containing two hundred acres who payeth accordingly. This is set to Collo O'Hanlon £10.0s.0d.The assess of four horses, and two beeves every year value worth £10 0s.0d.Four beeves and a half yearly to be paid, valued worth every beef 20s.0d. amounted unto £4.10s.0d. Seven muttons at 2s. 0d. the piece 14s. Oil. Four custom muttons at 2s. 0d. the piece 8s. 0d.Two dishes of butter at 12d. the piece 2s. 0d.Sixteen custom lambs at 12d. the piece 16s.0d.Sixteen match hens at 4d. the piece 5s. 4d. Sixteen hooks to cut corn in harvest for one day, at 8d. per diem the piece 10s. 8d. 300 eggs at 6d. the hundred 18d.Three garrons, and a leader at all times for carriage and receiving out of the English Pale or elsewhere, for forty days every year rated at 12d. per diem for two garrons and the leader amounteth to 40s. 0d.[477]

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[473] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 77; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 11. See also Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, III. Mountbagnall.

[474] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 41-43.

[475] O'Sullivan has also remarked that Irish Grange 'included a native Irish betagh settlement known as late as the late seventeenth century as Betaghsrath, now the townland of Monksland.' He has also commented that there is a ringfort located in each of the modern townlands of Irish Grange, Rath, Rath Lower and Monksland. See O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 41-43 & 77.

[476] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 77.

[477] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District*, pp. 31-47. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 73-75.

In common with most of the settlements listed in the 1575 rent roll, the settlement at Muchgrange was listed in the subsequent inquisition into the estates of the Bagnalls which was conducted in 1608 and which described the site as a town:

> *...the town and lands of Muchgrange called the English Grange in the county aforesaid containing 260 acres ...*[478]

In the seventeenth century land confiscations of the English Commonwealth Patrick Bellew of Verdonstown was the forfeiting proprietor of the townland of Muchgrange,[479] and the final record of this settlement was made in the 1658 inquisition into the parishes of Co. Louth, where it was once again described as a *towne* and included as follows:

Carlingford and Omeath Parish: The said jurors being upon their oath doe also say that the parrishs of Carlingford and Omeath consist of several townes following vizt.:...Old Grange, Lower Mullaghtye, Muck Grange... Irish grange, Ballivarly &Omeath & that the said parrish is an impropriation &a vicarage one third part of the great tythes of the same in the yeare 1640 was held from the Lord Primate of Ardmagh att thirtye pounds per annum..[480]

3. CARTOGRAPHY

Muchgrange is depicted on four cartographical sources. The first of these is Robert Lythe's map of 1575 which is contemporaneous with the surviving rent roll of the Bagnall estate, and which records the two settlements of *Great Grange* and *Little Grange* in close proximity to each other.[481] Following on from this, the settlement was illustrated in 1766 and 1777 by Wrenn and Taylor and Skinner respectively.[482] On Wrenn's depiction it is denoted by the text *St. James' Well,* although there is no architectural detail evident and no illustration of the church. In 1777 Taylor and Skinner marked the location of the settlement as *Much Grange* but, in common with Wrenn, they failed to provide any significant structural detail for either the settlement itself or indeed the church. The final illustration of Muchgrange was recorded on the 1836 six-inch OS map which shows *St. James' Well,* as well as the *old burial ground.* It also depicts a neighbouring house, referred to as *Grange House*.

4. LOCATION

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[478] Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 76-77.
[479] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 53.
[480] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, pp. 37-38; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.
[481] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 56.
[482] See Figures 34 & 35.

As previously discussed, the site of Muchgrange church is now currently located within the civil parish of Carlingford. However, the surviving documentary evidence tends to suggests that, despite being described as a *towne* in several primary sources, the settlement at Muchgrange was never an independent parish. In particular, the inquisition of 1658 suggests that, in the medieval period, Muchgrange formed part of the large parish of Carlingford, [483]and that from *c.* 1404 onwards it was also incorporated into the manor of Carlingford.[484] This, in turn, would indicate that the church at Muchgrange functioned as a chapel of ease, rather than as a parish church.

The site of the church itself is located at a distance of approximately 0.75km from the coast and is situated in a pocket of agriculturally fertile land, which would have been an important settlement factor for a medieval monastic grange. In common with the church sites at Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall and Templetown, the church at Muchgrange was positioned upon a slightly flat-topped mound giving a good vantage point over the surrounding countryside.[485]

5. SIZE

Although the archaeological remains which have survived at Muchgrange Church are minimal, the extant foundations still discernible on the ground indicate that the church was aligned east to west and had maximum dimensions of 11m by 5m.[486] This would suggest that the church once had an approximate internal area of 55 square metres. According to research conducted by Ó Carragáin into the size and function of church buildings in early medieval Ireland, this would signify a church of small size,[487] although, in the case of Muchgrange, this observation is compromised slightly by the fact that there is no evidence to suggest a church at this site in the early medieval period. Nonetheless, it is important to note that Ó Carragáin's research has also emphasized the relationship between the size of a church and its status,[488] and, although his research concentrated upon the early medieval period, it is certainly feasible that there was a similar link between size, status and functionality in the later medieval period. It is also worth commenting that, according to Ó Carragáin, early medieval churches in Ireland which

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[483] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* pp. 37-38.
[484] See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Ballymascanlan Church.
[485] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 77; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 249; RMP LH 009-002001, Muchgrange Church Site.
[486] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 77; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 249. See Figure 36.
[487] Ó CARRAGÁIN, T, (2006), p. 108.
[488] IBID, p. 107.

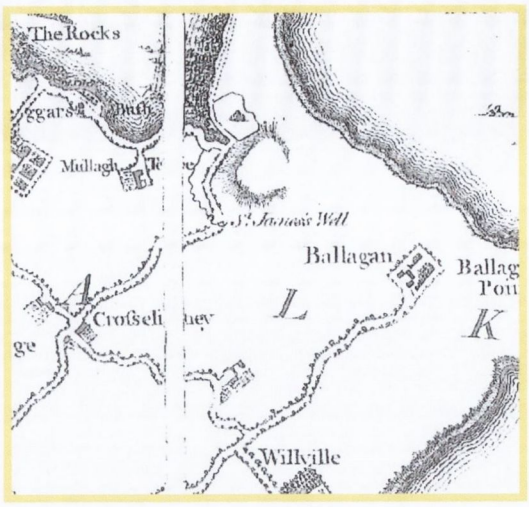


Figure 34: St. James' Well as depicted on *A Topographical Map of County Louth, 1766,* by Mathew Wrenn.
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).

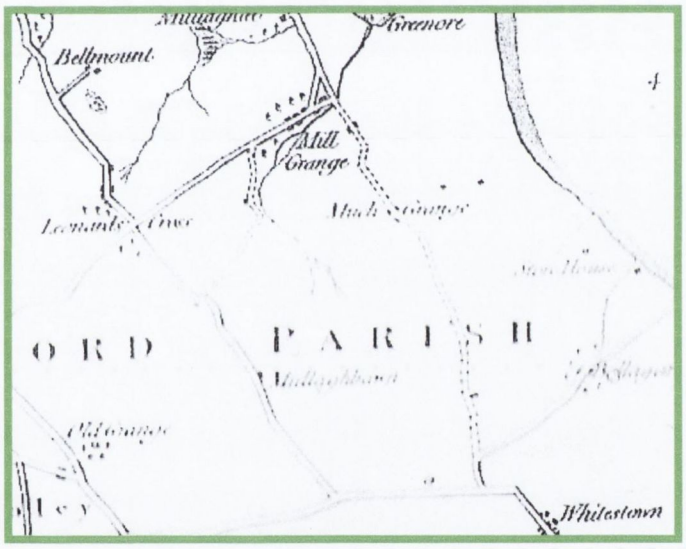


Figure 35: The settlement of Muchgrange as depicted on *A Map of the County of Louth, 1777, by George Taylor and Andrew Skinner.*
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).

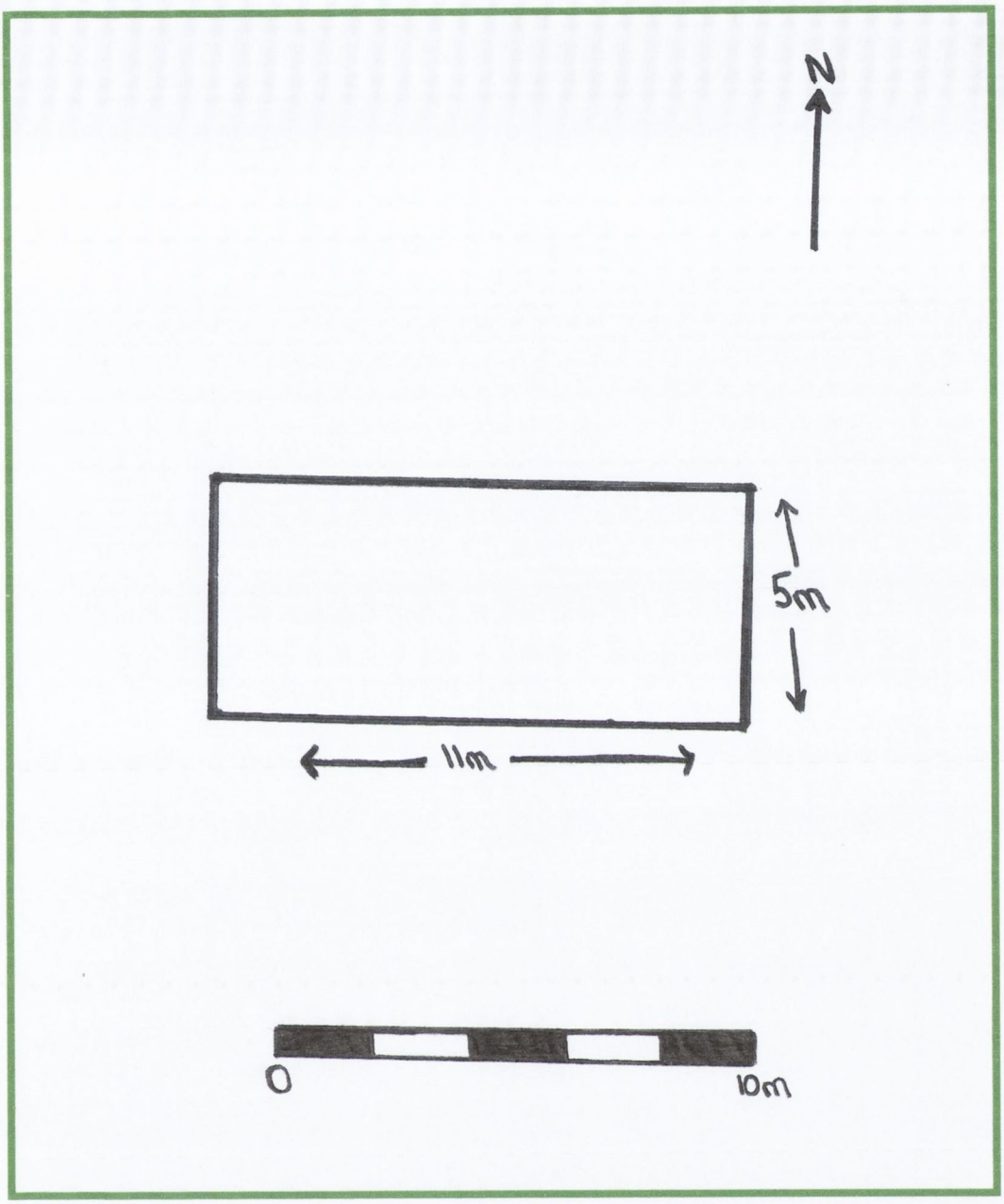


Figure 36: Rough plan of Muchgrange Church.

later received parish status averaged at an approximate internal area of 59 square metres.[489] The surviving documentary evidence suggests that the church at Muchgrange, which had an internal area of 55 square metres, never achieved parish church status.

6. MORPHOLOGY

As there is no surviving physical evidence on site to support the existence of a cross-wall dividing a nave and chancel at Muchgrange, the balance of evidence would suggest that it was a unicameral structure.

7. MASONRY STYLES

Due to the fact that the church and graveyard at Muchgrange are not regularly maintained,[490] the remaining foundations of the church are now completely covered with earth and foliage. The surviving masonry at this church is therefore obscured and it has been impossible to make an examination of it.

8. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERY

The site of Muchgrange Church was classified by Davies in 1941 as a graveyard,[491] and by preliminary archaeological survey of the county in 1984 as a cemetery. [492] The cemetery in its current state appears to be disused and neglected and there are now no distinguishing medieval features evident.

a. HOLY WELLS

In common with the churches at Faughart and Templetown,[493] the church at Muchgrange appears to have been closely associated with a holy well; St. James' Well. Although Buckley and Sweetman made a brief reference to this well being located to the

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[489] IBID, p. 108.
[490] Buckley and Sweetman in the 1980s and 1990s classified Muchgrange as *Site of a Church and Disused Graveyard.* See BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 77; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 249.
[491] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.
[492] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 15.
[493] See Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Faughart Church & Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Templetown Church.

north-west of the church site,[494] they did not describe it in any great detail. Davies however, had made a much more informative description of this well in 1941 commenting that:

> *Just below it* [the church] *is St. James' Well, a long tank walled with large roughly dressed blocks without mortar; a huge slab at one end may have been thrust off it.*[495]

Stubbs, writing in 1908, alluded to this well simply as 'St. James, Millgrange T.L., Carlingford P,' making no reference to its construction, even though he remarked in the same study that a 'very ancient building' covered St. Brigid's Well at Faughart.[496] The St. James to which this well is dedicated to is presumably the same James who was the first of the twelve apostles of Jesus to be martyred by Herod Agrippa, and who later became the focal point for the renowned pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, and is now the patron saint of Spain.[497]

9. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Apart from St. James' Well, there are no other archaeological sites of note located in the townland of Muchgrange, or indeed, in close proximity to the church site. The closest archaeological monuments to Muchgrange are located approximately 0.5km to the north-west of the church site, in the townland of Mullatee and consist of a possible souterrain and a tower house site.[498] The site of the tower house at Mullatee was listed alongside 'Muchgrange cemetery' in the preliminary archaeological survey of 1984.[499] The site of the possible souterrain is now inaccessible and was alluded to very briefly in the *Inventory* of 1986 and the *Survey* of 1991 as 'local tradition of a cave close to Mullatee Castle'.[500] The tower house was also described very briefly as the ruinous castle site of *Paid na Farrell's Castle*, now only surviving as some pieces of mortared masonry.[501]

10. ETYMOLOGY

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[494] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 77; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 249.
[495] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.
[496] STUBBS, (1908), p. 40. STUBBS, (1910), p. 297.
[497] MCMAHON, M., *Saints: The Art, The History, The Inspiration*, (London, 2006), p. 81.
[498] See Figure 37.
[499] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 15.
[500] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 44; BUCKLEY& SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 133.
[501] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 93; BUCKLEY& SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 147.

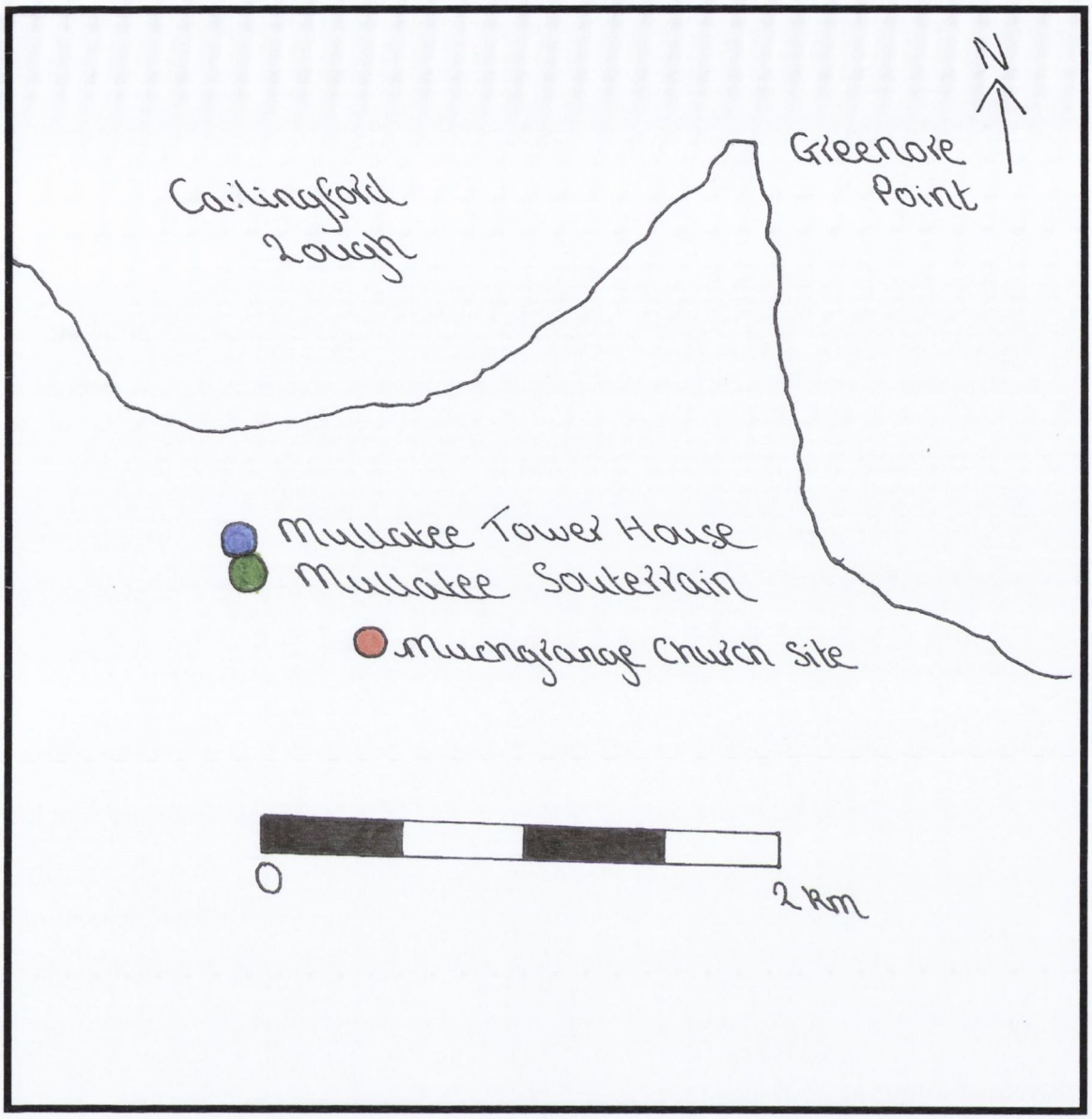


Figure 37: Rough plan of the associated archaeological sites at Muchgrange. The church site is indicated in red, the tower house in blue and the souterrain in green.

The *grange* element of this placename has obviously derived from the fact that there was a monastic grange of the Cistercian abbey of Newry located in the townland in the medieval period. The sources which referred to Muchgrange it as *English Grange* or *Anglia Grangia,* for example the 1608 inquisition into the Bagnall estate, appear to have done so in order to distinguish it from the smaller neighbouring settlement of Irish Grange.[502] It is not certain where the *Much* element of this placename originated, but it is possible that it was used to indicate that this settlement was larger than the neighbouring settlement of Irish Grange. This explanation of its usage is apparently supported by the evidence provided by Robert Lythe's map of 1575 which portrays the two settlements of Muchgrange and Irish Grange side by side denoted by the names as *Great Grange* and *Little Grange* respectively.[503]

11. CHRONOLOGY

There is practically no physical evidence extant at Muchgrange which can aid with the formation of a reliable chronology for this site. The only information which can be elicited from the church ruins as they appear today is that the church was probably a unicameral structure of small size, measuring approximately 55 square metres in area. It is however possible to piece together a partial chronology for the settlement at Muchgrange through a perusal of the relevant documentary sources, although, unfortunately, all of the extant references refer to the settlement generally rather than to the church specifically.

The listing of the townland of Muchgrange in the 1301 list of amercements indicates that it had undergone some form of Anglo-Norman sub-infeudation at this point. In 1378 two residents of Muchgrange, Walter and Richard Dowdall were recorded as paying dues in kind to the Archbishop of Armagh, Milo Sweteman. The settlement was also subsequently included in the 1378 entry from the archiepiscopal *Register of Milo Sweteman* which listed two residents of *Anglia Grangia,* Walter and Richard Dowdall, who made their respective payments of dues to the archbishops' agents.[504]

Research conducted by O'Sullivan has indicated that in *c.* 1157-8 Donnchad Ua Cearbhaill, granted these lands in eastern Cooley, for use as a monastic grange, to the

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[502] STUBBS, (1910), p. 297.
[503] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 56.
[504] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1378.

newly founded Cistercian abbey of *Virido Ligno* in Newry.[505] Furthermore, in the period after the confiscation of the lands of the lands of the Cistercian abbey of Newry[506] by the English government in 1404,[507] these lands were subsequently incorporated into the *Manor of Carlingford* and the *Town of Irish Grange*, and were later allocated as the *Lordships of Carlingford and Cooley* to Nicholas Bagnall in 1552.[508] According to O'Sullivan, in the years prior to 1404, these lands, represented by the modern townlands of Grange, Muchgrange and Irish Grange, originated as native Irish betagh settlements under the jurisdiction of the Newry Abbey, and later evolved as two distinct Granges of the abbey.[509] The settlement was described in the 1575 rent roll of the Bagnall estate, in the 1608 inquisition into the Bagnall lands, and in the 1658 parish inquisition as a town.[510]

IX. KNOCKNAGORAN CHURCH

1. INTRODUCTION

Apart from the early medieval monastery of Killansnamh, the only other known site of a medieval church in Omeath was located approximately 3km to the south-east of Cornamucklagh, in Knocknagoran, a townland which consists of approximately 259 acres.[511] Due to the fact that the archaeological remains at Knocknagoran have all but

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[505] These lands included the modern townlands of Muchgrange, Millgrange, Old Grange, Monksland and Irish Grange.

[506] Newry Abbey was originally of native Irish foundation and, according to O'Sullivan, was established at some stage after the demise of the Viking settlements on Carlingford Lough and prior to 1157, when Muirchertach McLoughlin granted it to the Cistercians who founded the abbey of *Virido Ligno,* a daughter house of Mellifont, on the site. Although obviously not located in the barony of Lower Dundalk, O'Sullivan has described Newry Abbey as the 'fifth religious institution to have a presence in the Cooley area at this period'; the other four presumably being the Order of the Knights Templar, the Order of the Knights Hospitaller, the Dominicans and the Cistercians of Mellifont. See O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 41-43 & 77. See also Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Ballymascanlan & V. Templetown. See also Chapter IV: Urban Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford, V. The Dominican Abbey.

[507] See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Ballymascanlan Church.

[508] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 77; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 11. See also Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, III. Mountbagnall.

[509] O'Sullivan has also remarked that Irish Grange 'included a native Irish betagh settlement known as late as the late seventeenth century as Betaghsrath, now the townland of Monksland.' He has also commented that there is a ringfort located in each of the modern townlands of Irish Grange, Rath, Rath Lower and Monksland. See O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 41-43 & 77.

[510] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District*, pp. 31-47; *Irish Records Commission*, Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* pp. 37-38.

[511] http://www.seanruad.com/cgi-bin/iresrch, The IreAtlas Townland Database. See Figure 1 Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Cornamucklagh. Knocknagoran is also located approximately 12km from Muchgrange.

disappeared it is necessary to depend largely upon the results of two archaeological surveys of the region which were undertaken in the 1940s and 1960s by Davies[512] and Buckley[513] respectively, and which are unfortunately quite scarce in the information they provide. The last significant survey of the site was made by Buckley on 21st July 1967, the results of which were included in both the *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth* in 1986, and also the *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* in 1991.[514] The only archaeological excavation at Knocknagoran was undertaken in 1998 by O'Carroll and did not directly involve the church site. O'Carroll carried out a partial excavation of a nearby feature, known locally as 'O'Hagan's Fort', which is listed in both the *Inventory* and *Survey* as an earthwork site, and which is marked as an 'antiquity' on the current OS six-inch to the mile map.[515]

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

The earliest known possible reference to a medieval church in Knocknagoran was recorded *c.* 1200 when Hugh de Lacy granted the 'the rectory of Omeath' to the Benedictine Abbey of St. Andrew of the Ards, otherwise known as the Black Abbey of the Ards of Ballyhalbert, Co. Down.'[516] As previously discussed, O'Sullivan is of the opinion that this grant was made in respect of a medieval church at Cornamucklagh which was established on the site of the early Christian monastery.[517] However, this researcher has concluded that the grant is more likely to refer to the medieval church at Knocknagoran on the grounds that there is no evidence, archaeological or documentary, to support the hypothesis that the monastery of Killansnamh was ever reused as an ecclesiastical site following its demise at the hands of the Vikings in the tenth century. Furthermore, the documentary record does validate the existence of a church in Knocknagoran in the Anglo-Norman period, even though the extant archaeological evidence for this church is admittedly minimal.

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[512] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.
[513] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 75.
[514] BUCKLEY, (1986), p 75 & BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234. Unfortunately the *Sites and Monuments Record* for this site, RMP LH 005-008001, Knocknagoran Graveyard, does not contain any additional information to that published in the *Inventory* and the *Survey*. There is also no *Topographical File* on record for this site at the National Museum of Ireland.
[515] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=1393, O'CARROLL, F., 'Excavation Report, Knocknagoran, Earthwork Site, 1998:465; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 64; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p.198
[516] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 50.
[517] See Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Cornamucklagh & O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 50.

The next possible reference to a settlement in Omeath in the Anglo-Norman period occurs in a list of townlands recorded in relation to amercements, or fines, imposed in Co. Louth by a Crown Court in 1301.[518] Having made an in-depth study of this document, and having also identified the majority of the townlands listed for the barony of Lower Dundalk, it was the opinion of MacIomhair that:

> *The modern denomination Tullaghomeath derives from the Uí Méith, who migrated to Cuailgne from their home in County Monaghan. The original name of the district may be represented by Tylathcothelan (31) and Tylathcothyl (33) of our list, which appear where we should expect Tullaghomeath.*[519]

It cannot be denied that this link is certainly tenuous and sheds no light upon medieval ecclesiastical settlement in Omeath. However, if it were the case that the two townlands listed, Tylathcothelan and Tylathcothyl, were indeed located in Omeath then it would raise the possibility that some degree of Anglo-Norman sub-infeudation of the area had been achieved by 1301, especially when considered in tandem with the grant of the rectory of Omeath by Hugh de Lacy in 1200. It must be acknowledged however, that this is a theory which has previously been considered improbable, mainly due to the topography of the locality coupled with a lack of documentary and archaeological evidence for an Anglo-Norman settlement in Omeath.

The next reference to the 'rectory of Omeath' was recorded in 1360, when the archbishop of Armagh, Richard FitzRalph appears to have purchased it from the abbey of Ballyhalbert for £200.[520] For reasons unknown, the church was subsequently seized by the Crown and was not restored to Armagh until 1395, when John Colton was archbishop.[521] Although the exact date of this seizure is unclear, it would appear that it must have taken place some time after 1367 when the Archbishop of Armagh, Milo Sweteman, wrote a letter to one Arthur MacBróin, his seneschal in Armagh, seeking information regarding the payment of 'the farm of the people of Omeath occupied for two years.'[522] In the original Latin format the section directly relating to Omeath reads as follows:

> *...et de firma plebis de Ometh per vos occupata nobis solvenda per duos annos.*[523]

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[518] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 42.
[519] MACIOMHAIR, (1965), p. 49.
[520] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1360.
[521] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1395.
[522] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1367.
[523] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1367.

According to Smith, the letter, which is dated at 'Dromeskyn' on the 14th of January 1367, states that the abbot of Armagh has written to the archbishop complaining that Arthur makes a claim on his convent for certain sums and nevertheless retains the ecclesiastical cup pledged with the archbishop for three ounces. Arthur is commanded to be at Dromiskin on 21 January, bringing the above sum, if paid, or the cup, and any other money he may have collected, in order to treat with the archbishop about these and other matters, considering among other things a mark for the entrance of Arthur's nephews and the payment of the farm of the people of Omeath, occupied for two years.[524] O'Sullivan suggests that the archbishop had at this stage acquired the rectory of Omeath, wherever it may have been located, a view supported by the reference of 1360, and that the rentals had, in this instance, been retained by the seneschal.[525]

There is also a more elusive early fifteenth reference to an *Omee* in another of the archiepiscopal registers, that of John Swayne, which dates to 1438:

> *Letters patent of gt., with the unanimous assent of dean and chapter of Armagh church, as a reward for faithful service, to Philip McKewen, advocate of the Archbishop and his Church of Armagh, of the tithes of sheaves and other emoluments of Derremoghyr, Omee and Dyrbroghis belonging to Archbishop and his archiepiscopal table, to hold of Archbishop, and his successors. During his life.*[526]

In this case it is not clear why *Omee is* listed alongside *Derremoghyr.* Chart has identified this place as being Derry More, which is situated near Newry. He does not make any reference to where *Omee* may have been located, and it is possible, especially given the physical proximity of Newry to the Carlingford area, that this place may in fact be Omeath.[527] Indeed, subsequent versions of the placename recorded in various documentary sources would appear to support this identification. For example, on the 6th of October 1508 Malachy O'Hanlon made a grant 'of the lands of Omee near Carlingford' to Garrett Fitzgerald, the eighth earl of Kildare and then Lord Lieutenant. [528] According to O'Sullivan, who has studied the text of this grant in great detail, 'there is no indication why this transaction was entered into, but it could have been a move by O'Hanlon to curry favour with Kildare and to head off the acquisition of the lands by the

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[524] *The Register of Milo Sweteman*, 1367.
[525] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 50-51.
[526] *The Register of John Swayne,* 1438.
[527] It should also be noted that this possible reference to Omeath was not mentioned by MacIomhair in his 1959 article on Louth churches and church lands recorded in Swayne's register. See MACIOMHAIR, (1959a), pp. 369-79.
[528] PRONI, D.3078/1/25/1-7. O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 49.

Englishry of County Louth.'[529] Twenty-two years later, in 1530, the 'lands of Omeath' were once again referred to when they were let out to one 'Feylem O'Neill,'[530] while in 1544 '*Omee*' was again mentioned in a rent roll of the lands of the Archbishop of Armagh, George Dowdall, the tenants paying 3s. 4d. per annum.[531]

By 1575 Omeath had passed into the possession of the Bagnalls of Newry, but in a rent roll of the Bagnall estate for the same year no tenants were listed for Omeath, while a contemporaneous map depicted the immediate foreshore area of Carlingford Lough at Omeath as being deeply forested.[532] In a subsequent inquisition of the Bagnall Estate in 1608 Omeath was described as 'a territory, containing 1,200 acres, formerly called the lordship of Omee, parcel of the manor of Carlingford, containing several towns such as Cornemucklogh [Cornamucklagh], Liskley [Lislea], Dromallat [Drummullagh], Ardaghie [Ardaghy], Bawn [Bavan], Tawlaght [Tullagh Omeath], Knockguirin [Knocknagoran], Corkitt [Corrakit], Tesky [Ballinteskin], and Ballywonan [Ballyonan]'.[533] Furthermore, the ferry at Narrowwater in the townland of Cornamucklagh may be that mentioned in the inquisition of 1608 as:

...a ferry over the creek of the sea or river of Carlingford viz. for ferriage of a man 2d. a horse or mare 4d. a bull ox or cow, young or old 4d. and a sheep, goat or hogg ?d.[534]

According to O'Sullivan, this also suggests the possibility that a hamlet or village existed in the vicinity of the ferry at this time.[535]

In 1658 an inquisition was appointed into church organisation in Co. Louth, and, while several of the jurors were Old English or native Irish, their remit confined them to an examination of the state of the Established Church in each of the parishes in the county. In Omeath one Rice Ap Hugh[536] held the impropriation from the archbishop of

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[529] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 49.
[530] PRONI, D.3078/1/25/1-7. O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 49.
[531] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1544; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 50-51.
[532] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District,*, pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 49.
[533] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 49-50.
[534] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608'; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 50.
[535] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 50.
[536] The surname *Ap Hugh* mentioned here in 1640 would appear to indicate an individual of Welsh origin or ancestry. Although there are no other surviving documentary references to Rice Ap Hugh, in 1622 there were ten different references to a clergyman named Ambrose Ap Hugh/Amberose Aphugh/Ambrose Hooke/Ambrose Appiu/Amber. Appiu recorded in *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*, pp. 4-11. In these references he is named as leasing lands in Newtown Monasterboice from Primate Long worth £6 15 shillings. He is also listed as the curate of eight churches in Co. Louth; Monasterboice, Louth, Knockabbey, Castlering, Rossmakay, Philipstown, Kilclogher, Kilmore Cooley [Templetown], and as the impropriator of one church in Co. Monaghan at Donaghmoyne. Of the eight Louth sites one, Templetown, [listed as vacant] is located in the barony of Lower Dundalk, two, Rossmakay [listed as ruinous & valued at 6 shillings] and Castlering [ruinous, 15 shillings] were located in

Armagh. The inquisition recommended that the parishes of Omeath and Carlingford be united and that the church of the united parish be at Carlingford. The church in Carlingford was described as being out of repair although it does seem to have had a resident minister at this point:

Carlingford and Omeath Parish: The said jurors being upon their oath doe also say that the parrishs of Carlingford and Omeath consist of several townes following vizt.:...&Omeath & that the said parrish is an impropriation &a vicarage one third part of the great tythes of the same in the yeare 1640 was held from the Lord Primate of Ardmagh att thirtye pounds per annum. The other two parts then in the possession of Silvester Plunket's widow who paid a rent unto the Exchequer for the same, but how much the said Jurors cannot tell, which said two parts were then worth sixtye pounds per annum. Mr. Bonner then incumbent who received the whole smale tythes then worth thirty pounds. [A Blank Shown Here] *One third part of which said Fishing did belong to the Lord Prymate, & the other two parts to the Crown of England then & att Presente worth ffourtye shillings per annum. Mr. Swalden is now Minister at Carlingford & hath a salary from the Commonwealth. And the said jurors doe further say that Omeath is an impropriation possessed by Rice ap Hugh in the yeare 1640 who held the same from the Lord Prymate of Ardmagh. The great tythes yeilded in the yeare 1640 twelve pounds now worth ffoure pounds yearly. The smale tythes were worth six [pounds?]att presente worth ffourtye shillings yearly. The church is scittuate in Carlingford out of repaire. The said Jurors doe conceive itt fitt that the Parrishs of Carlingford & Omeath be united and the church for the meeting of the said parrishs to be at Carlingford.*[537]

As late as 1703 Omeath was still listed in the archiepiscopal rent rolls and was described as follows:

The Parsonage of Omeath. The Tythes of this alsoe belong to the Primat. There are in the parish 10 small townlands & those corce pasture with some arable land. Lord Primat has also one third of the Tythe fish brought into Carlingford town: is not much to made of it, little fish being brought here.[538]

3. CARTOGRAPHY

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the barony of Upper Dundalk. As there are two Louth townlands named Philipstown, one in the barony of Upper Dundalk, and one in the barony of Ardee, it is not clear which one was referred to in 1622 but it was recorded as being ruinous and worth £3. A further two of the churches, Louth [ruinous, £3 10shillings], and Knockabbey [ruinous, 10 shillings] are located in the barony of Louth, while Monasterboice [ruinous, £1 10 shillings] and Kilclogher [repaired, £3], are situated in the barony of Ferrard. Ambrose Ap Hugh was also listed as a member of the new corporation of Carlingford convened in 1619 by King James I because 'of the greater part of the corporation having become recusants'. This new corporation was formed with 19 named individuals, 13 of who were the sovereign and burgesses and 6 were the commonalty. The sovereign was Arthur Bagnall and of the 12 burgesses, not all of whom were residents of the borough of Carlingford, O'Sullivan has noted that most, apparently including Ambrose Ap Hugh, were of Welsh origin. See O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 85-86 for a more in-depth discussion of this corporation. In 1575 one Richard Aphewc had been Constable of Carlingford Castle, and in the same year one Ryce Ap Hughes was listed as a tenant of the Bagnalls holding lands in Castletowncooley. See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, IV. Castletowncooley.

[537] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.

[538] *Extracts from Rent Rolls of the See of Armagh in 1703*, p. 93; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 50-51.

As far as can be discerned, there are no surviving cartographical representations of the medieval church at Knocknagoran. However, there is a graveyard marked on Taylor and Skinner's Map of 1777 at the site of the modern church of St. Andrew's.[539]

4. LOCATION

As previously discussed, regarding the siting of the early medieval monastic site at Killansnamh, the natural topography and geology of the Omeath region appears to have had a significant impact upon ecclesiastical patterns of settlement in the medieval period. The plain of Cooley, which is still the most populous part of the Carlingford Peninsula, has a settlement history which is quite distinct from that of the upland townlands of Omeath. As highlighted by Aalen, the calcareous clayey lowlands of Cooley have attracted colonists from prehistoric times, 'from megalith builders and rath-dwellers onwards'.[540] Furthermore, from the late twelfth century onwards the lowlands of Cooley were largely occupied and colonized by the Anglo-Normans who established Carlingford as a fortified urban settlement to guard the area, and by the seventeenth century English setters were being introduced to the same the region under the auspices of the Cromwellian land settlements. Although Aalen has noted that some of the large clusters of farms in Cooley, for example Whitestown and Rathcor Lower, would have had their origin in Anglo-Norman villages with open-field organization, on a pattern similar to that of villages in lowland England, with the exception of the town of Carlingford, the Gaelic-Irish population must always have been in a substantial majority, and it is not unlikely that they continued to organize their agriculture in the greater part of the area on a rundale basis to which numerous smaller farm-clusters may well be related.[541]

In contrast to this fairly populous pattern of settlement in the lowlands of the peninsula, the agriculturally poorer uplands of Omeath, did not engage Anglo-Norman settlement attention in the same manner and the area appears to have been left almost exclusively to the native Irish. Paterson has remarked upon the fact that, although the counties of Louth, Down and Antrim had by the later Middle Ages been long colonized

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[539] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 75; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234.
[540] AALEN, F.H.A., 'Some Historical Aspects of Landscape and Rural Life in Omeath, Co. Louth', *Irish Geography,* Volume IV, Number 4, (1962a), p. 260.
[541] AALEN, (1962a), p. 260.

and planted with strong castles by the Anglo-Normans, they made practically no headway in the territory that is now Co. Armagh:

> *No great Norman castles or ecclesiastical foundations arose within the territory to mark their progress or occupation.* [542]

Indeed, this is an observation that could also easily have been applied to the neighbouring territory of Omeath during the medieval period, and of course, it had major implications for the development of the medieval church settlement in the area. Contemporary documentary sources, coupled with studies conducted by Paterson, Aalen and O'Sullivan indicate that the Omeath area was, in places, thickly wooded until at least the seventeenth century, and, even into the sixteenth century provided refuge for semi-nomadic bands of rebellious Gaelic-Irish who were accustomed to live upon spoils garnered from raiding the peripheral lands of the Pale.[543] In fact, settled agricultural life, does not seem to have begun in earnest in Omeath until the end of the sixteenth century, and even at that, until the middle of the nineteenth century there was still little interference, even under the influence of the great landlords, with the basic traditional life of the local inhabitants.[544] These are settlement trends that could have greatly impacted upon the development of the medieval church in Omeath. The border regions of the Pale, of which Omeath formed a part, was often in a state of political unrest, and the influence of see of Armagh in these areas suffered in consequence. So, as Aalen has noted, 'although the colonized portions of Co. Louth may have become progressively English in life and thought, the Armagh and Tyrone portions of the colony resisted English influence to such an extent that it was often necessary for the Archbishop to resort to excommunication in the enforcement of order within the diocese in the later Middle Ages,' [545] and indeed, conditions in Omeath were probably more in line with the latter than the former.

The only known site of a medieval church in Omeath was located in the townland of Knocknagoran.[546] This church is listed in both the *Inventory* and the *Survey* as a 'Church Site'. There are no structural details for this church provided in either publication, even though the site itself was surveyed on the 21st July 1967. Buckley, in

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[542] PATERSON, T.G.F., 'Housing and House Types in County Armagh', *Ulster Folklife,* Volume 6, (1960), p. 8.
[543] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District,* pp. 31-47; PATERSON, (1960), p. 8; AALEN, (1962a), p. 260; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 49.
[544] AALEN, (1962a), p. 260.
[545] PATERSON, (1960), p. 8.
[546] See Figure 38.

1986, and Buckley and Sweetman, in 1991, both described this site in two identical entries as follows:

Church (site) Graveyard marked on Taylor and skinner's map of 1777. Present church modern, but irregular mound in NNE corner of graveyard probably site of earlier church.[547]

As well as this definite church site there is another site categorised as a 'Possible Church Site' which is listed in the *Inventory* but was omitted from the *Survey* due to a lack of evidence. It is situated approximately 0.75km from the first church site and was also surveyed on 21st July 1967. It was recorded by Buckley in 1986 simply as 'Stony area known as 'Cnoc na hEaglaise'. Reputedly find spot of a chalice.'[548]

One of these sites had been previously surveyed by Davies for his 1941 publication in the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal.* It was most likely the first site, because Buckley and Sweetman reference him in their description of it. However, Davies' description of this site raises some questions, as he recorded it, not as a church site, but as a church in use, and he also commented that it:

> *Lies on a shelf close to Carlingford Lough, probably the raised beach. It is now used by Catholics; but is older than the adjoining chapel and is marked on Taylor and Skinner's map of 1776. I am uncertain whether it is the site of the pre-reformation chapel of Omeath, mentioned by Leslie, as there are no ancient stones.*[549]

There are clearly some discrepancies here when this description is compared to that of Buckley and Sweetman. Firstly, they do not mention that it is a coastal site, and although Davies was writing twenty-six years before Buckley and Sweetman's survey was carried out, he clearly states that the church was still in use by Catholics, while they assert that by 1967 it had been reduced to an 'irregular mound'. Davies also implies that it was the church which is recorded on Taylor and Skinner's Map of 1776, while Buckley and Sweetman state that only a graveyard is illustrated on Taylor and Skinner's Map of 1777 for this site. As far as the present writer is aware there are not two maps by Taylor and Skinner dating to 1776 and 1777 so this is probably just a simple mistake or a typing

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[547] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 75; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234. The results of the 1967 survey can also be accessed at the *Sites and Monuments Record:* RMP LH 005-008001, Knocknagoran Graveyard. The site is also described as a 'Cemetery' in the 1984 preliminary archaeological survey of Louth, but, apart from providing location co-ordinates for the site, does not provide any additional information. See ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 8.

[548] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 81 & see Figure 4. Unfortunately there is neither a *Topographical File* nor a *Sites and Monuments Record* file recorded for this site.

[549] DAVIES, (1941b), p.12.

error. Interestingly however, Davies mentions a pre-Reformation chapel in Omeath [550] which is also referred to by Leslie:

> *Omeath was a Chapel of Ease in Carlingford Parish. The parsonage or rectory was, in pre-Reformation times, the property of the Black Priory of the Ards.* [551]

5. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

a. STONE CARVINGS

In 1948 a discovery was made in Omeath of two carved figures which appeared to have a religious symbolism and which seemed to be of medieval date. In addition to this, the backs of the figures were rough in texture, which gave the impression that they had originally been built into a wall. These carvings were brought to the notice of the National Museum and of the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* by one J. Macartney Robbins, who had photographed them. When they were discovered they were set into a bank, one on each side of the flat platform in front of Park House, Omeath. This house, which at the time belonged to the Doyle family of Omeath, had formerly belonged to the Omeath Irish College for a brief period, and before that to the Woodhouse family, who were originally from Armagh. [552]In a bid to discover where and when these figures had originated Leask was consulted, and, from an examination of the photographs, suggested that the figure with the upright collar was a cleric of some kind and might possibly be dated to 1620, while the other figure, which had long hair might date to anywhere between 1670 and 1770. [553] It was not until Paterson, having being consulted about the Woodhouse family, requested to examine them, that their true provenance was discovered, and unfortunately for this study it transpired that they were not connected in any way to the medieval churches of Omeath.[554]

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[550] IBID, p.12.
[551] LESLIE, (1911), p. 394.
[552] TEMPEST H.G., 'Two Carved Stone Figures at Omeath', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XI, Number 4, (1948), p. 287.
[553] TEMPEST, (1948), p. 287.
[554] It was later discovered that when Armagh Cathedral was being restored in 1834, by the architect Cottingham, he removed, from the walls of the old building and also from the crypt, a number of carved stones of varying date, some of which he removed to London, and the remainder he gave away to individuals who had contributed to the cathedral's restoration fund. In 1948, Paterson stated with certainty that the two figures came from Armagh Cathedral, having in all probability been given to the Woodhouse family, he also noted that a number of similar stones with same origin had been traced in various parts of Co. Armagh and in many cases had been returned to the Cathedral for preservation. See PATERSON, T.G. F. & Davies, O., 'The Churches of Armagh', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology,* Volume III, (1940), p. 82; TEMPEST, (1948), p. 287.

6. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERY

Although the site of the medieval church at Knocknagoran is depicted on Taylor and Skinner's eighteenth century map of Co. Louth as a graveyard,[555] the site is represented today as an irregular mound in the NNE corner of the grounds of a modern church. There are now no distinguishing features of a medieval cemetery in evidence at this site and it is therefore impossible to make any definitive comments about it.

7. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

Due to the fact that no archaeological excavations have taken place at the church site in Knocknagoran, no excavated artefacts have ever been recovered for analysis in this study. However it is worth noting that the possible church site, 'Cnoc na hEaglaise,' which was surveyed in 1967 and described as a 'stony area' by Buckley in 1986, was also the reputed find spot of a chalice. Regrettably, there is no record of this chalice in the National Museum of Ireland, and no indication of who may have discovered it, when it first came to light, or indeed what may have happened to it after it was recovered. As there is no surviving description of this chalice, it is impossible to attempt to date it along typological lines. The lack of documentary record for this chalice would indicate that the story of its discovery in Knocknagoran may have been passed down orally over several generations. Although oral history can partially compensate in some cases where the documentary record is lacking, [556] it should be noted that the reliability of this information varies greatly and can obviously be called into question; nonetheless it would be remiss of this researcher to ignore it completely, especially considering the religious connotations of the placename Cnoc na hEaglaise.

8. ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

There are only three other archaeological sites listed in the *Inventory* and the *Survey* for the townland of Knocknagoran. The first is the site of an earthwork which is marked as an antiquity on the current OS six-inch to the mile map and known locally as 'O'Hagan's Fort'. No visible surface trace of this site has survived, except for a curve in

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[555] See Figure 3.

[556] AALEN, F.H.A., 'Tradition and History in Omeath, County Louth', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume XV, Number 2, (1962b), p. 121.

a field fence to the south which has a circumference of *c.* 50m.[557] As previously mentioned O'Carroll carried out a partial excavation of this site in 1998 ahead of a proposed housing development. She concluded that the topographical setting and placename evidence, as well as the results from the excavation, all suggested that this site was that of a levelled ringfort.[558] The second surviving archaeological site at Knocknagoran is an enclosure site which consists of an old bank under modern field walls which may represent remains of an ancient enclosure, [559] while the third is a ringfort which comprises an artificially raised circular platform with an internal diameter of 30m enclosed by degraded earthen bank.[560] As in the case of the townland of Cornamucklagh, these sites indicate that, despite the relatively inhospitable nature of the terrain around Omeath, this area had nonetheless been a magnet for human settlement for many centuries.

9. ETYMOLOGY

In 1914, in conjunction with Murray's article on Omeath, O'Dubhda compiled a list of placenames in the townlands of Omeath, both from the old Irish speakers there, as well as from the students of the local Irish classes.[561] He acknowledged that the translations in a few cases were doubtful, as the names were given to him in many instances by school children. Even so, however, this list is extremely important for the study of the medieval ecclesiastical settlement of Omeath especially considering the paucity of physical evidence.

O'Dubhda listed two placenames for the townland of Cornamucklagh. The first, *Coille Cnoc A Puirt*, he identified as the wood opposite Narrowwater Castle, and he translated the name literally as 'the wood of the hill-port'.[562] It is possible that this placename indicates the landing site of the ferry from Narrowwater which was recorded

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[557] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 64; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p.198 & see Figure 4. These three sites are also listed in the preliminary archaeological survey of Louth along with an additional fourth site which is categorised as an 'Enclosure (uncertain)'. As is the case with the 'Cemetery' at Knocknagoran this publication does not include any archaeological information relevant to these sites. See ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984), p. 8.

[558] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=1393, O'CARROLL, F., 'Excavation Report, Knocknagoran, Earthwork Site, 1998:465.

[559] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 64; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 198 & see Figure 38.

[560] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 54; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p 176 & see Figure 38.

[561] O'DUBHDA, P., 'Gaelic Place-Names in Omeath', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume III, Number 3, (1914), p. 232.

[562] O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 232.

for Cornamucklagh in the inquisition of 1608. [563] The second, *Roilig Cnoc A Puirt,* he identified as 'the old burial place in above wood. It is said that only unbaptized children or strangers were buried here.' [564] It seems more than probable that this burial place is on the site of the monastery of Killansnamh. As previously discussed, the townland name of *Cornamucklagh*, or *Cor na Muclac* in its Gaelic-Irish form[565] does not bear any religious connotations and translates as 'the round hill of the piggeries'.[566] Furthermore it is a townland name which occurs not only in Louth but also in some other counties as well.[567]

For the townland of Knocknagoran O'Dubhda listed four placenames, all of which have ecclesiastical undertones. The first of these is *Teampoill Labhair*, which translates as 'St. Lawrence's Chapel', by which the present Roman Catholic Church is known, as was the church in O'Dubhda's time, as St. Lawrence is the patron saint of Omeath. [568] The Irish word *teampall/teampull* can obviously be taken to mean a *temple* but it is also known to denote a specifically medieval church, as well as a Protestant Church, or a churchyard.[569] As previously discussed,[570] although *temple* was initially considered one of the oldest forms of church name used in Ireland, [571] more modern research has concluded that the use of *temple* as a church name to be a much later etymological development. Flanagan, in particular, suggests that the terms *eaglais*, *mainistir* and *teampall* are all late and probably post-Norman introductions.[572] Hurley, however, in the south-west of Ireland has found that, although no instance has been found of the name *temple* being applied to a church in the pre-Norman period, a number of the sites in his study area which are now designated as *temple* are undoubtedly much older than the twelfth century.[573] So, it seems that, although the *temple* part of the name most probably dates from the post-twelfth century period, it would seem to only be applied to a

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[563] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608.
[564] O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 232.
[565] IBID, p. 232.
[566] STUBBS, (1909), p. 133; MURRAY, L.P., 'Omeath', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume III, Number 3, (1914), p. 223; O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 232; http://www.booksulster.com/library/plnm/placenamesC.php. See also Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Cornamucklagh.
[567] http://www.booksulster.com/library/plnm/placenamesC.php.
[568] http://www.booksulster.com/library/plnm/placenamesK.php.
[569] FOCLÓIR PÓCA, (1994), p. 489; http://www.crannog.ie/focloir.htm.
[570] See Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, II. Faughart & Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Templetown.
[571] JOYCE, P.W., *Irish Names of Places,* Volume I, (Dublin, 1869), pp. 317-18.
[572] FLANAGAN, (1967), pp. 379-88.
[573] HURLEY, (1979), pp. 82-83.

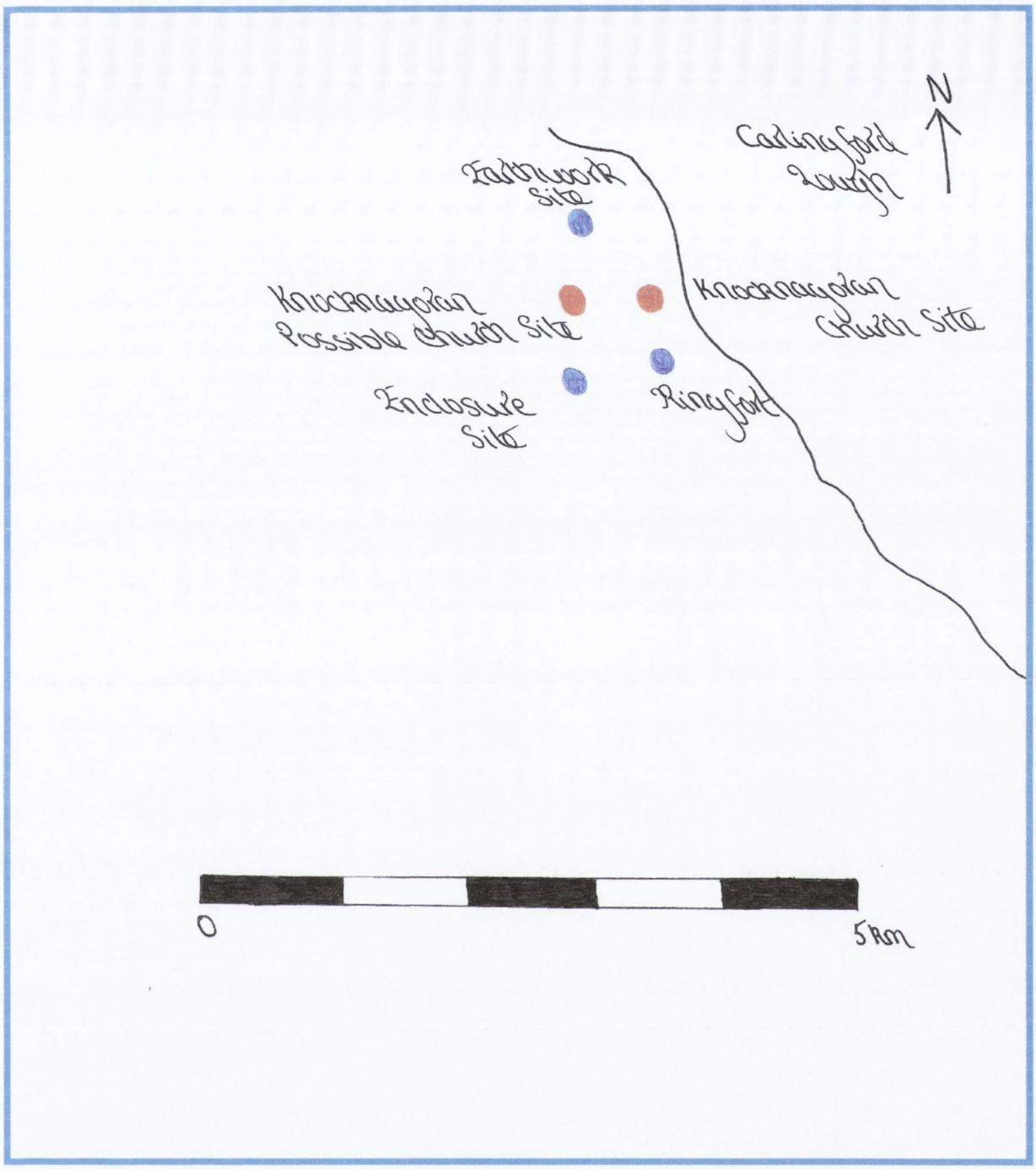


Figure 38: Rough map of the associated archaeological sites at Knocknagoran. The church sites are indicated in red, the other sites in blue.

particular type of church which was located on the site of an older pre-Norman church,[574] as was the case with Faughart.

The second placename translated by O'Dubhda for Knocknagoran was *Cille Cuim,* and this he explained as being 'the burial ground beside the chapel.' This could certainly indicate the site of a medieval church at Knocknagoran, located as it is beside the modern church of Omeath. The third place-name mentioned by O'Dubhda in Knocknagoran is *Cnoc na h-Eaglaise.* This he translated literally as 'the hill of the church' and he added one further important snippet of information about the place:

> *This is on the height up over the village in a very stony piece of land. It is said that a chalice was found here at one time.'* [575]

This would certainly appear to have been the evidence upon which Buckley based his inclusion of the site of a second possible medieval church in the *Inventory,* with the lack of any further physical archaeological evidence obviously preventing its inclusion in the more detailed *Survey.* Indeed the present author can find no evidence to corroborate this story of a chalice having been found at this site, so as previously mentioned, it was possibly an oral tradition which was recorded for the first time by O'Dubhda in 1914. The fourth site included by O'Dubhda was known locally as *Cnoc na hAltóra,* which translates as 'the hill of the altar' and it was located on top of Cerve Mountain.[576] No further detail was offered by O'Dubhda about this site, but it was possibly the site of a mass rock, perhaps dating to the period of suppression of Catholicism in Ireland in the seventeenth century. It would come as no surprise that inhabitants of such a virulently Gaelic-Irish border region would seek to preserve the practise of their faith even in times of persecution. The name *Knocknagoran* itself is not in any way religious and in its Gaelic-Irish form is written alternatively as *Cnoc* na *bhFuarán,* which translates as the 'hill of the wells,[577]' or *Cnoc na nGaban,* which translates as the 'hill of the goats.'[578] Like the townland name of Cornamucklagh, Knocknagoran is also a placename which occurs not only in Omeath but also elsewhere throughout the country.[579]

There are no instances of a holy well being mentioned in association with any possible medieval religious sites in Omeath. However there are two wells mentioned by

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[574] IBID, p. 76.
[575] O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 236.
[576] O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 236.
[577] SIMMS, K., pers. comm., (March, 2009).
[578] STUBBS, (1910), p. 291; MURRAY, (1914), p. 223; O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 236; http://www.booksulster.com/library/plnm/placenamesK.php.
[579] http://www.booksulster.com/library/plnm/placenamesK.php.

O'Dubhda as having been located in the townlands of Ballyonan and Bavan. That at Ballyonan is unlikely to have its origins in any ecclesiastical tradition as it is called the *Tobar na Glaire Gaibleann,* or the *well of the Glaire Gaibleann,* it was situated on the summit *of* Carlingford Mountain and was said to rise with the flow and lower with the ebb of the tide. O'Dubhda explained this name through an association with the mythical *Glas Gaivlenn,* a cow famous in some Gaelic-Irish traditions of different parts of Ireland because it could not be milked dry.[580] However, the second well may have had some religious connections. Located in the townland of Bavan this well was known in 1914 as *Tobar Mairtinne* which translates as *Martin's Well.* [581] As O'Dubhda could not find any reason why it should be called after a random, unidentified 'Martin', it is possible that it was named after St. Martin, although this is highly speculative.

It is apparent that, in contrast to the occurrence of placenames in the lowlands of Cooley, many of which are Anglo-Norman in origin, the placenames in Omeath are solely Gaelic-Irish in their provenance, a trend which has previously been examined by Hughes.[582] Furthermore, the translation of Cornamucklagh as 'round hill of the piggeries,' along with that of Knocknagoran as 'hill of the goats,' reinforces the predominantly rural nature of the region, which, in the medieval period, was known to have relied heavily upon agriculture.

10. CHRONOLOGY

The ecclesiastical remains at Omeath represent two distinct phases of religious settlement in the area and consist of three sites; one early medieval monastic site in the townland of Cornamucklagh,[583] and two medieval church sites, one definite and one possible, in the townland of Knocknagoran. Although it is not certain where these medieval church sites are located the first one may be situated on the grounds of St. Andrew's Church, Omeath. This church was founded in 1838 but closed on 30th September 1990. [584] Considering the descriptions of the site recorded by Davies, Buckley and Buckley & Sweetman, as well as the cartographical evidence in the form of Taylor

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[580] O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 235.
[581] IBID, p. 235.
[582] See HUGHES, (1961), pp. 149-174.
[583] See Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Cornamucklagh.
[584] It was subsequently de-consecrated on the 3 September 1992. It was a trustee church with no parochial district attached until after 1870. The church was subsequently sold for use as a private dwelling and in recent years was being used by dissident Catholic clergy of the Tridentine rite who offer remarriage in church to divorced Catholics. http://creggan.armagh.anglican.org/firsta1.html.

and Skinner's map of 1777, the site of the medieval church is unlikely to be have been located on the grounds of the present Catholic church in Omeath, St. Lawrence's, which was built in the 1980s and opened in 1987.[585] The lack of archaeological evidence at either of the possible church sites in Knocknagoran make it impossible to comment any further upon their chronology using only the physical evidence as an aid.

However, the numerous historical references to the 'rectory' and the 'parsonage' of Omeath which are evident in the documentary record from the early thirteenth to the early eighteenth century can be utilized to construct a more reliable chronology for Knocknagoran. Specific references to the 'rectory of Omeath' occur on three occasions; in 1200,[586] 1360[587] and 1395.[588] In 1200, it was granted by Hugh de Lacy to the Benedictine abbey of Ballyhalbert, in 1360 it was purchased from the abbey by the archbishop of Armagh for £200, and at some point after 1367, when it is referred to in the archiepiscopal register of Milo Sweteman,[589] it was confiscated by the Crown and later restored to Archbishop John Colton in 1395. In 1438 the 'tithes' of *Omee* are referred to in the archiepiscopal register of John Swayne,[590] and the identification of this place as Omeath is supported by further references to 'the lands of Omee near Carlingford' in 1508,[591] 'the lands of Omeath' in 1530,[592] and the church lands of 'Omee' in a rent roll of Archbishop George Dowdall in 1544.[593]

There is only one surviving reference which offers an insight into the physical state of this church, a record of an inquisition into church organization in Co. Louth which took place in 1658 and was conducted on a parish-to-parish basis.[594] At this point the church in Carlingford is described as being out of repair. Omeath is described as an impropriation in the possession of one Rice ap Hugh since 1640 who held it of the Archbishop of Armagh.[595] Although the text of the document is quite confusing in part, it would appear that the tithes from the parish of Omeath were divided into 'great tythes' and 'smale tythes'. In 1640 the 'great tythes' amounted to £12, and the 'smale tythes' to

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[585] http://www.armagharchdiocese.org/html/Parish_Directory9.htm.
[586] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 50.
[587] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1360.
[588] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1395.
[589] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1367.
[590] *The Register of John Swayne,* 1438.
[591] PRONI, D.3078/1/25/1-7.
[592] PRONI, D.3078/1/25/1-7.
[593] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1544.
[594] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* pp. 37-38.
[595] The use of the term *impropriation* indicates that Rice Ap Hugh may have been a layman who was in possession of the revenues of the rectory of Omeath. See FITZPATRICK, & O'BRIEN, (1998), p. 174.

£6, but by the year of the inquisition, 1658, had dwindled to £4 and 40 shillings respectively. It is apparent from a perusal of this document that the parish of Omeath must have existed independently prior to 1658, when the findings of the inquisition recommended that the two parishes of Carlingford and Omeath be united, with the parish church to be located at Carlingford. The declining tithes of the parish of Omeath between 1640 and 1658 certainly seem to suggest a dwindling population and it is probable that, if the church located in the more populous town of Carlingford was at this point out of repair, then the church at Omeath must have been in a similar, if not a worse state of preservation. Even this conclusion upon the unification of the parishes in 1658 is not a clear-cut one and is confused by an entry in the archiepiscopal rent rolls in 1703 which describes the 'parsonage' of Omeath, owing its tithes to the archbishop and located in a parish in which there were '10 small townlands';[596] a description which does not support the unification of the parishes of Omeath and Carlingford at this point, but rather suggests that the parish of Omeath, which in 1608 was described consisting of ten townlands was once again independent.[597]

Although the location of the 'rectory' or 'parsonage' of Omeath has never been conclusively discovered, the balance of surviving evidence would indicate that the most likely location for this church was at Knocknagoran on the grounds of the present St. Andrew's Church, the site which appears to have been surveyed in 1941 by Davies and later included in the *Inventory* of 1986 and also the *Survey* of 1991. If this was indeed the case, then it would stand to reason that this structure was the parish church of Omeath, with the possible second church located at Cnoc na hEaglaise possibly serving as a chapel of ease in the parish. Leslie mentioned a chapel of ease in Omeath in 1911, but appears to have confused the two sites:

> *Omeath was a Chapel of Ease in Carlingford Parish. The parsonage or rectory was in pre-Reformation times the property of the Black Priory of the Ards.* [598]

One possible interpretation of Leslie's research is that the original parish church of Omeath served as a chapel of ease in the parish of Carlingford following the unification of the two parishes in 1658. This does not preclude the possibility that at some point, prior to 1658, when the rectory of Omeath was operating as a parish church that there

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[596] *Extracts from Rent Rolls of the See of Armagh in 1703,* p. 93.
[597] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 49-50. See Figure 2 for an illustration of these ten townlands; Cornamucklagh, Lislea, Drummullagh, Ardaghy, Bavan, Tullagh Omeath, Knocknagoran, Corrakit, Ballinteskin, and Ballyonan.
[598] LESLIE, (1911), p. 394.

was a second church functioning as a chapel of ease and possibly located at Cnoc na hEaglaise. This would account for the ecclesiastical nature of the placename, as well as for the discovery of the mysterious chalice.

Despite the numerous physical reminders on the landscape of the lowlands of Cooley, mostly in the form of mottes, medieval churches and tower houses, in the uplands of Omeath, where there was a notable absence of any physical form of Anglo-Norman settlement, there is also a regrettable dearth of medieval ecclesiastical remains. It has therefore been necessary to sift intensively through the contemporary documentary records in a bid to uncover any reference at all to the archaeology and history of the medieval church in Omeath. However, having reviewed all of the available documentary sources relating to Omeath it still remains difficult to present a complete historical account of ecclesiastical settlement in the area for, as with so much of rural Ireland, there are few detailed literary or cartographical sources for earlier times,[599] so it has been necessary throughout this study to rely upon two surveys of the field evidence, which were conducted in 1941[600] and 1967,[601] as well as some vague snippets of oral history. Unfortunately however, in the years since these two surveys took place, much of this field evidence, which was minimal to begin with, along with the local oral tradition has become severely degraded, a trend which was recognised and lamented more generally almost one hundred years ago by Carlingford native, celebrated gaelgóir and local historian Laurence Murray:

> *The loss of our language and of our traditions has unfortunately made us to an extent aliens in our own land – the hills and streams and ruins which to be monuments of our past history are strange and silent before us.*[602]

Nonetheless, it has still been possible to make some additional conclusions upon the ecclesiastical settlement of Omeath, and in particular Knocknagoran, in the medieval period.

The topography of the mountainous uplands of Omeath were certainly not conducive to populous settlement in the manner in which the lowlands of Cooley were. Even so, however, a study of the associated archaeological sites in the general vicinity of Knocknagoran indicates that, despite the rugged nature of the locality, it had still managed to attract human settlers for several centuries. Furthermore, the surveys of

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[599] AALEN, (1962a), p. 261.
[600] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12.
[601] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 75 & 86; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234
[602] MURRAY, (1914), p. 213.

Knocknagoran conducted in 1941 by Davies and in 1967 by Buckley, indicate the existence of the site of a medieval church and cemetery in the grounds of the more modern St. Andrew's Church. Regrettably, the scarcity of this archaeological evidence, which is now comprised solely of an irregular mound, makes it impossible to comment upon the size, morphology or masonry style of the original medieval structure. Buckley, in 1986, recorded a second possible church site, known locally as 'Cnoc na hEaglaise'.[603] According to O'Dubhda, in 1914, it was the reputed find spot of a chalice at an unknown date,[604] and it was apparently on these grounds that it was included in the 1986 *Inventory,* although it was subsequently omitted from the *Survey* of 1991 due to lack of evidence.

The discovery, in 1948, of two carved stone figures of ecclesiastical origin at Park House, Omeath, raised the possibility that they may have originated from a medieval church at Knocknagoran. However, subsequent examinations of the carvings by Leask and Paterson determined that they had in fact originated in Armagh Cathedral.[605] The only other artefact which could possibly have originated from a medieval church at Knocknagoran is the chalice which was reputedly uncovered at Cnoc na hEaglaise at some point prior to 1914. The story of the discovery of this chalice appears to have been passed down orally, possibly over several generations, and, as there is no record of this chalice in the National Museum of Ireland, or elsewhere, it is impossible to attempt to date it typologically.

The associated cemetery at the medieval church site of Knocknagoran, although recorded on Taylor and Skinner's map of 1777, now has no defining medieval features extant. There are only three other archaeological sites listed in the *Inventory* and the *Survey* for the townland of Knocknagoran; an earthwork site,[606] an enclosure site[607] and a ringfort.[608] The earthwork site is the only site in Knocknagoran to have ever been archaeologically excavated. This excavation took place 1998 and the excavator, O'Carroll, concluded that site was that of a levelled ringfort.[609] As in the case of the townland of Cornamucklagh, these associated archaeological sites indicate that, despite

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[603] BUCKLEY, (1991), p. 86.
[604] O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 236.
[605] PATERSON & DAVIES, (1940), p. 82; TEMPEST, (1948), p. 287.
[606] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 64; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p.198 & see Figure 4.
[607] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 64; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 198 & see Figure 4.
[608] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 54; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 176 & see Figure 4
[609] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=1393, O'CARROLL, F., 'Excavation Report, Knocknagoran, Earthwork Site, 1998:465; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 54; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p 176.

the relatively inhospitable nature of the terrain around Omeath, this area had nonetheless been a magnet for human settlement for many centuries.

The scarcity of extant archaeological evidence for the medieval churches of Omeath can be supplemented to a certain degree by the surviving etymological evidence. A study made in 1914 by O'Dubhda identified *Coille Cnoc A Puirt*, as 'the wood of the hill-port',[610] which is the possible landing site of a medieval ferry from Narrowwater to Cornamucklagh which was in operation in 1608.[611] He translated *Roilig Cnoc A Puirt,* as 'the old burial place in above wood,'[612] which is likely to indicate the site of the early medieval monastery of Killansnamh. For the townland of Knocknagoran he highlighted four important placenames, all of which suggest ecclesiastical functionality. The first of these, *Teampoill Labhair*, translates as 'St. Lawrence's Chapel', by which the present Roman Catholic Church is known, as St. Lawrence is the patron saint of Omeath.[613] The *Teampoill* element of this placename is significant as *teampall/teampull* often denotes a specifically medieval church, or a churchyard.[614] Although *temple* was initially considered one of the oldest forms of church name used in Ireland, [615] it has more recently been suggested that the use of *temple* as a church was a much later etymological development, and possibly a post-Norman development.[616]However, in line with research conducted in the south-west of Ireland, it is also possible that, although the *temple* part of the name most probably dates from the post-twelfth century period, it was only applied to a particular type of church which was located on the site of an older pre-Norman church,[617] as was the case with Faughart.

The translation by O'Dubhda of *Cille Cuim,* as 'the burial ground beside the chapel' could possibly denote the site of a medieval church at Knocknagoran, located as it is beside the modern church of Omeath. The third placename translated by O'Dubhda was *Cnoc na h-Eaglaire,* the find spot of the lost chalice and the site identified by Buckley as *Cnoc na hEaglaise*.[618] The use of word *Eaglaire/eaglaise* here is significant and research conducted by Flanagan suggests that the introduction of this term to denote

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[610] O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 232.
[611] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608.
[612] O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 232.
[613] http://www.booksulster.com/library/plnm/placenamesK.php.
[614]FOCLÓIR PÓCA, (1994), p. 489; http://www.crannog.ie/focloir.htm.
[615] JOYCE, (1869), pp. 317-18.
[616] FLANAGAN, (1967), pp. 379-88.
[617] HURLEY, (1979), p. 76.
[618] O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 236.

a church site was probably a post-Norman introduction.[619] Finally O'Dubhda translated a fourth site in Knocknagoran, *Cnoc na hAltóra*, as 'the hill of the altar,'[620]and this was possibly the site of a seventeenth century mass rock. It is apparent that, in contrast to the occurrence of placenames in the lowlands of Cooley, many of which are Anglo-Norman in origin, the placenames in Omeath are solely Gaelic-Irish in their provenance.

Chronologically it may be observed that the ecclesiastical remains at Omeath represent two distinct phases of religious settlement and comprise one early medieval monastic site in the townland of Cornamucklagh, and two medieval church sites, one definite and one possible, in the townland of Knocknagoran. From 1200-1703 there are several surviving documentary references to the 'rectory' or 'parsonage' of Omeath, and the surviving evidence would appear to indicate that this site was located at Knocknagoran and served as the parish church as Omeath, with the possibility of a second church at Cnoc na hEaglaise functioning as a chapel of ease.

Finally, it can be observed that, the lack of archaeological evidence on the landscape of Omeath, in the form of mottes, medieval churches and tower houses, has previously precluded the consideration of an Anglo-Norman settlement in the region. However, the granting of the 'rectory of Omeath' by Hugh de Lacy to the abbey of Ballyhalbert in 1200, [621] coupled with the possible inclusion of two Omeath townlands, Tylathcothelan and Tylathcothyl, in a list of amercements imposed by the Crown court in Lower Dundalk in 1301[622]would seem to indicate that some degree of Anglo-Norman sub-infeudation had been achieved in the locality by the early fourteenth century. Nonetheless, if this was the case, the subsequent lack of archaeological, historical or etymological evidence for an Anglo-Norman colonization in the area suggests that a significant settlement was never successfully established in Omeath, and that the area remained predominantly Gaelic-Irish for the duration of the medieval period.

X. CONCLUSIONS

In the aftermath of the Anglo-Norman colonization of north Louth, in the late 1180s, the three early medieval monastic sites located at Faughart, Proleek and Roosky,

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[619] FLANAGAN, (1967), pp. 379-88.
[620] O'DUBHDA, (1914), p. 236.
[621] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 50.
[622] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 42.

were re-used by the Anglo-Normans while a further eight rural churches were established by the newcomers at Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Castletowncooley, Templetown, Willville, Grange, Muchgrange and Knocknagoran. These sites appear to have functioned as dispersed rural settlements. Along with the Church of the Holy Trinity at Carlingford, the churches at Faughart, Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall and Knocknagoran functioned as parish churches within the individual parishes of Faughart, Ballymascanlan, Newtown Cooley and Omeath. The churches at Castletowncooley, Willville, Grange and Muchgrange appear to have functioned as chapels of ease within the extensive medieval parish of Carlingford, and, in 1658, the parishes of Omeath and Newtown Cooley were also subsumed into the parish of Carlingford. The medieval church at Templetown was not one of the church sites which was absorbed into the parish of Carlingford in 1658 and so it is likely that this church also functioned as a parish church in the medieval period.

a. SURVEYS & EXCAVATIONS

In 1941 Davies included the churches of Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Templetown, Willville, Muchgrange and Knocknagoran in his survey of the medieval ecclesiastical remains in the Barony of Lower Dundalk.[623] In 1986 Buckley examined the churches at Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Castletowncooley, Templetown, Grange, Muchgrange and Knocknagoran for publication in the *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth.*[624] Following on from this, the *Archaeological Survey of County Louth*, which was compiled by Buckley and Sweetman, published surveys of the churches of Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Templetown, Grange, Muchgrange and Knocknagoran in 1991.[625] The site of the medieval church at Grange is the only one of this group which has undergone archaeological excavation. There have been three separate archaeological investigations at Grange; the first was overseen by O'Carroll in 2000[626] and the second and third were undertaken by Clutterbuck in 2002.[627]

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[623] DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 7, 12, 13 & 14.
[624] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 71, 72, 75 77, 79, 80 & 93.
[625] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 221, 234, 249, 256, 258, 260.
[626] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=4982
O'CARROLL, F., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2000:0707.
[627] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8704
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1359; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360.

b. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

The first recorded reference to the medieval settlement of Ballymascanlan occurred at some time between 1195 and 1205.[628] From this point onwards there were fifteen further documentary references made to Ballymascanlan church and settlement in the medieval period in 1301,[629] 1348, [630]1431,[631] 1528,[632]1535,[633]1540, [634] 1579, [635] 1600, [636] 1605,[637] 1606, [638] 1622 ,[639] 1627,[640] 1628, [641] 1633[642] and 1656. [643] The first possible reference to the medieval settlement at Mountbagnall occurred in 1236.[644] Further references to this settlement and church were recorded in 1301,[645] 1332,[646] 1390,[647] 1431,[648]*c.*1439,[649]1528,[650]1535,[651] 1575,[652] 1608,[653]1622,[654] 1656,[655] 1658;[656] and 1664.[657] Although there are no surviving primary documents which make direct reference to Castletowncooley Church, there are seven surviving references to the

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[628] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 79.
[629] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301)*, p. 42.
[630] *Inspeximus of 1348,* pp. 1-5.
[631] *The Register of John Swayne,* 1431; MACIOMHAIR, (1959a), pp. 369-79; MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 82.
[632] *Archbishop Cromer's Register*, 1528.
[633] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1535.
[634] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions 1540-42*, p. 120.
[635] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 81. See also LESLIE, (1911), p. 135.
[636] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 81. See also LESLIE, (1911), p. 135.
[637] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 81. See also LESLIE, (1911), p. 135.
[638] LESLIE, (1911), p. 135; MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 80.
[639] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*, p. 10.
[640] LESLIE, (1911), p. 133. See also *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*, p. 10.
[641] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 82.
[642] LESLIE, (1911), p. 133. See also *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*, p. 10.
[643] LESLIE, (1911), p. 135.
[644] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 407; SMITH, (1988), p. 263; HAGGER, (2001), p. 78; KENNY, (2007), pp. 145-47.
[645] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 43.
[646] MCNEILL, & OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1960), p. 55; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 428.
[647] *Extracts Relating to Co. Louth from the Calendar of the Register of Primate Nicholas Fleming,* 1390; *The Register of Nicholas Fleming, Archbishop of Armagh 1404-1416,* 1390.
[648] *The Register of John Swayne,* 1431; MACIOMHAIR, (1959a), p. 373.
[649] *Dowdall Deeds*, 1439.
[650] *Archbishop Cromer's Register,* 1528.
[651] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall*, 1535.
[652] O'SULLIVAN, (1985), pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 74.
[653] *Irish Records Commission*, Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608.
[654] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*, p. 10.
[655] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.
[656] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, pp. 19-41.
[657] *Hearth Money Rolls: Barony of Dundalk*, pp. 500-15.

settlement itself which were recorded 1301,[658] 1378,[659]1543, [660]1575,[661] 1608,[662] 1658[663]and 1703.[664] The existence of the medieval settlement at Templetown was first noted in 1301.[665] It was again recorded in 1368, [666]1411, [667]1433,[668]1528,[669] 1529, [670] 1535, [671] and finally, in 1541.[672] There are only four surviving documentary references to the medieval settlement at Willville which were noted 1301,[673] 1378, [674] 1575 [675] and 1658.[676] The earliest possible reference to the medieval settlement of Grange was also recorded in 1301[677] with additional records dating to 1431, [678] 1529, [679] 1552, [680]1575,[681] 1613,[682] 1658.[683] Five records pertaining to the medieval settlement at Muchgrange have survived and were recorded in 1301,[684]1378,[685] 1575,[686] 1608, [687] and 1658.[688] Finally,

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[658] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1302),* p. 42.
[659] *A Calendar of the Register of Archbishop Sweteman,* 1378; *The Register of Milo Sweteman, Archbishop of Armagh 1361-1380,* 1378.
[660] RMP LH 008-056, Castletowncooley Tower House Site; TEMPEST, (1920), p. 77; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 91; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 310.
[661] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District,* pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 72-75.
[662] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 76-77.
[663] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.
[664] *Extracts from Rent Rolls of the See of Armagh in 1703,* pp. 92-93.
[665] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 43.
[666] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1368; O'SULLIVAN, (2004), p. 45.
[667] *The Register of Nicholas Fleming,*1411.
[668] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), pp. 74-5.
[669] *Archbishop Cromer's Register,* 1528.
[670] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions,* p. 108; JEFFERIES, (1997a), p. 21; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 51-53
[671] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1535.
[672] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions,* p. 108.
[673] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 43.
[674]*The Register of Milo Sweteman,*1378.
[675] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District,* pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 72-75.
[676] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.
[677] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 43.
[678] *The Register of John Swayne,* 1431; MACIOMHAIR, (1959a), pp. 370-74.
[679] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions,* p. 108; JEFFERIES, (1997a), p. 21; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 51-53
[680] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 77; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 11.
[681] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District,* (1985), pp. 31-47 ; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 72-75.
[682]*Dowdall Deeds,* 1613. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 84-86.
[683] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.
[684] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 42; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 43.
[685]*The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1378. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 45-46.

there are thirteen surviving documentary references to the settlement and churches of Omeath which date to *c.* 1200,[689] 1301, [690] 1360,[691] 1367, [692] 1395,[693] 1438, [694] 1508, [695]1530, [696] 1544,[697] 1575,[698] 1608, [699] 1658,[700] and 1703.[701]

c. CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Seven of the eight sites under review in this chapter were depicted upon surviving cartographical sources, the one exception being Mountbagnall. The settlement of Ballymascanlan was depicted upon Richard Bartlett's Map *of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602.*[702] There are five surviving pictorial representations of the medieval settlement at Castletowncooley; the first is by Baptista Boazio and dates to 1599,[703] the second was drawn *c.* 1602 by Richard Bartlett,[704] the third was created by Mathew Wrenn in 1766,[705]the fourth was compiled by Taylor and Skinner in 1777[706] while the fifth survives in the form of the 1835 edition of the OS six-inch to the mile map.[707] The church at Templetown was illustrated by Lythe in 1575, [708] by Bartlett *c.* 1602,[709] by Wrenn in 1766 and finally by Taylor and Skinner in 1777. [710] The settlement at Willville is

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[686] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District,* pp. 31-47. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 73-75.
[687] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 76-77.
[688] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, pp. 37-38; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.
[689] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 50.
[690] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 42.
[691] *The Register of Milo Sweteman*, 1360.
[692] *The Register of Milo Sweteman*, 1367.
[693] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1395.
[694] *The Register of John Swayne,*, 1438.
[695] PRONI, D.3078/1/25/1-7. O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 49.
[696] PRONI, D.3078/1/25/1-7. O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 49.
[697] *A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall,* 1544; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 50-51.
[698] *A 1575 Rent-Roll, with Contemporaneous Maps of the Bagenal Estate in the Carlingford Lough District,*, pp. 31-47; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 49.
[699] *Irish Records Commission,* Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608 ; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 49-50.
[700] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.
[701] *Extracts from Rent Rolls of the See of Armagh in 1703*, p. 93; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 50-51.
[702] See Figure 2.
[703] See Figure 10.
[704] See Figure 11.
[705] See Figure 12.
[706] See Figure 13.
[707] RMP LH 008-056, Castletowncooley Tower House Site; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 72.
[708] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 56.
[709] See Figure 15.
[710] See Figure 16.

depicted on four cartographical sources; Boazio's map of 1599,[711]Bartlett's map of *c.* 1602,[712] Wrenn's map of 1766 and Taylor and Skinner's map of 1777.[713] The medieval settlement at Grange was recorded five times by Boazio in 1599, [714] by Bartlett *c.* 1602, [715] by Wrenn in 1766,[716] by Taylor and Skinner in 1777, [717] and finally on the current OS six-inch map.[718] The medieval settlement at Muchgrange was depicted on four cartographical sources; by Lythe in 1575, [719] by Wrenn in 1766, by Taylor and Skinner in 1771,[720] and finally on the 1836 six-inch OS map. As far as can be discerned, there are no surviving cartographical representations of the medieval church at Knocknagoran. However, there is a graveyard marked on Taylor and Skinner's Map of 1777 at the site of the modern church of St. Andrew's.[721]

d. LOCATION

With the exception of Knocknagoran Church, which was located in the mountainous uplands of Omeath, in the extreme north-east of the barony, the remaining sites under review were all positioned in the agriculturally fertile lowlands of the barony. Geographically these sites form a broad ring around the periphery of the peninsula, stretching from Ballymascanlan in the north-west, down to Templetown in the south, and back up again to Grange and Muchgrange in the north-east.[722]

e. SIZE & MORPHOLOGY

In terms of morphology, the surviving physical and documentary evidence indicate the following: the churches at Ballymascanlan and Templetown were divided nave and chancel structures, the churches at Mountbagnall and Muchgrange functioned as unicameral, or single cell, structures, while the church at Grange appears to have been substantially fortified in a similar manner to the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford.

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[711] See Figure 23.
[712] See Figure 24.
[713] See Figures 25 & 26.
[714] See Figure 29.
[715] See Figure 30.
[716] See Figure 31.
[717] See Figure 32.
[718] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 93.
[719] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 56.
[720] See Figures 34 & 35.
[721] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 75; BUCKLEY, & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234.
[722] See Figure 1.

The extant archaeological remains also suggest that Muchgrange Church, which had an internal area of 55 square metres, was a church of small size, while the structures at Mountbagnall and Templetown, which had internal areas of 114 and 83.16 square metres respectively, were churches of middle size. In 2002 the dimensions of an unidentified structure at the site of Grange Church were calculated by Clutterbuck as 18m by 14m,[723] which would in turn indicate a structure with an internal area of 252 square metres.

f. MASONRY STYLES

Of the eight sites under review in this chapter there are medieval masonry remains extant at only three of them; Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall and Templetown. There are two separate stone structures evident in Ballymascanlan Graveyard which may be of medieval date. The first is a small rectangular roofless structure with a flat-headed doorway located centrally in the west wall and possibly dates to the early medieval period.[724] The south wall and two adjoining sections of the east and west walls of the second structure at Ballymascanlan are still evident along with a stone stairway which appears to be of medieval date.[725] The simple plan of Mountbagnall Church, along with the surviving stonework could indicate an early date of construction for this site.[726] However, the lack of mortar evident in the fabric of the walls and the peculiar proportions of the structure as it stands today suggests that the masonry may have been re-piled at some stage following the demise of the original church.[727] A Templetown the east and south walls of the church are fairly complete, the western gable has mainly fallen and the north wall was at one time buttressed. The west gable has been destroyed down to the ground level and the foundation course is not visible, although some later buttressing indicates its original position.[728]The church itself is constructed of roughly coursed limestone boulders, blocks and greywacke.[729]

g. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

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[723] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360.
[724] See Plate 2.
[725] See Plate 5.
[726] See Plate 11.
[727] FITZPATRICK, E., pers. comm., (March, 2009).
[728] See Plate 23.
[729] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 79; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 258.

Architectural features have survived intact at just three of the eight sites under examination in this chapter; Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall and Templetown. A flat-headed doorway, possibly dating to the early medieval period has survived located centrally in the west wall of the structure which is located to the front of Ballymascanlan Church.[730] At the second structure, which is located to the rear of Ballymascanlan Church a stone stairway, of apparent medieval date, was found to adjoin the eastern gable of the remains.[731] There is also a small recess evident in the south wall of this structure.[732] At Mountbagnall Church there is a stone which may possibly be the original door jamb described by Davies in 1941 is still in evidence on site.[733] In addition to this stone, there is a stone carving located on top of one of the pillars at the entrance-gate to the site which possibly once functioned as a mason's mark.[734]

Four medieval windows have survived at Templetown Church, the biggest example being located in the eastern gable, with two smaller ones surviving in the south wall, and the remaining one in the north wall.[735] There are the remains of what initially appear to be two opposing doorways in the nave of the church. Upon closer examination it can be seen that they do not strictly oppose each other, the doorway in the north wall has been broken out and is visibly wider than that in the south wall, leading Buckley and Sweetman to speculate that it may therefore be a later insertion.[736]

There are a piscina and recess located in the southeast angle of this church.[737] The recess at Templetown is very plain in design and, as there are no signs of a bowl or drain into the wall of the church, this feature could in fact be a credence table or shelf for the washing of the utensils of the Mass. There was a wooden roodscreen positioned approximately 5m from the east gable; the evidence for this has survived in the form of two beam holes which can be seen on the inner face of the north wall, as well as two corbels which project from the inner face of the south wall.[738]

h. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERIES

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[730] See Plate 2.
[731] See Plate 5.
[732] See Plate 6.
[733] See Plates 13 & 14.
[734] See Plates 15 & 16.
[735] See Plates 24-30.
[736] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 258; see Plate 33.
[737] See Plate 36.
[738] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 12; BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 79-80; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 260; see Plate 22.

There is surviving evidence, both physical and documentary, of associated cemeteries at seven of the eight church sites under review in this chapter; Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Castletowncooley, Templetown, Willville, Muchgrange and Knocknagoran. The medieval church remains at Ballymascanlan are located within the grounds of a modern church and cemetery. The earliest gravestone evident in this modern cemetery only dates to 1742, however, it is likely that there was once a medieval burial ground located at this site alongside the original church. Mountbagnall Church is also located within the grounds of a cemetery, although it does seem to be of a much older date than that at Ballymascanlan. There are a number of eighteenth century headstones in evidence at Mountbagnall although there are no grave markers which can be definitively dated to the medieval period. There are, however, numerous rough, crudely carved stones scattered around the graveyard which are clearly very old but which unfortunately cannot be dated definitively.[739]

At Castletowncooley there is a cemetery site located approximately 0.75km to the south-east of the church site.[740] In 1967 the site consisted of a roughly rectangular area, with maximum dimensions of 17.5m north-south and 15m east-west, with a possible boulder-lined perimeter. [741] Both the *Inventory* and the *Survey* record that there was a 'local tradition of bones being unearthed' at this site.[742]The cemetery at Templetown is well maintained and in a good state of preservation although, with the exception of the two possible mullion fragments which are located to the east of the church, this cemetery does not appear to have any distinguishing medieval features or burials extant. There are two holy wells associated with this church, Lady's Well in the townland of Templetown, and *Tober Meen*, on the shore at Templetown.[743]There is now no surviving trace of a medieval cemetery extant at Willville and the only known reference to it was made in 1911 by Leslie.[744]The cemetery located at the site of Muchgrange Church is currently disused and neglected and there are no distinguishing medieval features evident. In common with the churches at Faughart and Templetown, the church at Muchgrange appears to have been closely associated with a holy well; St. James' Well. Although the site of the medieval church at Knocknagoran is depicted on Taylor and Skinner's

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[739] See Plate 17.
[740] See Figure 14.
[741] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 84.
[742] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 84; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 268.
[743] STUBBS, (1908), p.40
[744] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.

eighteenth century map of Co. Louth as a graveyard,[745] the site is represented today as an irregular mound in the NNE corner of the grounds of a modern church. There are now no distinguishing features of a medieval cemetery in evidence at this site.

i. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

Excavated artefacts have only been uncovered at one of the sites under review in this chapter, at the site of Grange Church. During the course of O'Carroll's excavation in 2000 she identified forty-one features of archaeological significance, in particular stretches of foundations for an east–west-running wall as well as a sherd of twelfth–thirteenth century local cooking ware.[746] A medieval limekiln was discovered in 2002 by Clutterbuck during the course of his first excavation at Grange.[747] The third phase of archaeological investigation at this site was also conducted by Clutterbuck in 2002. During the course of his second excavation at Grange in 2002 divided the archaeological features at this site into three phases: late medieval (fifteenth–sixteenth century), early modern (*c.* seventeenth–eighteenth century), and modern (nineteenth–twentieth century). Walls found in the southern sector of the site appeared to be late medieval, representing the remains of a building covering an area of 18m by 14m, and ranged from 1.2m to 0.65m wide.[748]

j. ETYMOLOGY

The name Ballymascanlan can be translated as MacScanlan's town, or the town of the son of Scanlan. [749] The name 'New Town' of Cooley, by which name Mountbagnall Church was commonly known throughout the medieval period may possibly have originated in its foundation date, which although unknown, may have post-dated the foundation of the medieval town of Carlingford and resulted in the name 'New Town'. The later name Mountbagnall is a clear derivative of Nicholas Bagnall's authority in the region in the sixteenth century, [750] the 'mount' element of the name referring to the motte

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[745] See Figure 3.
[746] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=4982
O'CARROLL, F., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2000:0707.
[747] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8704
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1359.
[748] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=8705
CLUTTERBUCK, R., Excavation Report, Rath Lower, 2002:1360.
[749] ARCHDALL, (1876), p. 482; STUBBS, (1908), p. 35.
[750] STUBBS, (1910), p. 297.

and bailey site. The medieval settlement at Castletowncooley is alternatively referred to in several primary sources as *Lucy, Luceton, Lucyistoun, Castleton in Couley, Earl's Quarter, Earlsquarter,* and *Upper Castletown in Cooley.*[751] It is likely that these placenames originated from the fact that the territories of Castletowncooley were in the possession of the de Lacy family from *c.* 1194-5 onwards and are derivatives of *Lacy's Town.* Similarly, the identification of the placename *Earlsquarter* with Castletowncooley may be related in some way to the fact that Hugh de Lacy was Earl of Ulster from 1205-10 and again held the title in 1227. The more modern name Castletowncooley itself would initially appear to have evolved due to the location of James Dowdall's tower house in the townland from 1543 onwards. However the fact that the area was referred to as *Upper Castletown in Cooley* in the text of the grant of £10 made to Dowdall to build the tower house indicates that it derived from the existence of an older castle in the area, possibly the motte at Mountbagnall.

Templetown Church was sometimes referred to in medieval sources as *Kilwirra*, or in its anglicized form, *Kilmore*, denoting the Church of Mary, or possibly St. Mary's Church. The name Templetown itself possibly developed from the holdings of the Knights Templar in the area, or alternatively from the fact that the Irish word *teampall/teampull* can indicate a specifically medieval church, as well as a Protestant Church or a churchyard.[752] The placename Grange has obvious monastic connotations, and derives from the fact that the lands encompassing the modern townlands of Grange, Irish Grange, Monksland, Muchgrange and Millgrange originated as lands belonging to the Cistercian Abbey of Newry. Similarly, the *grange* element of the placename Muchgrange has obviously originated in the fact that there was a monastic grange of the Cistercian abbey of Newry located in the townland in the medieval period. The name *Knocknagoran* is not in any way religious and in its Gaelic-Irish form is written alternatively as *Cnoc* na *bhFuarán*, which translates as the 'hill of the wells,[753]' or *Cnoc na nGaban,* which translates as the 'hill of the goats.'

k. CHRONOLOGY

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[751] *Irish Records Commission*, Inquisition of the Bagnall Estate, 1608; LAWLOR, (1911), p. 294; MCNEILL, & OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1960); MACIOMHAIR, (1965), p. 42; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), pp. 43, 46, 72, 75, 76, 77.

[752] FOCLOIR POCA, *The English/Irish, Irish/English Dictionary,* (Dublin, 1994), p. 489; http://www.crannog.ie/focloir.htm.

[753] SIMMS, K., pers. comm., (March, 2009).

All eight of the settlements under examination in this chapter were included in the 1301 list of amercements, or fines, imposed at a Royal Court in Drogheda,[754] indicating that a considerable portion of the fertile lowlands of the Cooley Peninsula had been subjected to some form of Anglo-Norman sub-infeudation at this point. However, the initial Anglo-Norman colonization of this barony had been instigated in the late 1180s and it is therefore possible that some of the churches in this study area had been established prior to 1301. For example, documentary sources indicate that extensive lands at Ballymascanlan were granted to the Cistercians of Mellifont by Hugh de Lacy at some point between 1195 and 1205.[755] Furthermore, although no definite date of foundation has been recorded for Mountbagnall Church it is possible that an Anglo-Norman settlement had been established here as early as 1236 by Rohesia de Verdun.[756]In addition to these two sites, the etymological evidence available for the study of the medieval settlement at Castletowncooley which suggests that the placename *Lucy/Luceton/Lucyistoun* may have evolved after Hugh de Lacy acquired lands on the Cooley Peninsula in 1194/95, indicates that the initial Anglo-Norman settlement of the townland probably developed quite rapidly in the late twelfth-early thirteenth century. In addition to this, although the first recorded documentary reference to the medieval settlement at Templetown did not occur until 1301 it has generally been acknowledged that Matilda de Lacy's land grant to the Templars in Lower Dundalk was made at sometime between the years 1262 and 1280.[757] Similarly, the first specific reference to the 'rectory of Omeath' occurred in 1200.[758] It is also known that the lands surrounding Grange were granted to the Cistercian Abbey of Newry in the twelfth century, although the first recorded reference to the settlement did not occur until 1301. [759]

All eight of these settlements are mentioned sporadically in the primary sources from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, some references refer specifically to the

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[754] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* pp. 42-49.

[755] *Grant of Ballymascanlan to the Cistercians of Mellifont,* p. 79.

[756] *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland: Volume I: 1171-1251,* ed. by H.S. SWEETMAN, Public Record Office, (London, 1974), 1236. OTWAY-RUTHVEN, A.J., 'The Partition of the de Verdon lands in Ireland in 1332', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 66, Section C, (1968), p. 407; SMITH, B., 'The Concept of the March in Medieval Ireland: The Case of Uriel', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 88, Section C, (1988), p. 263; HAGGER, M.S., *The Fortunes of a Norman Family: The de Verduns in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, 1066-1316,* (Dublin, 2001), p. 78; KENNY, G., *Anglo-Irish and Gaelic Women in Ireland c. 1170-1540,* (Dublin, 2007), pp. 145-47.

[757] LEWIS, (1837), p. 253; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 41; http://www.irish-architecture.com/buildings_ireland/louth/carlingford/lewis.html.

[758] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 50.

[759] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* p. 43.

churches themselves while others refer more generally to the individual settlements. What is apparent, however, is that by the early seventeenth century, the sources record that most of these churches had fallen into disrepair. For example, in 1622 it was recorded that the church at Ballymascanlan had been repaired,[760] but the last known reference to this church occurred in 1656 when the great tithes of Ballymascanlan were rented by the Commonwealth to one John Dodson.[761] It was never referred to again and it must have been at some stage after this that the church fell into disrepair and ruin and was subsequently replaced in the eighteenth century with the current Ballymascanlan Church.[762] The last known reference to Mountbagnall church was also made in 1656. [763] The last references to the settlements at Castletowncooley, Willville, Grange, Muchgrange and Omeath were made in the parish inquisition of 1658. Although there is a scarcity of surviving architectural features at most of these eight church sites, the available evidence, particularly that which survives at Templetown, indicates that construction work was ongoing from at least the thirteenth century right up to the sixteenth century.

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[760] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,(T.C.D. MS. E.36),* transc.& ed. by T. FITZPATRICK, 'The Royal Visitation of 1622', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VI, Number 1, (1925), p. 10.
[761] LESLIE, (1911), p. 135.
[762] MACIOMHAIR, (1970), p. 83.
[763] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.

CHAPTER V: URBAN ECCLESIASTICAL SETTLEMENT AT CARLINGFORD

I. INTRODUCTION

> *I think that I like Carlingford better than any other town that I know. It is not, indeed, a handsome town, it is narrow, hilly, angular, and, to some extent, gloomy. But there is a medieval suggestiveness about it which brings you back many centuries, fills your mind with vague dreamings and tells you what Carlingford once was. To the antiquarian it is a real gold mine...*[1]

The 'medieval suggestiveness' described above at the turn of the twentieth century by Carlingford native and renowned Irish scholar and historian, Laurence Murray[2], undoubtedly emanates from the extensive medieval remains which have survived intact in this small north Louth town.[3] These medieval stone monuments include King John's Castle, an early thirteenth century stone castle, Taaffe's Castle and the Mint, two fifteenth-sixteenth century tower houses, a fourteenth century Dominican Abbey, the Church of the Holy Trinity which incorporates a later medieval church tower, and the Tholsel, a later medieval town gate.[4] Additionally there are numerous other medieval features of note which include two carved stone heads and some remaining portions of the original town wall. Since the mid-eighteenth century, when the medieval remains of this town first appear to have sparked the interest of such antiquarians as Thomas Wright and Isaac Butler[5], Carlingford has served as an inspiration for a host of secondary historical sources in the form of journals, articles and books,[6] not to mention the array of pictorial sources which include maps, sketchings, engravings, paintings and photographs. In more recent times, these documentary and pictorial sources have been supplemented by a number of informative and invaluable archaeological excavations at several of the medieval sites in Carlingford. As the purpose of this thesis is to make an assessment of medieval ecclesiastical patterns of settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk it has not been

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[1] MURRAY, L.P., 'Monasteries of Louth. Part II: The Post-Norman Monasteries,' *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume I, Number 4, (1907), p. 75.

[2] See QUINN, J., 'The Late Rev. Laurence Murray', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1942), pp. 1-4.

[3] See Figure 1.

[4] See Figure 2.

[5] DEANE, J. (ed), 'Extracts from Isaac Butler's Journal, 1744', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume V, Number 2, (1922), pp. 100-101; WRIGHT, T., *Louthiana: or, An Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland,* Book II, Millennium Reprint of the First 1748 London Edition, (Dundalk, 2000), p. 6.

[6] In 2007 work was initiated on the Carlingford Historic Town Atlas. It is scheduled for publication in 2010 the author is Harold O'Sullivan. GEARTY, S., pers. comm., (April, 2009). See also http://www.ria.ie/projects/ihta/areport.html

possible to make a detailed archaeological analysis of each of the surviving monuments at Carlingford. However, a fully comprehensive examination of the ecclesiastical remains at Carlingford cannot be undertaken without an accompanying consideration of the other associated medieval site types in the town as they evolved and developed in their urban context. Therefore, it is proposed in this chapter to give a brief but inclusive discussion of the associated urban settlement at Carlingford after having presented an in-depth archaeological study of the medieval ecclesiastical sites of the town: the Church of the Holy Trinity, St. Mary's Church, St. Michael's Church and finally, the Dominican Abbey.

II. THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

1. INTRODUCTION

> *Contiguous to the old Abbey is a capacious and handsome modern church, erected upon the site of an ancient religious edifice, the tower of which, being in good preservation, serves as a steeple to the present building. It is surrounded by a remarkable green graveyard, well stocked with old oaks and spreading sycamores...*[7]
>
> **(Anon, 1846)**

The church of the Holy Trinity at Carlingford served the small Church of Ireland community in the vicinity up until the mid-1970s [8] but was later closed in 1982 and de-consecrated on 12th November 1991.[9] Since 1991 the church has been leased by the Church of Ireland to the Carlingford Heritage Trust who, with the aid of the Representative Church Body and a grant from Bord Fáilte, were able to convert it for use as a cultural venue and now run and maintain it as the Holy Trinity Heritage Centre which is open to the public and is available for hire for weddings, concerts, small conferences and a variety of other community events. The fees accumulated from these activities support the maintenance and staffing costs of the Heritage Centre, and the church therefore continues to survive in a very good state of preservation.[10] A Conservation Plan for the medieval town of

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[7] ANON, *A Picturesque Handbook to Carlingford Bay,* (Newry, Dublin, Belfast, Downpatrick & Dublin, 1846), p. 77.

[8] GOSLING, P., *Carlingford Town: An Antiquarian's Guide,* Carlingford Lough Heritage Trust, (Carlingford, 1992), p. 17.

[9] http://creggan.armagh.anglican.org/firsta1.html

[10] OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, *Carlingford Historic Town Walls, County Louth. Conservation and Management Plan,* (Oxford, 2007), p. B20; O'SULLIVAN, H., 'The Catholic Parishes in the Barony of Cooley. Part 1: From Earliest Times to the End of the Seventeenth Century', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 20, Number 2, (2005), p. 54; GOSLING, (1992), p. 17; CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford,* (Carlingford, 1992), no pg. numbers; http://creggan.armagh.anglican.org/firsta1.html. See Plate 1.

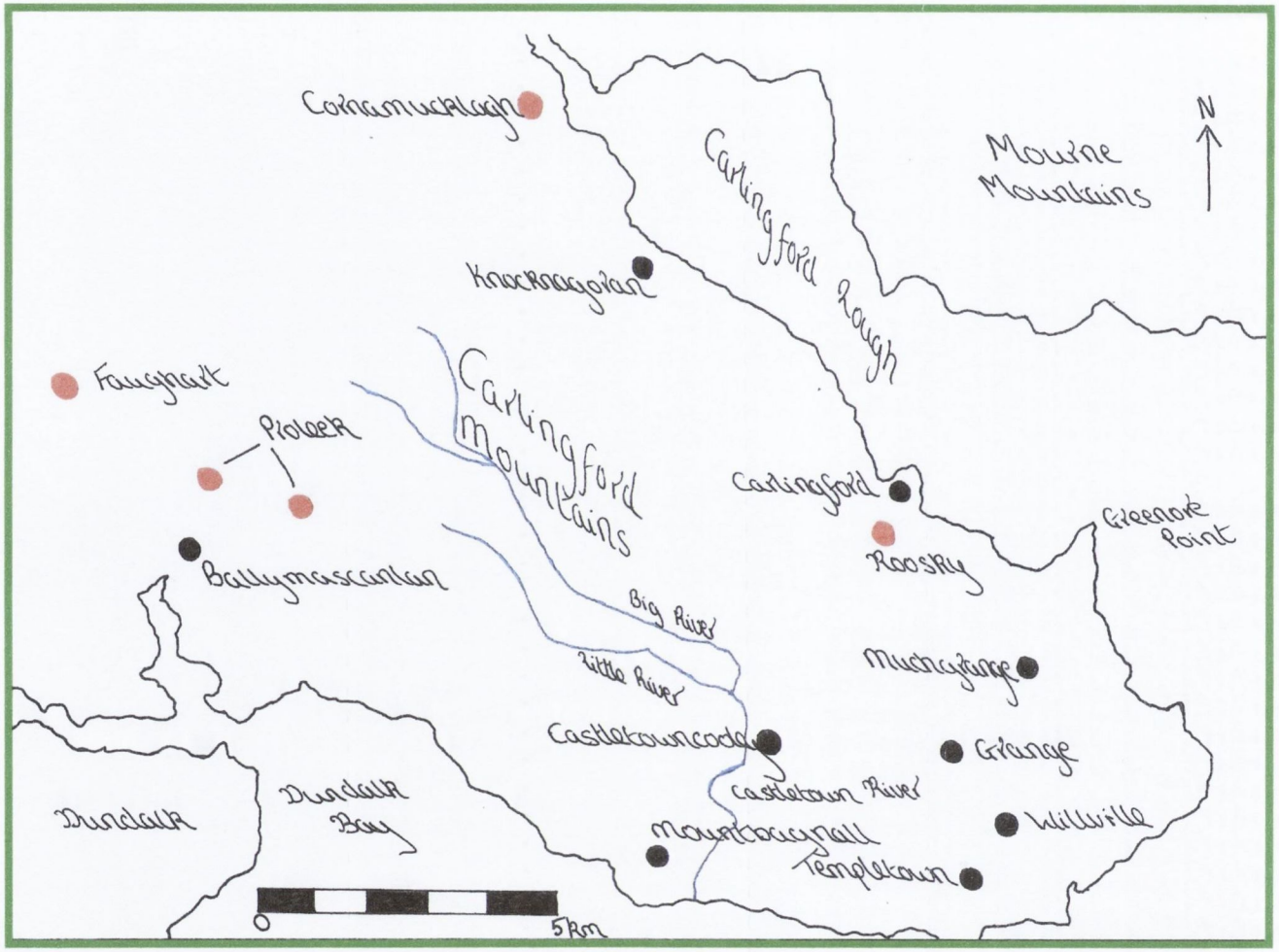


Figure 1: Rough distribution map of the ecclesiastical sites in the barony of Lower Dundalk. The pre-Norman sites are indicated in red, the Anglo-Norman sites in black.

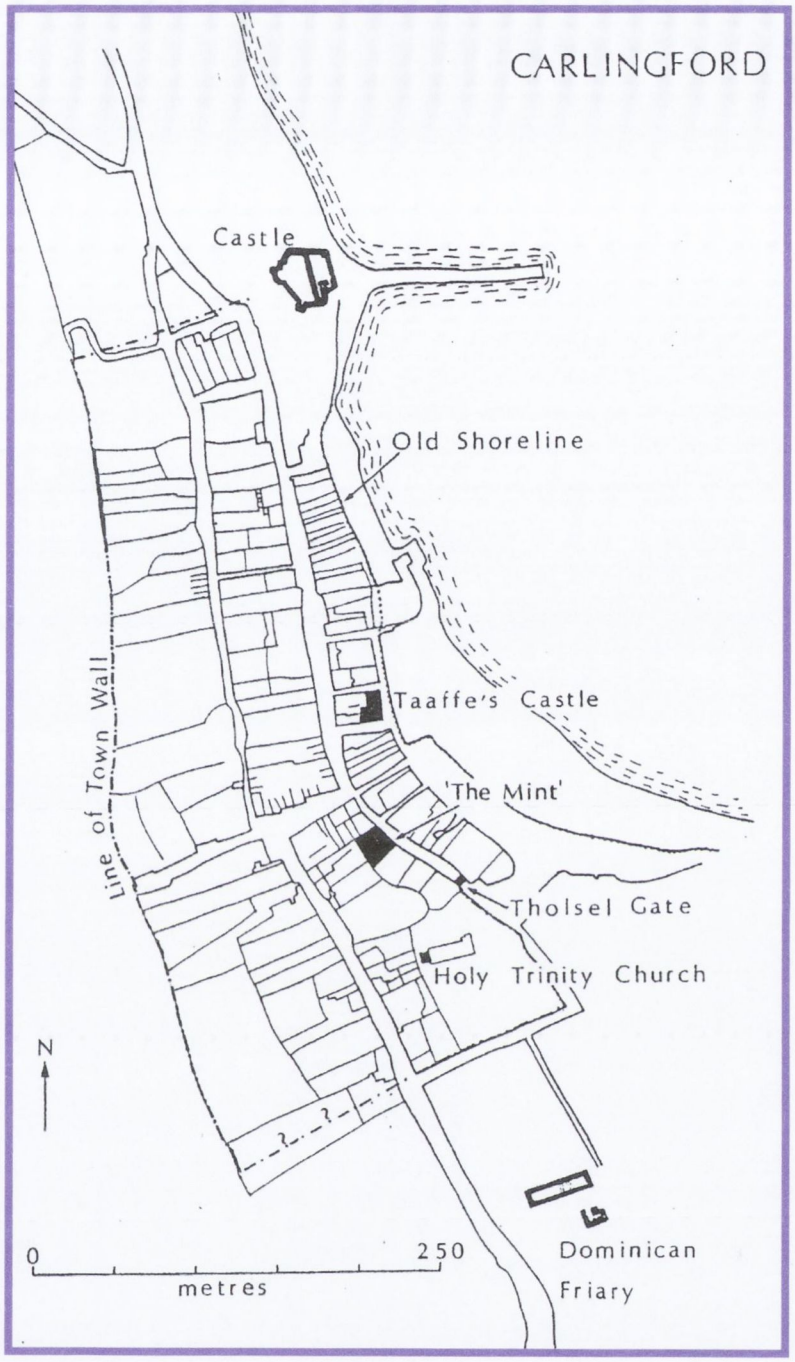


Figure 2: Map of Carlingford.

(BRADLEY, J., 'Urban Archaeological Survey of Co. Louth,' with contributions by H. KING, Volumes I & II, Office of Public Works, (Dublin, 1984)).



Plate 1: The Church of the Holy Trinity, Carlingford.

Carlingford, drafted in 2007 by Oxford Archaeology, noted that the only two possible threats to the maintenance and survival of this site would be ground works on services below the church, which would have to be archaeologically monitored in an appropriate manner, or a cessation of funding for the Heritage Trust which would result in the closure of the Heritage Centre and the termination of regular maintenance works.[11]

The first archaeological survey of the Holy Trinity Church was published by Davies and Paterson in the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal* in 1939.[12] This article was brief in nature and the archaeological discussion focused solely upon the church tower. It was probably due to the fact that he had examined this site for the 1939 article that Davies did not include it in his subsequent study of the medieval churches of Co. Louth, which was published in five different articles in the *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal* in the 1940s. Nonetheless, it was a glaring omission and one which was to be later repeated by Buckley in the *Archaeological Inventory of County Louth* in 1986 and also by Buckley and Sweetman in the 1991 *Archaeological Survey of County Louth.* However, in a brief handwritten survey of the tower which is contained within the *Sites and Monuments Record* file for the Holy Trinity Church, Sweetman explained the exclusion as follows:

> *This site when inspected in 1986 the conclusion arrived at was that the church was eighteenth century, or later, but that the tower at the west end was earlier, possibly only late medieval but was excluded from the detailed volume for lack of evidence.*[13]

Fortunately, however, the church had been surveyed in detail by Bradley for the 1984 'Urban Archaeological Survey of Co. Louth'.[14] In addition to these surveys, three excavations, one conducted by Moore and Gleeson in 1992,[15] and two undertaken by McConway and Bermingham in 1999,[16] have provided invaluable skeletal evidence for this site, although regrettably, none of these investigations has been successful in identifying

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[11] OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. B20.

[12] PATERSON, T.G.F. & DAVIES, O., 'Carlingford Church Tower', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume IX, Number 3, (1939), pp. 246-47.

[13] SWEETMAN, P.D., 'Survey of Church & Tower of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford,' (RMP LH 005-04210, 30th January 1992).

[14] BRADLEY, J., 'Urban Archaeological Survey of Co. Louth', with contributions by H. KING, Volumes I & II, Office of Public Works, (Dublin, 1984), p. 45.

[15] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133.

[16] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=552; MCCONWAY, C., Excavation Report, Church Lane, Carlingford, 1999:553; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554. See also BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford', (*Sites & Monuments Record*).

the structural remains of the original medieval church. The warfare of the seventeenth century greatly damaged the Holy Trinity Church, and in particular, the destruction and ruin instigated by the retreating Jacobites in 1690 left only the church tower standing intact.[17] As a result of this, the church was almost completely rebuilt in the early eighteenth century and was renovated once again about a century later.[18] Even so, however, the fabric of the church tower itself is clearly medieval, and documentary sources confirm that the church was in existence throughout the medieval period.[19]

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

As previously discussed, Carlingford Lough was first noted in *Annals of Ulster* and the *Annals of the Four Masters* in the early 850s as the site of a naval encounter between rival Viking fleets.[20] However the first documentary evidence to indicate an Anglo-Norman settlement at the site occurred in the late twelfth century when the 'ferry of Carlingford' was mentioned in a grant of 1185 by John de Courcy to Downpatrick Priory.[21]The first definitive reference to an urban settlement at the site was recorded just four years later when Peter Pipard, the lord of Ardee was granted 'four burgages in Carlingford' with a fishery by Prince John at some stage between 1189-1192.[22] It would seem logical that a church would have been established at the newly-founded town before too long. However, the earliest known documentary reference to the church at Carlingford only occurred in 1237 when 'the churches of Carlingford and Rooskey', were granted by Hugh de Lacy, in that year, to St. Andrews Church, in Scotland in return for hospitality which he himself had received while staying there.[23] Following on from this, the advowson of the 'whole Church of Carlingford' was referred to in a charter dating to between 1260-

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[17] GAVIN, J. & O'SULLIVAN, H., *Dundalk: A Military History,* (Dundalk, 1987), pp. 16-17.
[18] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 54.
[19] GOSLING, (1992), p. 18. See also section 2. Historical References.
[20] OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 7 & see Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, IV. Cornamucklagh.
[21] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, A.J., 'The Partition of the de Verdon lands in Ireland in 1332', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume 66, Section C, (1968), p. 402; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 7.
[22] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 7. See also Chapter I: Introduction, IV. General Historical Background to the Study Area for a discussion regarding the dating of these grants.
[23] LESLIE, J.B., *Armagh Clergy and Parishes,* (Dundalk, 1911), p. 163; *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume IV, Number, 1, (1916), p. 11. BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45; GOSLING, (1992), p. 17. O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009).

1280 in which it was granted to the Order of the Knights Templars by Matilda de Lacy, as proprietor of the manor of Carlingford.[24]

In 1301 the 'town of Kerlyngford' was mentioned in a list of townlands recorded in relation to amercements, or fines, imposed by a royal court in that year.[25]Although the document makes no reference to the church at Carlingford it is nonetheless an important source for assessing the degree of sub-infeudation of the barony of Lower Dundalk which had been achieved at this point.[26]Just one year later, in 1302, the church at Carlingford was again referred to in a document which records a legal dispute in 1302 between the Order of the Knights Templar and Matilda la Botiler, the daughter of Matilda de Lacy, regarding the right of presentation to the vicarage of Carlingford.[27] The next direct reference to the church occurred in 1313 when it was held by one Master Philip de Erdeley who had it on lease from the Crown, but who was never instituted rector by the Primate.[28] The final fourteenth century reference to the church was recorded in 1375 when it was mentioned in the archiepiscopal register of Milo Sweteman.[29]

Following on from this there are two fifteenth century references to the church at Carlingford, the first of which dates to 11th March 1411 and comprises a letter to the vicar of Carlingford, Sir Richard Waspayn, from the Archbishop of Armagh, Nicholas Fleming:

The archbishop having in the course of his ordinary visitation sequestered (the fruits) of the church of Karlingford, pertaining to the prior and brethren (confratres) of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in Ireland, rectors of the second (alterius) portion thereof, on account of their failure to repair part of the chancel, and appointed Sir Richard FitzJohn, chaplain, and John Seyn, clerk, sequestrators; Waspayn is commanded to warn all the faithful not on any pretext to meddle with dues pertaining to the said prior and brethren, without special licence from the archbishop, on pain of greater excommunication.[30]

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[24] LESLIE, (1911), pp. 158 & 163; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 41; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2009). See also Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Templetown Church, 2. Historical References for a discussion on the dating of this charter.

[25] *Calendar of Plea Rolls 8: Plea Roll 54, Membrane 19: (Townlands in County Louth in A.D. 1301),* ed. by D. MACIOMHAIR, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* , Volume XVI, Number 1, (1965), p. 42.

[26] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 43.

[27] LESLIE, (1911), pp. 158 & 163; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 41; O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009). See also Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Templetown Church, Section 2: Historical References for a discussion of this dispute.

[28] MACIOMHAIR, D, 'The Knights Templars in County Louth', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca,* Volume 4, Number 1, (1960-61), p. 86.

[29] *A Calendar of the Register of Archbishop Sweteman,* ed. by H.J. LAWLOR, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Volume XXIX, Section C, (1911), 1375; *The Register of Milo Sweteman, Archbishop of Armagh 1361-1380,* ed. by B. SMITH, The Manuscripts Commission, (Dublin, 1996), 1375; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.

[30] *Extracts Relating to Co. Louth from the Calendar of the Register of Primate Nicholas Fleming,* ed. by A. GWYNN, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XI, Number 4, (1948), 1411.

The Holy Trinity Church at Carlingford is also referred to in the will of Christopher Dowdall which dates to 1485 and which mentions two additional churches in the town at this point:[31]

> *...to the church of the Holy Trinity of Carlingford 6s. 8d.;to the parish church of St. Mary of Carlingford 3s. 4d.: to the chapel of St. Michael there 12d.;...* [32]

In the sixteenth century the church at Carlingford is mentioned in the register of Archbishop Dowdall in 1535 in a record which contains an order of visitation of churches of *clerus inter Anglicos* as well as a list of the synodals and procurations payable in respect of religious establishments *inter Anglicos*, in the case of the former and including deaneries *inter Hibernicos* in the case of the latter. These were payments exacted by the archbishop in respect of attendances at synods while the latter were contributions made by the archdeacons, *Anglici* and *Hibernici* to cover their expenses in the conduct of visitations to parishes. Thus, according to O'Sullivan, 'these records therefore give a reliable picture of the state of church organisation in this period.'[33]

Six years later, during the dissolution of the monasteries, an inquisition dated at Termonfeckin in May 1541 found that the Order of Knights Hospitallers owned two-thirds of the rectorial tithes in the parish church and of the fish 'caught on the river of Carlingford'; the other third belonged to the archbishop of Armagh.[34]This is hardly surprising considering that after the dissolution of the Order of the Knights Templar in the early fourteenth century, the Hospitallers had been granted the majority of their lands in the barony of Lower Dundalk as well as the tithes of at least fourteen other parish churches in the county which had previously been held by the Templars.[35] The same inquisition found that the tithes of the rectory of Carlingford had been leased to Sir Oliver Plunkett for a term of years, the lessee to bear all charges except the repair of the chancel.[36]

In the early seventeenth century the church at Carlingford was recorded in several primary sources. In 1620 all the tithes, oblations and spiritual duties of the rectory of

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[31] GOSLING, (1992), pp. 18-19; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10; O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009).

[32] *Dowdall Deeds,* ed. by C. MCNEILL & A.J. OTWAY-RUTHVEN, Stationery Office for the Irish Manuscripts Commission, Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1960), 1485. GOSLING, (1992), p. 19.

[33] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 66.

[34] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions 1540-42,* ed. by N.B. WHITE, Irish Manuscripts Commission, The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1943), pp. 109, 110, & 120; LESLIE, (1911), p. 158 & 163; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 78; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10; O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009).

[35] REYNOLDS, L., *The Medieval Parishes of Clogherhead and Walshestown (1300-1857)*, the Clogherhead Historical Society, (Clogherhead, 2003), p. 14. See Chapter III: Anglo-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, Templetown Church for a more detailed discussion.

[36] *Extent of Irish Monastic Possessions,* p. 108; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2009).

Carlingford were confirmed to the Primate;[37] in 1622 the Royal Commission Report of 1622 found the Church was repaired but the chancel was ruinous,[38] and in 1633 the Primate was mentioned as the patron of the church.[39]Over twenty years later, in 1658, an inquisition by the English Commonwealth found that one-third part of the tithes of Carlingford were held by the Archbishop of Armagh and two-thirds by the widow of one Sylvester Plunkett, while one William Swalden had been appointed minister of the church by the Commonwealth in April 1658 at a salary of £100. This inquisition also found that all of the churches of the parish were out of repair.[40] Thirty-four years later, in 1692, the church was once again out of repair but the chancel was described as being roofed.[41]

The church was apparently rebuilt in around 1700 according to an entry in the *Dowdall Deeds* which details a belated reward given to its builder.[42] Finally, the remains of the Holy Trinity Church were noted briefly in the mid-eighteenth century by the antiquarian Isaac Butler who wrote in 1744 that:

There is likewise a Parish Church with a steeple, dedicated to the Trinity, the Rev. Paul Twigg Minister and Glanvile Clark.[43]

Four years, in 1748, later Thomas Wright also made a brief description of this church:

On the opposite End of the Town to that of the Castle, there is still to be seen the ruinous Remains of a fine Monastery; and not far from it, upon the Summit of a neighbouring Hill, a spacious Burying Ground, and a little Church or Chapel adjoining to it. By Reason of the Position and Height of the neighbouring Mountains, the Inhabitants of this Town, great part of the Summer Season, lose Sight of the Sun several Hours before he sets in the rational Horizon.[44]

3. CARTOGRAPHY

There are six cartographic representations of the medieval town of Carlingford which are important for this study. The first is Baptista Boazio's *County of Louth and*

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[37] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2005).
[38] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622,*(T.C.D. MS. E.36), transc.& ed. by T. FITZPATRICK, 'The Royal Visitation of 1622', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VI, Number 1, (1925); LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.
[39] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2005).
[40] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* transc. by J.B. LESLIE, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 1, (1929), p. 37-38; LESLIE, (1911), p. 164; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May 2009).
[41] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45.
[42] *Extracts from the Will of the Rev. Thomas Leigh, 1709*, ed. by J.L. GOUGH-MEISSNER, Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal, Volume IX, No. 3, (1939), p. 247.
[43] DEANE, (1922), p. 100.
[44] WRIGHT, Book II, (2000), p. 6.

District in 1599 which depicts a number of towers at Carlingford.[45]The second is Richard Bartlett's *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602* which clearly illustrates the town walls, King John's Castle, a tower located within the town wall boundaries, which could possibly indicate the Church of the Holy Trinity, as well as a building located near the shoreline and entitled *Chappel.*[46]

The third image which is of note for this study is the map of Carlingford, Newry and Greencastle entitled *O Hanlans Cvntrie* which dates to 1624.[47] *O'Hanlan's Cvntrie* forms part of a collection of manuscript plans in the British Library entitled *The State of fortes in Ireland as they weare in the yeare 1624.*[48] There is a copy of this map currently held at the Armagh County Museum and it was from a study of this copy that Paterson and Davies made the controversial claim in 1939 that the tower of the Holy Trinity Church had once been incorporated into the town wall defences.[49] The map appears to depict three religious buildings; Roosky Priory outside the town walls to the top left, the Dominican Abbey, also outside the town walls to the direct left and a third structure bearing a cross located within the wall boundaries, marked D, and identified as the Mint tower house by Paterson and Davies in 1939.[50]It is more likely, however, that this structure is, in fact, a representation of the Church of the Holy Trinity.[51]

The fourth map to be considered is the *Down Survey Map of 1657* upon which the town walls of Carlingford, as well as a tower, can be clearly seen, its boundaries are remarkably similar to those which were later to be used on the first OS maps.[52]The final two maps date to the eighteenth century and were drawn by Mathew Wrenn in 1766 and George Taylor and Andrew Skinner in 1777. On Wrenn's representation the town walls are

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[45] See Figure 3.
[46] See Figure 4.
[47] See Figures 5 & 6.
[48] The map of *O Hanlans Cvntrie* was purchased on 1st July 1861, for £14 14s, at Sotheby's, in the sale of Archbishop Tenison's manuscripts (lot 76). ST. JOHN-MCALISTER, M., pers. comm. (June, 2009).
[49] RAMSAY, G., pers. comm., (May, 2009). See Armagh County Museum, 392.1935 (SB 688 Shelf E11, room G14) & PATERSON, & DAVIES, (1939), pp. 246-47. In a note accompanying this article Tempest notes that: *The original of this map is said to be in the British Museum, but we have not been able to identify it there. It is of Elizabethan date. Our reproduction in considerably larger than the copy at Armagh, but as we have not found the original, we cannot compare its scale with it. Its reference is B.M. Add. M.S.S. 24,200, State of the Forts in Ireland.* See TEMPEST, H.G.T., 'Note on the Elizabethan Map of Carlingford in the Crossle Collection', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume IX, Number 3, (1939), p. 247. See also the discussion of the tower in part 8. Architectural Features, c. Belltower.
[50] See Figure 5, & 6.
[51] See discussion of the tower in part 8. Architectural Features, c. Belltower.
[52] FERGUSON, P., pers. comm.., (June, 2009). See also DOLAN, J. T., 'The Down Survey or Cromwellian Plantation Maps of Louth [and drawing of fragment of Down Survey Parish Map of Dundalk which Survived the 1711 Fire, facing page 230],' *County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal, (*1928), pp. 247-49; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 12.

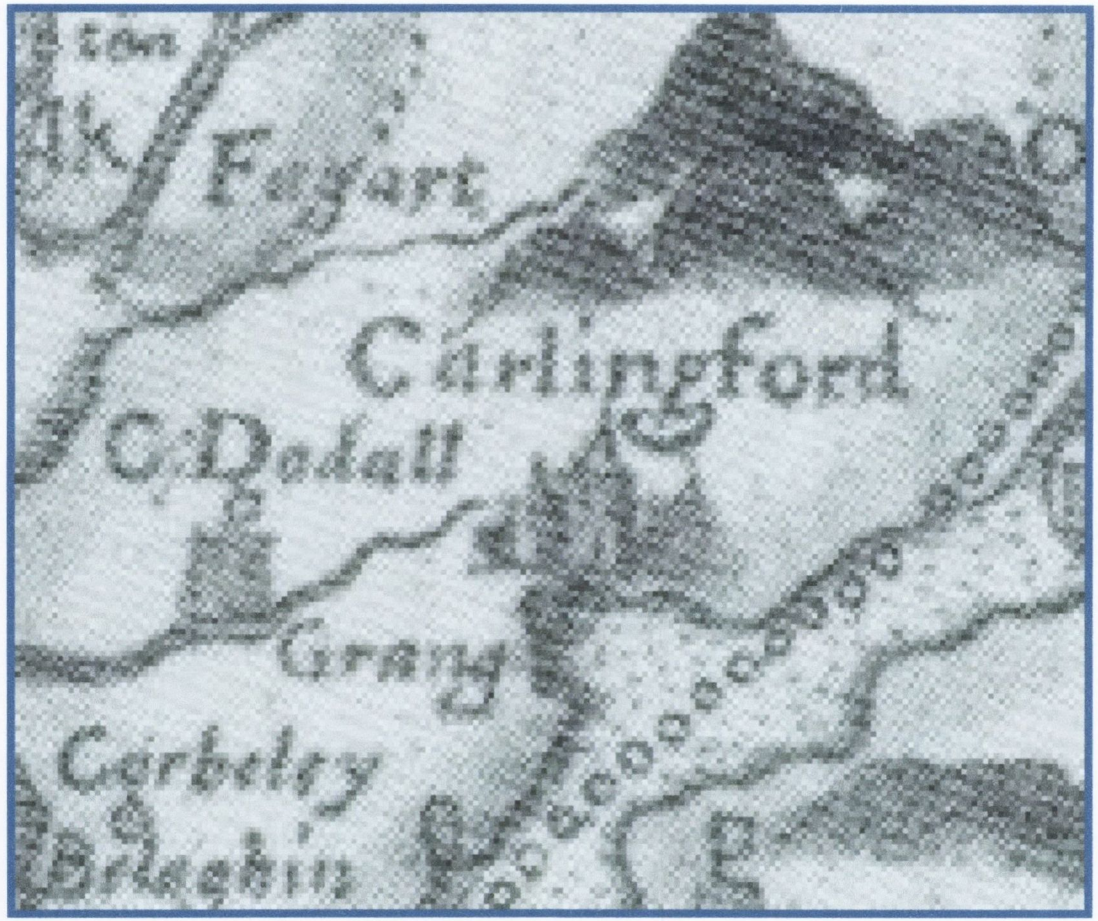


Figure 3: Carlingford as depicted on *County of Louth and District in 1599.* Reproduced from Baptista Boazio's *Map of Ireland.*
(TEMPEST, H.G, 'Boazio's Map of Ireland, 1599', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XII, Number 4, (1952a)).

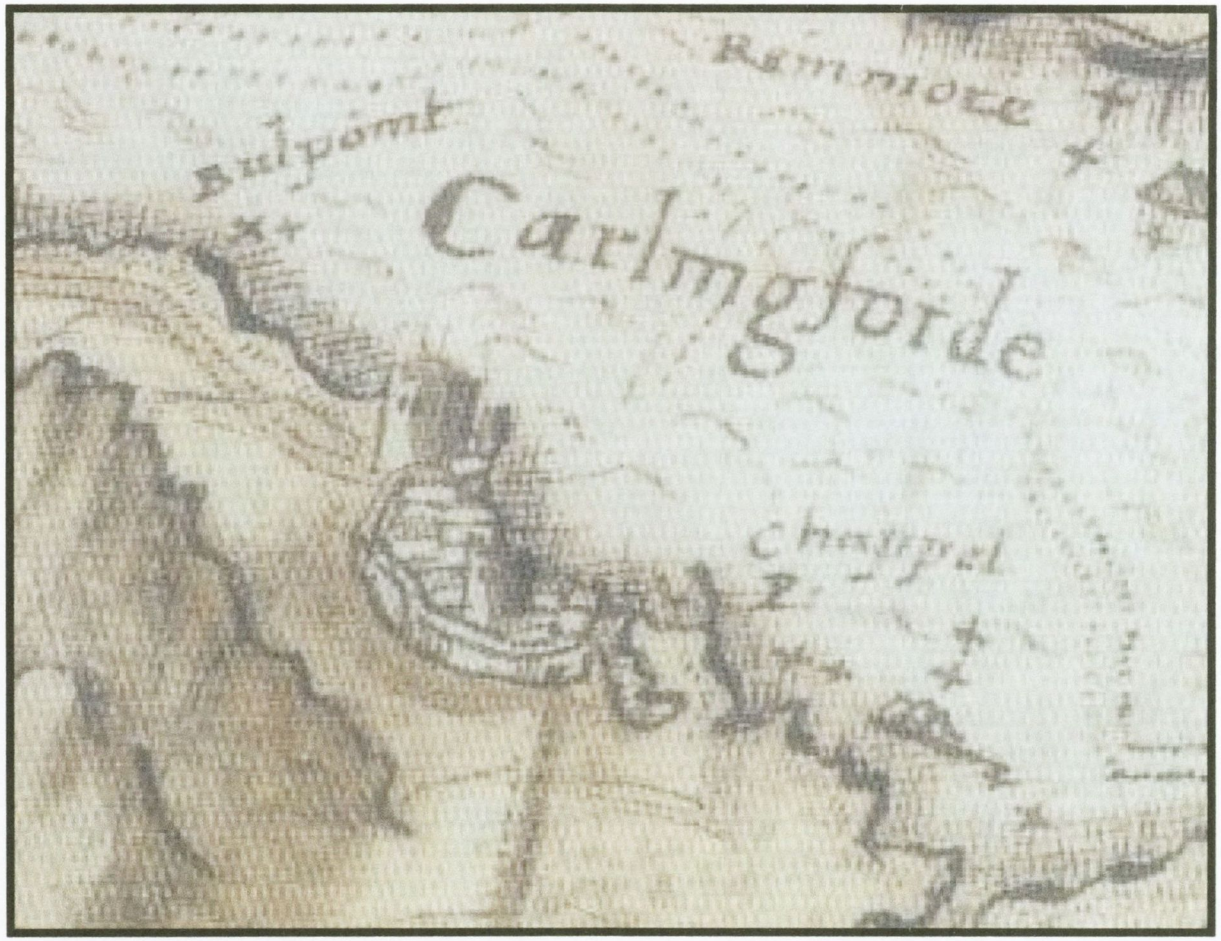


Figure 4: Carlingford as depicted on the *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602* by Richard Bartlett.
(O'SULLIVAN, H., *Irish Historic Towns Atlas No. 16, Dundalk,* Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 2006)).

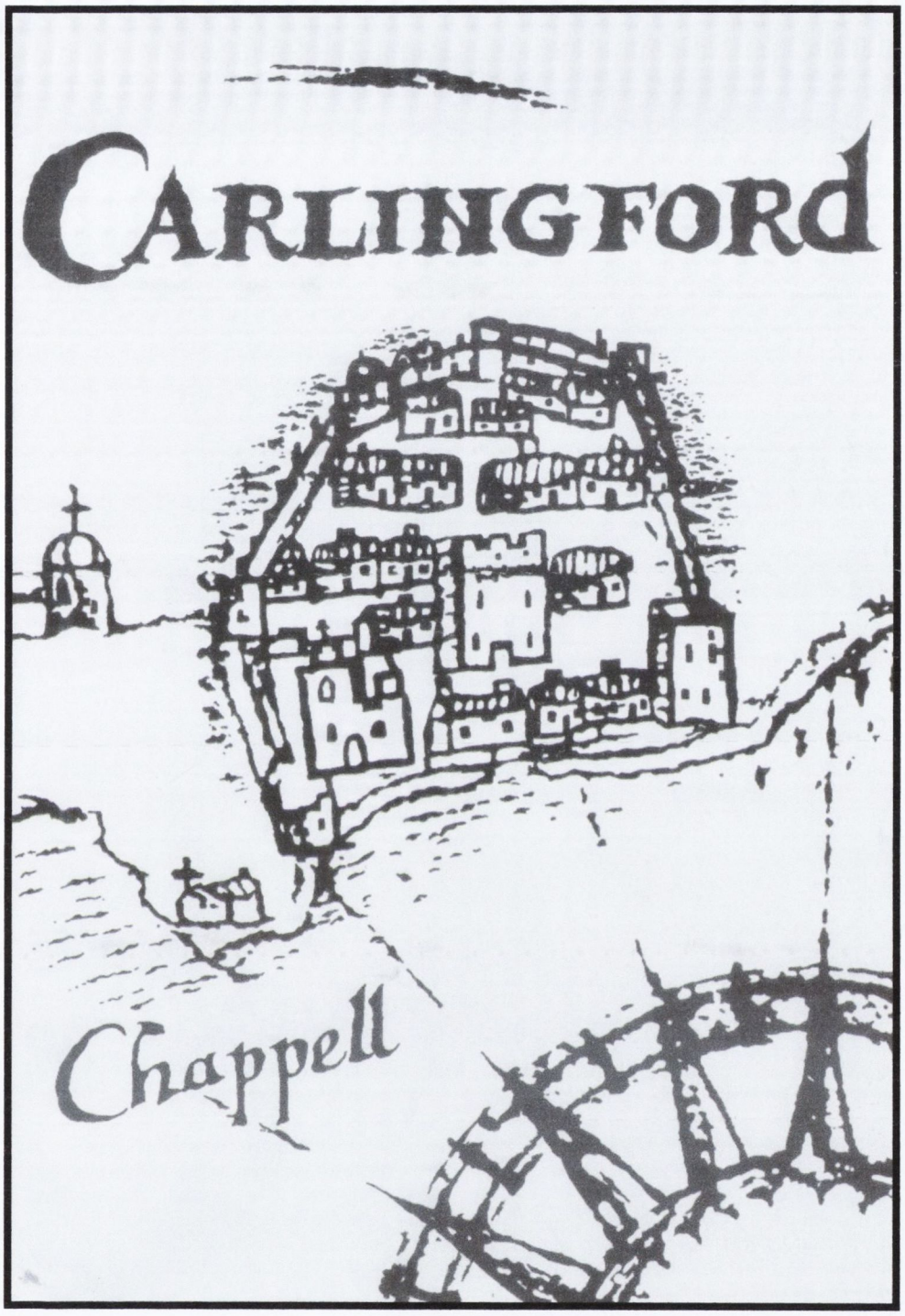


Figure 5: ***'O Hanlans Cvntrie', Map of Carlingford, Newry & Greencastle, (1624).***
(Armagh County Museum, 392.1935 (SB 688 Shelf E11, room G14)).



TOWER OF CHURCH AND ELIZABETHAN MAP OF CARLINGFORD.

Carlingford Church tower 1. from north east. 2. from north west.

3. 16th Century Map of Carlingford. (The following reference letters have been added).

A. Rooskey Priory.
B. Carlingford Abbey.
C. Chappell, apparently about site of Ghan House.
D. "The Mint."
E. Taaffe's Castle.
F. "King John's" Castle.
G. Tholsel.
H. Wall Tower suggested as still in existence as the Parish Church Tower.
I, J, K. Other Wall Towers.

Photos by Miss Gaffikin.

Figure 6: Paterson & Davies' interpretation of Carlingford on *'O Hanlans Cvntrie', Map of Carlingford, Newry & Greencastle, (1624).*

(PATERSON, T.G.F. & DAVIES, O., 'Carlingford Church Tower', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume IX, Number 3, (1939), pp. 246-47.)

not shown, although King John's Castle is depicted along with several other unnamed structures.[53] In common with Wrenn, Taylor and Skinner also noted King John's Castle, along with several unidentified buildings, they did not include the town walls, but they did depict both Roosky Priory and the Dominican Abbey.[54]

4. LOCATION

The Church of the Holy Trinity is located in the south-east corner of the town of Carlingford and stands on the top of a hill, surrounded by a well-maintained graveyard and enclosed by a stone-built wall. It is probable that the Church of the Holy Trinity stands on the site of the original medieval parish church of Carlingford,[55] therefore, it is of paramount importance for the purposes of this study. The present church is situated on a prominent shoreline on a mound which appears to be of strategic and defensive significance.[56] Nonetheless, the identification of this church as the site of the original parish church is confused by the 1485 will of Christopher Dowdall, which, as previously mentioned, lists three churches; the Church of the Holy Trinity, the parish church of St. Mary of Carlingford, and the chapel of St. Michael.[57] Even so, however, the bulk of the extant evidence, both archaeological and historical still indicates that the Church of the Holy Trinity is the most plausible site for the original medieval parish church of Carlingford.[58]

5. SIZE

Due to the fact that the main body of the church, as it survives today, dates entirely to the post-medieval period, it is impossible to speculate upon the size of the original structure or to classify it as a church of small, medium or large size.

6. MORPHOLOGY

It is similarly impossible to classify the original structure as being a unicameral or bicameral church. However, the existence of a medieval church tower at this site can assist to a certain degree with a morphological classification.

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[53] See Figure 7.
[54] See Figure 8.
[55] OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), pp. B19-B20; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 54; GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.
[56] OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY,(2007), p. B20.
[57] GOSLING, (1992), p. 18.
[58] This is also the opinion of O'Sullivan. See O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 54.

7. MASONRY STYLES

The only surviving medieval masonry at the Church of the Holy Trinity survives in the body of the church tower, which is composed of limestone.[59] The earliest construction work evident in this building appears to date to the late sixteenth century, although a surviving trefoil window in the tower appears to be earlier and possibly dates to the fifteenth century

8. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

a. WINDOWS

Although the existing church structure was extensively renovated in 1804,[60] it is likely that there had been an Anglo-Norman parish church in existence on this site since at least the early thirteenth century.[61] This hypothesis is supported by a deed of 1237 which mentions 'the churches of Carlingford and Rooskey' whose profits had been granted by Hugh de Lacy, in that year, to St. Andrews Church, in Scotland in return for hospitality which he himself had received while staying there.[62] A detailed examination of the church indicates that it had in fact been renovated several times, at various different periods before the refurbishments of 1804 were conducted. The renovations of 1804 appear to have resulted in the installation of the ten diamond-paned, Gothic windows which now light the interior of the building, as well as the large stained glass east window and indeed most of these windows can be seen to have been clearly inserted into the existing fabric of the church. [63]

b. DOORWAYS

The entrance in the south wall of the church, which appears to have been previously blocked, is an interesting feature and has been described in the *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford* as 'a simple pointed doorway of seventeenth century date'.[64] The fact

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[59] See Plate 2.

[60] GOSLING, (1992), p. 17; CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.

[61] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.

[62] O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm.., (May, 2009). See also LESLIE, J.B., *Armagh Clergy and Parishes,* (Dundalk, 1911), p. 163; LAWLESS, N. 'Armagh, Clogher and Louth,' *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume IV, Number 1, (1916), p. 11; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45; GOSLING, (1992), p. 17. O'Sullivan, pers. comm.

[63] GOSLING, (1992), p. 17; CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. See Plates 1, 3 & 4.

[64] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.

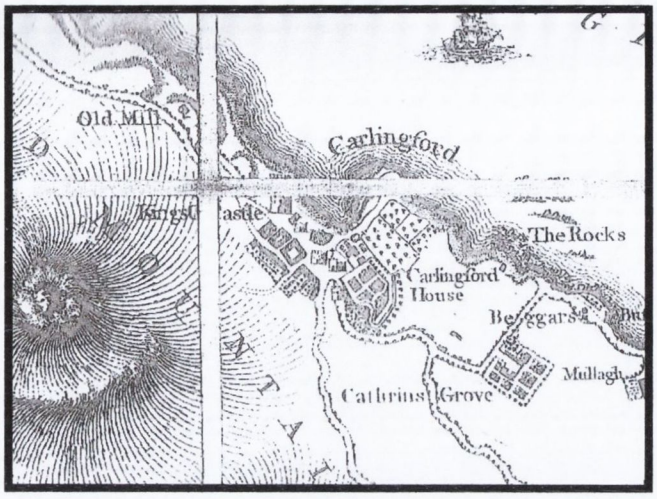


Figure 7: Extract from *A Topographical Map of County Louth, 1766,* by Mathew Wrenn.
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).

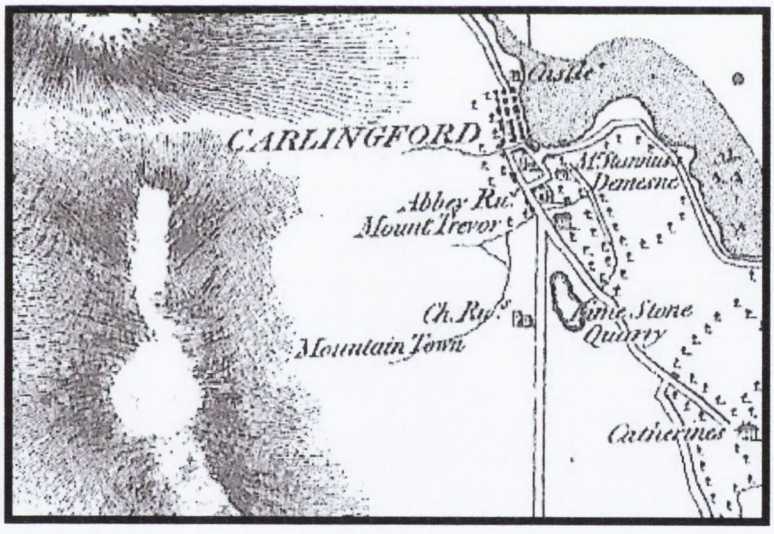


Figure 8: Extract from *A Map of the County of Louth, 1777, by George Taylor and Andrew Skinner.*
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin).



Plate 2: Masonry in the western wall of the Holy Trinity Church tower.



Plate 3: Diamond-paned windows in the north wall of the Holy Trinity Church.



Plate 4: Window in the east wall of the Holy Trinity Church.

that one of the diamond paned Gothic windows cuts through it certainly validates the theory that it predates that 1804 renovations.[65] Gosling has cautioned against accepting the widely held view that the whole body of this church, (excluding of course the medieval tower), was rebuilt in the time of the Reverend Thomas Leigh who was vicar of Carlingford from 1699-1709, on the grounds that this doorway could possibly date to the sixteenth century or indeed to the seventeenth century pre-1699.[66] Indeed, there are several surviving documentary references to the Holy Trinity Church which can corroborate the fact that some construction work took place on site at various stages throughout the course of the seventeenth century. For example, in 1622 the church was repaired and the chancel was described as ruinous although seventy years later, in 1692 the church was once again out of repair but the chancel was still described as being roofed.[67] Thus, it would seem more logical that Reverend Leigh, who became vicar of Carlingford seven years later, in 1699, merely continued with the restoration work in the ten years until his death, in 1709. An insightful extract from the will, highlighted in 1939 by Gough-Meissner would appear to support this chronology of repair:

> *To Humphrey Carpenter, who built the church at Carlingford £10, in consideration of the shameful delay the parish hath given the said Humphrey in payment for his work.*[68]

Nonetheless, Gough-Meissner's own interpretation of the will was that it proved conclusively 'that the present parish church of Carlingford is a post-Reformation building tacked on to one of the wall towers and built sometime between the years 1699 and 1709'.[69] In support of this theory he cited the fact that the windows on the north side of the church are at a considerably lower height from the floor than those on the south side,[70] although he did not elaborate upon the significance of this. However, considering the documentary references to ongoing repair work at the church in 1622 and 1692 it seems unlikely that the whole church was built anew between 1699 and 1709 but rather that the restoration work was ongoing and perhaps finished during this period.

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[65] See Plate 5.

[66] GOSLING, (1992), p. 18; RMP LH 005-04210: Church & Graveyard of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford.

[67] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45.

[68] *Extracts from the Will of the Rev. Thomas Leigh, 1709,* ed. by J.L. GOUGH-MEISSNER, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume IX, No. 3, (1939), p. 247.
GOUGH-MEISSNER, J.L., 'Note on the Parish Church of Carlingford', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume IX, No. 3., (1939), p. 247.

[69] GOUGH-MEISSNER, (1939), p. 247.

[70] IBID, p. 247.

c. BELLTOWER

Undoubtedly the most important feature of this church for the purposes of this study is the three-storeyed crenellated belltower which has generally been dated to the fifteenth or sixteenth century and which appears to have been renovated in the seventeenth century.[71] The earliest archaeological survey and examination of this site appears to have been made by Davies and Paterson in 1939. During this assessment they noted that the church tower was constructed of rubble and mortar with ashlar corner-stones and that it was clearly older than the adjoining nineteenth century church. They calculated that the tower measured 20 feet. 6 inches on the south wall by 24 feet 8 inches on the west wall with the thickness of the south wall being 6 feet 6 inches. They noted that the foundation was battered at an angle of about 70 degrees to 5feet up and that the west wall was slightly inclined up to the balcony.[72] They recorded that entrance to the tower was by a round-headed door on the south, which seemed to be an insertion; but they added that the tower must always have been accessible from the south or the east, as in the other two walls there was no sign of a door.[73] On the west they described a built-up rectangular window, which was eight and a half feet above ground-level, and measured 2 feet 6inches by 1 foot 2 inches. The lintel was found to be slightly curved, and seemed to have been cut as the lowest stone of a Gothic arch, and to have been re-used in its present position. According to Paterson and Davies, this window was probably an insertion, as the wall around it was built of very small stones.[74]

Above they noted the presence of a balcony which was nine inches wide and made of large slabs which projected slightly from the face of the lower wall. Higher up was a narrow rectangular window, measuring about 2 feet by 6 inches with slightly inclined jambs.[75] They recorded that the roof of the tower was surrounded by a high parapet set slightly back from the wall-faces and at its base there was a course of thin slabs with drainspouts at intervals. Three feet above this there was the cut-stone string course, above which was the crenellated parapet, rising to the corners, and with squints in the centre of each side.[76] They were of the opinion that this parapet was not earlier than the seventeenth century and that the location of the tower as a porch at the west end of the church was

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[71] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. See Plate 6.
[72] See Plate 7.
[73] See Plate 7.
[74] See Plate 8.
[75] See Plate 9.
[76] See Plate 10.

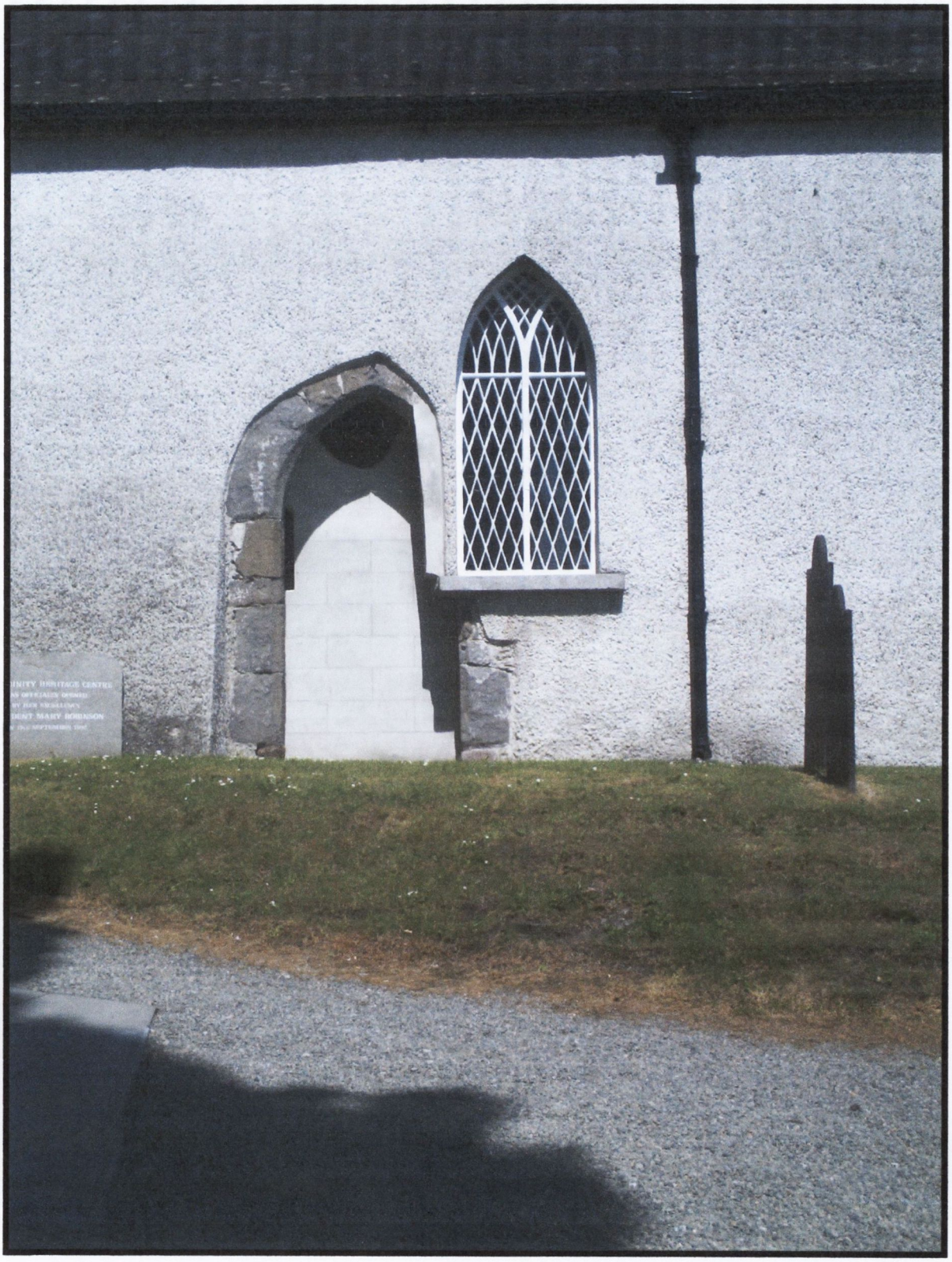


Plate 5: Pointed doorway in the south wall of the Holy Trinity Church.

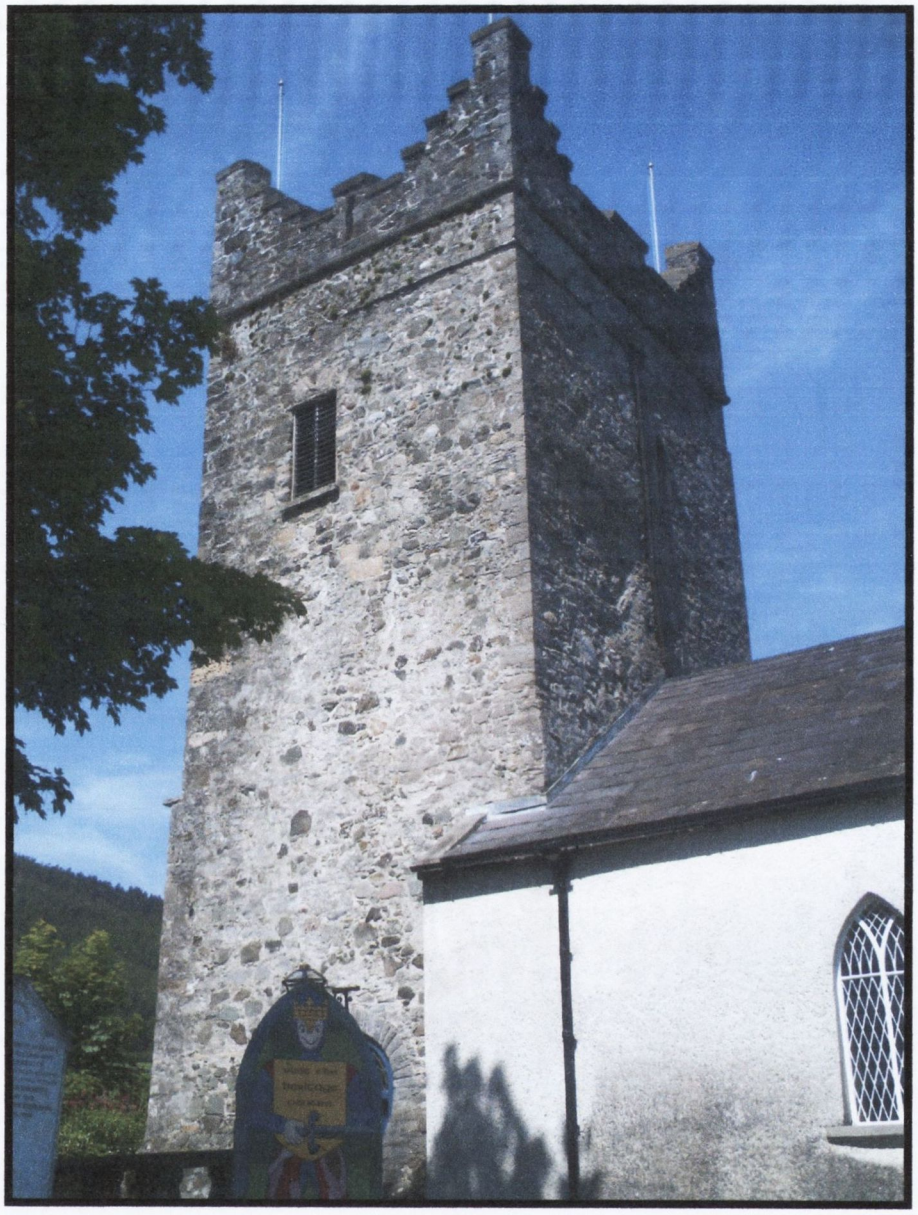


Plate 6: View of the southern face of the tower adjoining the Holy Trinity Church.



Plate 7: View of the base batter and doorway in the south wall of the Holy Trinity Church tower.



Plate 8: Built-up rectangular window in the west wall of the Holy Trinity Church tower.

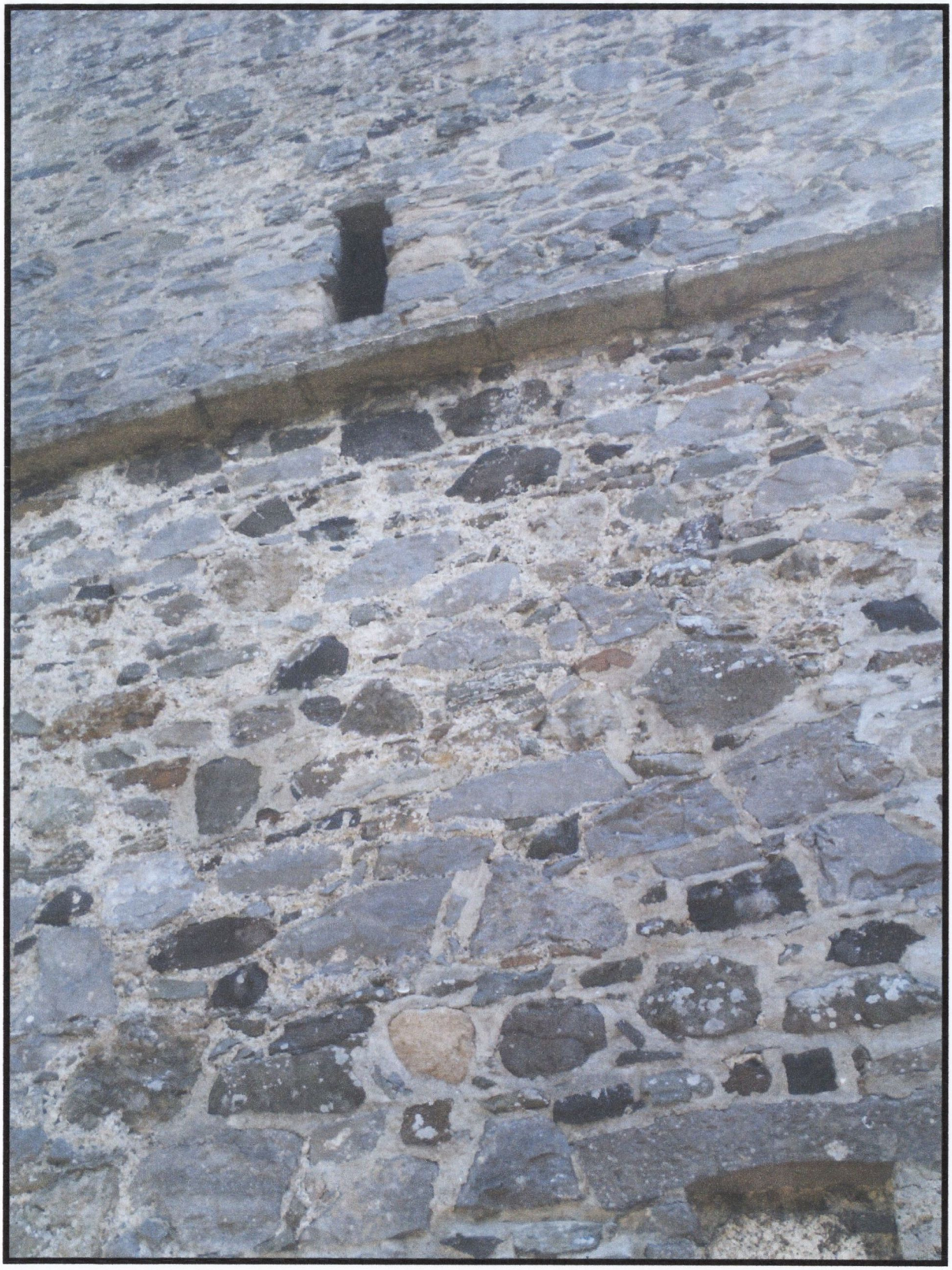


Plate 9: Projecting balcony and rectangular window with inclined jambs in the western wall of the Holy Trinity Church tower.



Plate 10: Crenellated parapet on the southern side of the Holy Trinity Church tower.

typical of Church of Ireland architecture. However they also noted that what they described as the 'trefoil-window', the upper western window, coupled with the thickness of the batter of the walls suggested an earlier date for the structure.[77] There is also an additional rectangular window evident in the upper south wall of the tower which was not mentioned by Paterson and Davies.[78]

According to Bradley who surveyed the site in 1984:

> *The tower at the west end is the only ancient feature. It lacks those diagnostic architectural features which could provide a close date and it can only be dated by analogy with other similar church towers which were built in Ireland between the 15th and 17th century.*[79]

Bradley described the tower as rectangular, constructed of coursed limestone and slate rubble, with four floors and a parapet level above. He noted the external batter at the base splaying from a string course on the west wall which separates the ground floor from the first floor. In 1984 the tower was entered, as it still is today, in the south wall through a round headed door of modern date. In the east wall Bradley observed a pointed chamfered arch which would have linked the tower with the nave originally. He recorded the presence of a lintelled rectangular window in the west wall, blocked with masonry but still visible externally although no trace showed through the plaster of the interior. He proposed that access to the upper floors would have been by ladder or wooden stairway originally. On the first floor he observed a rectangular opening in the east wall, a lintelled rectangular window in the west wall, which was visible externally, and a large pointed window in the south; all of which at that stage had been built up. On the second floor he described a lintelled rectangular opening in the east wall, a small straight lintelled slit with internal splay in the west wall and a blocked up window of uncertain form in the north wall. The third floor was the belfry stage and was found to have a large window placed centrally in each wall. He concluded his survey of the church tower by stating that:

> *Unfortunately none of their tracery survives although it may be noted that while the east window alone is pointed, all have flat rear arches. The parapet is stepped and is supported by an external string course.*[80]

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[77] PATERSON, & DAVIES, (1939), p. 246. See Plate 11. The description of the trefoil window as the 'upper western window' is a confusing one. The window is located in the eastern wall of the church tower, not the western wall. This eastern wall however abuts the western gable of the church, and this may account for its description as a 'upper western window'.

[78] See Plate 12.

[79] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45.

[80] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45

More recently, Sweetman has noted that work on the church which had been undertaken from 1991-92 had revealed a two centered chamfered doorway at the west end of the south wall. According to Sweetman this doorway was undoubtedly late medieval. He was of the opinion that it may have been in its original position or it may have been moved from the tower and used in the church at the time when the church was added to the tower. He offered a more definite chronology for the construction and dating of this tower and suggested three main phases of building. The first, which involved the building of the tower, probably took place in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, the second, which entailed the adding of the church with possible re-setting of the tower doorway in the church, was conducted in the seventeenth century, and the third and final phase of construction which resulted in drastic alterations to the church in the nineteenth century with the addition of new windows, especially the east windows, and the blocking of the medieval doorway. The base batter appeared to be an added feature on the tower. [81]

It can be immediately noted from a perusal of these different surveys of the Holy Trinity Church tower that there are a number of disparities in the descriptions of the various different archaeological and architectural features. Indeed, the discrepancies are not solely limited to the form and typology of the tower but extend also to its functionality. Paterson and Davies in 1939 were of the opinion that the church tower had once functioned as part of the town wall defences. In support of their hypothesis they cited a map in the Crossle Collection dating to 1624 in the Armagh County Museum, and they labelled the various archaeological features with letters as follows:

> *A map in the Crossle collection, Armagh Museum shews a walled enclosure with three castles inside (D, E & F all identifiable today) a gate G on the lough where the south gatehouse or Tholsel now stands, a chapel C just outside it on the site of the Ghan House, the abbey- church B, and four towers round the wall, H, I, J, K. The Down Survey seems to shew a tower at a gate, whence leads a road well inland of the abbey so it cannot be the present Tholsel. The identification of the wall-tower H with the tower of the modern church is not difficult. The latter could in style be Norman and it stands on a hill which the enceinte is likely to have included. When the wall was dismantled the tower was presumably considered useful, and so adapted to a new church.*[82]

This functionality was reiterated by Killanin and Duignan in 1967[83]and also by Sweetman in 1992 who observed that 'the tower is too small to be a tower house and may,

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[81]RMP LH 005-04210: SWEETMAN, P.D., Survey of Church & Tower of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford, (30th January 1992).
[82] PATERSON, & DAVIES, (1939), p. 247.
[83] KILLANIN, M. & DUIGNAN, M., *The Shell Guide to Ireland*, (London, 1967), p. 124.

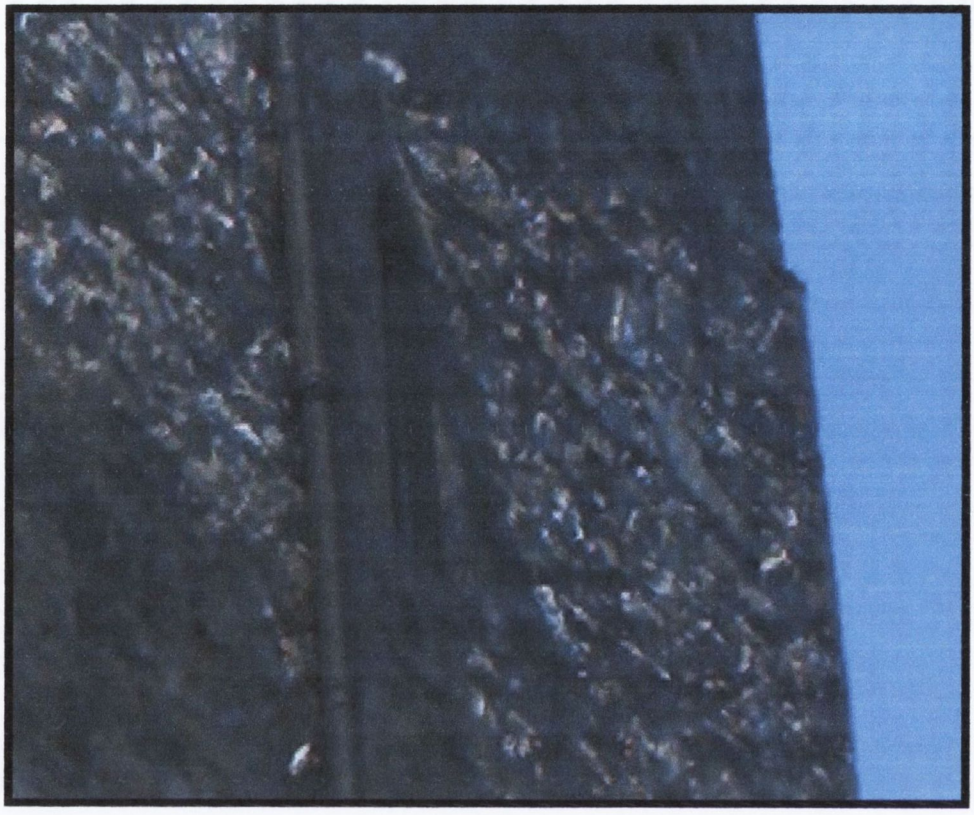


Plate 11: Trefoil window located on the eastern face of the Holy Trinity Church tower.



Plate 12: Window in the south wall of the Holy Trinity Church tower.

as already suggested elsewhere, be a tower on the town wall. It has no tower house-like opes except for an ogee-headed window at the top level east wall and must have had a wooden staircase.'[84] However this hypothesis has been vigorously repudiated by Bradley, who had conducted extensive research on the medieval town walls of Carlingford for the 1984 'Urban Archaeological Survey of County Louth':

> *The theory proposed by Paterson and Davies and repeated by Killanin & Duignan that it was a mural tower may be dismissed. The building which they label as 'The Mint' is clearly the church because it has a spire with a cross on top of it.*

In fact, this is a repudiation which was later supported by Gosling who astutely pointed out that although 'some authorities have accepted that the church tower, which was undoubtedly medieval, was originally a wall tower on the line of Carlingford's defences, only converted for use as a church tower *c.* 1700. This is however an unlikely scenario, and one which is also untenable considering John Bradley's interpretation of the line of Carlingford's medieval defences.' [85] Having assessed all of the available archaeological, documentary and cartographic evidence, it is the opinion of this researcher that the tower of the Holy Trinity Church could not have been incorporated into the medieval town wall of Carlingford, as is supported by an examination of the map of 1624 where it is apparent that Paterson and Davies have quite clearly mistaken the church for the Mint tower house.

d. ALTAR STONES

In 1939 Gough-Meissner highlighted an interesting altar slab which he believed was contemporary with the seventeenth-early eighteenth century renovations at the Holy Trinity Church and was of the opinion that it could possibly be contemporary with a similar altar stone in St. Nicholas' Church. Dundalk:

A most interesting fact is that the altar slab in use until 1916 is very probably contemporary with the church and may be a relic of Laudian revival. It is a plain stone slab. Fortunately it was not destroyed. It was discovered in the Vestry incorporated in the wooden table when I made a search for it. We know that the Daily Offices were said twice daily at the close of the 17th century in St. Peter's Drogheda; elsewhere the same custom obtained. The altar slab in St. Nicholas' Church Dundalk, probably of the same period, was in 1916, placed on the floor level, when an oak Holy Table was substituted for it. Recently the Archdeacon of Chesterfield (Archdeacon Dillworth-Harrison) published an interesting paper on the stone altar slabs of the latter half of the 18th century. They are met

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[84] RMP LH 005-04210: SWEETMAN, P.D., Survey of Church & Tower of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford, (30th January 1992).
[85] GOSLING, (1992), p. 18.

with down to Queen Anne's reign. I suggest that the slab at Carlingford may be one of them. [86]

e. STONE CARVINGS

The *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford,* published in 1992, contains a photograph of a stone carving entitled 'details of three birds, possibly martlets, on the base of the hood moulding over the east window of the Holy Trinity Church.'[87] This carving was not mentioned by Davies and Paterson, Bradley or Sweetman, and is not visible on site from ground level. This is an interesting carving and could tentatively be comparable to the stone carvings evident on the windows of the Mint tower house.[88] This comparison is possible for a number of reasons. These carvings represent the only surviving examples of window embellishment at any of the churches of Lower Dundalk, and they were all located within the medieval town of Carlingford. Furthermore, in terms of typology it is significant that, while the carving at the Holy Trinity Church represents three birds, one of the carvings on Window 1 at the Mint depicts a horse,[89] and together these two images represent the only two surviving examples of non-human carvings of living creatures in the barony of Lower Dundalk. Additionally, in terms of dating, the five windows surviving at the Mint have all been dated to the sixteenth century and have been described as examples of the influence of Celtic Renaissance on art during this period of Irish history.[90] Similarly, Sweetman has contended that the belltower of the Holy Trinity Church can be reliably dated to the sixteenth century,[91] while Bradley, Davies and Paterson have also dated the construction of this belltower to the fifteenth-seventeenth century. [92]

9. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERIES

a. GRAVE SLABS/STONES

The graveyard of the Holy Trinity Church appears to be inter-denominational and is home to the graves of both Protestant and Roman Catholic families. According to Tempest:

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[86] GOUGH-MEISSNER, (1939), p. 247; RMP LH 005-04210: Church & Graveyard of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford. This altar stone is currently in the care of the Reverend Sandra Pragnell at St. Andrew's Church, the Bush, in Cooley. HOLY TRINITY HERITAGE CENTRE, pers. comm., (June, 2009).

[87] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. See Plate 13.

[88] See Plates 14-17.

[89] See Plate 14.

[90] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. See Plates 14-17.

[91] RMP LH 005-04210: SWEETMAN, P.D., Survey of Church & Tower of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford, (30th January 1992).

[92] PATERSON & DAVIES, (1939), p. 246; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45.



Plate 13: Details of three birds, possibly martlets, on the base of the hood moulding over the east window of the Holy Trinity Church.
(CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford,* (Carlingford, 1992)).



Plate 14: Window 1 in the Mint tower house.



Plate 15: Window 2 in the Mint tower house.



Plate 16: Window 3 in the Mint tower house.



Plate 17: Window 4 in the Mint tower house.

> *Popular belief has always been that the Protestant churchyard is the site of the Pre-reformation church. Burials of those of both communions have always taken place in the churchyard.*[93]

Considering that the church was renovated significantly throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth century it comes as no surprise then that some of the earliest gravestones extant in the churchyard of the date to the first decade of the eighteenth century. The earliest identifiable gravestone commemorates one Ann Toomes who died in 1703. Another dated 1734 notes that Marjory Pierce was born in 'The Citty of Londonderry…and lived there during the late siege.' [94] In 1984 however, Bradley while researching for the *Urban Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* identified a medieval grave slab in the Holy Trinity Churchyard which he described as

> *A chamfered coffin shaped slap is set upside down at the head of a grave in the south of the graveyard. Only the lower portion is visible but it would appear to bear a cross design in relief springing from a decorated base consisting of a pointed reticulated arch.*[95]

b. EXCAVATED BURIALS

The restoration of Holy Trinity Church in the early 1990s required the digging of a duct to house heating and electrical cables along the internal north and south walls of the building which led to the discovery of human skeletons in shallow graves beneath the floor boards. Twenty extended inhumations with an east-west orientation with heads to the west were uncovered. All were buried in simple grave cuts with no evidence of coffins or other grave goods. The majority were cut through each other causing considerable dislocation and loss of material. In some cases skeletons were found to have been reinterred with later burials. According to Moore and Gleeson, who were responsible for the excavation of these remains, the disturbance of the burials may have occurred during renovations to the floor in the 19th century. [96]

The skeletal remains consisted of 20 in situ burials and a minimum of 32 disarticulated individuals. Of the 20 in situ burials 10 were males, 6 were females and 4 were juveniles. At least 15 of the disarticulated remains were male, 9 were female and 4

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[93] TEMPEST, H.G.T., 'Note on the Elizabethan Map of Carlingford in the Crossle Collection', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume IX, Number 3, (1939), p. 247.

[94] GOSLING, (1992), p. 18; CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST,(1992), no pg. numbers; RMP LH 005-04210: Church & Graveyard of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford.

[95] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45. On a recent visit to the church this researcher was unable to locate or positively identify this stone.

[96] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133.

were juveniles.[97] The skeletal report indicated that the antemortem tooth-loss rate was high and hypoplastic defects in the enamels were noted in several individuals. Several examples of periostitis of the lower end of the tibiae were found and one example of osteomyletis of a tibia was found among the disarticulated remains. There were 2 examples of major trauma to the skull, one was a result of trephination, a form of cranial surgery, and the other had suffered a large sword wound. Both individuals appear to have survived their trauma. Two bones were dated using the C 14 method; one bone was found to have a calibrated age range of AD 1517-1666, while the other sample had a calibrated age range of AD 1442-1650.[98] The skeletal remains were reburied in the graveyard which surrounds the Holy Trinity Church.[99]

Seven years after the discovery of these skeletons, additional human remains were discovered by Conway during monitoring of a drainage scheme in Church Lane, outside the eastern gate of the Holy Trinity Church, and work on the scheme was postponed to allow a full archaeological excavation of the remains to take place. Four human skeletons in total were discovered lying just outside the modern walls of the graveyard. All four lay within the natural beach gravel and there was no evidence of coffins. It was determined that the skeletons were at least several hundred years old, but, in the absence of associated datable artefacts a more accurate age was not determined. The lower legs of all four skeletons had already been removed with the construction of a cobbled surface-presumably a path/roadway. Three of the skeletons lay within a single grave-cut, and there was evidence to suggest that the first burial had been pushed or moved slightly to allow for the second, which in turn partially underlay the third. The fourth burial lay to the south of these and within a much shallower grave-cut. [100] Pathology analysis was carried out on site by Buckley, who determined that all four were young adult males and all bore sword cuts on their skulls. One individual had a healed head wound in addition to a fresh sword mark.[101] Considering the available evidence, it was the opinion of Conway that these four

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[97] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133.
[98] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford', (*Sites and Monuments Record*), no page numbers.
[99] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133.
[100] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=552; MCCONWAY, C., Excavation Report, Church Lane, Carlingford, 1999:553.
[101] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford', (*Sites and Monuments Record*), no page numbers.

individuals were infantry men, struck down from horseback in a late medieval/early post-medieval skirmish.[102]

One further archaeological excavation took place at the Holy Trinity Church in 1999. This excavation was conducted by Bermingham and was organized to monitor the addition of a kitchen extension to the Holy Trinity Heritage Centre. The required groundworks covered an area c. 4m by 4m. Building construction necessitated the ground to be reduced by 0.3m in the area of the new floor and up to 0.8m along the line of the building's foundation trenches. Ground reduction was carried out using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. Two burials and two drains were uncovered. On instruction from Dúchas, these features were excavated and the burials were removed. The burials were extended inhumations, oriented east-west, and had been placed into shallow graves, which, at the time of excavation, were unmarked. Bermingham noted that the presence of nails indicated that these skeletons were originally contained in coffins. [103] The western end of one of the burials truncated the eastern end of the second. This earlier burial was only excavated from below the knee, as the rest of the burial extended outside the development area. Apart from coffin nails, there were no grave-goods found in association with these burials, although a bone pin/handle was found in the machined-off topsoil within a metre of the later of the two burials. Drains had truncated each burial; several bones were missing from the upper skeleton, and the skull had been crushed. At least one of the drains dated from the nineteenth century and was more than likely constructed as part of the nineteenth century programme of renovation. The second drain was either late nineteenth or early twentieth century in date. Bermingham also noted that the two burials which she discovered were possibly contemporaneous with the burials excavated by Moore and Gleeson, as they shared a number of similarities. [104] However the use of coffins in the burials external to the church indicated a slightly later date and the absence of coffin nails or any trace of wood in the burials excavated by Moore and Gleeson suggested that those burials were simple inhumations in which coffins were not used.[105]

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[102] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=552; MCCONWAY, C., Excavation Report, Church Lane, Carlingford, 1999:553.

[103] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554.

[104] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554.

[105] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554.

10. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

With the exception of several coffin nails, and one bone pin/handle which were uncovered in Bermingham's 1999 excavation, [106] no additional artefacts or grave goods were discovered at this site. This is unfortunate as it has been found that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries churchyards and graves within churches sometimes offer archaeological evidence for changing mentalities occasioned by the Reformation. Indeed studies conducted by O'Brien and Roberts at parish churches in England have found that:

> *In some parishes, or within membership of some parishes resistance to reform led to the secretion of statuary, plate, relics, vestments and other items. Churchyards and graves were favoured hiding places and where such graves can be precisely dated opportunities may arise for insights into reform and conservatism.*[107]

Nonetheless, it must be acknowledged that these three excavations at the Holy Trinity Church, along with that conducted by Channing at the Dominican Abbey,[108] are by far the most extensive and informative of any of the excavations which have taken place at any of the medieval churches and church sites of Lower Dundalk. Despite the detailed skeletal information which was obtained from these excavations Bermingham remarked that 'no medieval archaeological structural evidence…[was] revealed. If evidence for the earlier church survives, it remains to be found.'[109]

11. ETYMOLOGY

The fact that this church was named after the Holy Trinity; the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, needs no explanation, having obvious religious connotations. The exact date of this dedication is not known, but the will of Christopher Dowdall confirms that the church was known by this name from at least 1485. The name of the town itself, Carlingford, initially seems to support the tentative evidence which suggests that there may have been some form of Viking settlement located at Carlingford in the pre-Norman period. While the placename Carlingford itself, which is derived from the old Norse *Kerlingafjorthr*, or 'the

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[106] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554.

[107] O'BRIEN, E. & ROBERTS, C., Introduction to 'Archaeological Study of Church Cemeteries: Past, Present and Future', in *Church Archaeology: Research Directions for the Future*, ed. by J. BLAIR & C. PYRAH, CBA Research Report 104,(1996), pp. 165.

[108] CHANNING, J., 'Excavation Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford,' (*Sites and Monuments Record*). See also BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford', (*Sites & Monuments Record*).

[109] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554.

old woman's fjord', [110] certainly suggests that the Lough was utilized by the Vikings, research conducted by Bradley for the 'Urban Archaeological Survey of Co. Louth' has concluded that the precise nature of their activity and settlement in the region is uncertain.[111] Additionally, the anglicized form of this placename can alternatively be interpreted as a derivative of the Irish word *Cairlinn* which means 'rough lough'.[112] In the Irish annals the lough is referred to as Snamh Aighneach and according to the annalists it was the scene of a battle between rival Viking fleets in the early 850s.[113] Furthermore, in 921 A.D. the 'foreigners' of Snamh Aighneach are mentioned, while another entry for 1149 makes reference to the 'harbour' of Snamh Aighneach, all of which would seem to indicate that there was a Viking settlement somewhere on the lough. Even so, however, it should be noted that although these annalistic references can tentatively be construed as proof of a Viking settlement on Carlingford Lough there is no firm evidence to conclusively locate it on the site of the present town. Indeed, Bradley has observed that from a 'purely topographical point of view, such a settlement, if it existed, would be more likely placed further up the lough, perhaps in the vicinity of Narrowwater.'[114]

12. CHRONOLOGY

The Church of the Holy Trinity, along with the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford and the medieval church at Faughart, are three unique sites in this study area in the sense that they can all be chronologically analyzed using a combination of documentary, architectural and archaeological evidence derived from excavation. Historical sources indicate that there was an Anglo-Norman settlement developing at Carlingford from the late 1180s.[115] The earliest known documentary reference to the church at Carlingford only occurred in 1237, [116]with a further reference to the advowson of the 'whole Church of

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[110] MARSTRANDER, C.J.S., *Bidrag Til Det Norske Sprogs Historie I Irland,* (Kristiana, 1915), p. 28; BRADLEY, J., *Urban Archaeological Survey of Co. Louth,* with contributions by H. KING, Volume I, Office of Public Works, (Dublin, 1984), p. 33.

[111] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 33.

[112] MARSTRANDER, (1915), p. 28; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 33.

[113] *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland,* ed. by J.N. RADNER, The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, (Dublin, 1978), p. 91; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 33; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (Oxford, 2007), p. 7. For a more detailed discussion of this Viking activity in Carlingford Lough see Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement, V. Cornamucklagh.

[114] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 33.

[115] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 7.

[116] LESLIE, (1911), p. 163; LAWLESS, (1916), p. 11. BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45; GOSLING, (1992), p. 17. O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009).

Carlingford' surviving in a charter dating to between 1260-1280.[117] The church at Carlingford was again referred to in a document which records a legal dispute in 1302 between the Order of the Knights Templar and Matilda la Botiler, regarding the right of presentation to the vicarage of Carlingford.[118]By 1313, five years after the suppression of the Order of the Knight's Templar in 1308, it had come into the possession of a certain Master Philip de Erdeley who held it, however, as a layman might, by lease from the Crown but was never instituted rector by the Primate.[119] The church was also mentioned in 1375 in the archiepiscopal register of Milo Sweteman.[120] A surviving record in the archiepiscopal register of Nicholas Fleming indicates that by 1411 the church had come into the possession of the Order of the Knights Hospitaller,[121] while in a will dating to 1485 which has been preserved in the *Dowdall Deeds,* three churches are listed for Carlingford; the Church of the Holy Trinity, the parish church of St. Mary and the chapel of St. Michael.[122] There are also several surviving sixteenth century references to the church at Carlingford; it is mentioned in Archbishop Dowdall's Register in a visitation of churches dating to 1535,[123] and in the aftermath of the dissolution of the monasteries it was leased to Sir Oliver Plunkett in 1541.[124]In the early seventeenth century the church at Carlingford was recorded in several primary sources; in 1620 all the tithes, oblations and spiritual duties of the rectory of Carlingford were confirmed to the Primate,[125] in 1622 the Royal Commission Report of 1622 found the church was repaired but the chancel was ruinous,[126] and in 1633 the Primate was mentioned as the patron of the church.[127]Over twenty years later, in 1658, an inquisition by the English Commonwealth found that the church was out of repair,[128] and finally, in 1692, the church was once again out of repair but the chancel was described as being roofed.[129]

The only surviving portion of the Holy Trinity Church which dates to the medieval period is the three-storeyed crenellated belltower which has generally been dated to the

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[117] LESLIE, (1911), pp. 158 & 163; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 41; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[118] LESLIE, (1911), pp. 158 & 163; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 41; O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[119] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 86.
[120] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1375; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.
[121] *Extracts Relating to Co. Louth from the Calendar of the Register of Primate Nicholas Fleming,* 1411.
[122] *Dowdall Deeds,* (1960), 1485. GOSLING, (1992), p. 19.
[123] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 66.
[124] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions,* p. 108; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[125] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2005).
[126] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*; LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.
[127] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2005).
[128] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, p. 37-38; LESLIE, (1911), p. 164; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May 2009).
[129] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45.

fifteenth or sixteenth century and which appears to have been renovated in the seventeenth century.[130] The earliest archaeological survey and examination of this site appears to have been made by Davies and Paterson in 1939.[131] They dated the parapet to the seventeenth century, although they also noted that what they described as the 'trefoil-window', the upper western window, coupled with the thickness of the batter of the walls suggested an earlier date for the structure.[132] According to Bradley who surveyed the site in 1984 the tower can only be dated 'by analogy with other similar church towers which were built in Ireland between the 15th and 17th century.'[133] More recently, Sweetman has offered a more definite chronology for the construction and dating of this tower and suggested three main phases of building. The first, which involved the building of the tower, probably took place in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, the second, which entailed the adding of the church with possible re-setting of the tower doorway in the church, was conducted in the seventeenth century, and the third and final phase of construction which resulted in drastic alterations to the church in the nineteenth century with the addition of new windows, especially the east windows, and the blocking of the medieval doorway.[134]

In addition to this, two human bones excavated from the grounds of the Holy Trinity Church in 1992 were dated using the C 14 method; one bone was found to have a calibrated age range of AD 1517-1666, while the other sample had a calibrated age range of AD 1442-1650.[135] These calibrations, although inexact, indicate the possibility that burial practices were ongoing at this church in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and tentatively support the documentary records which suggest that the church continued in use throughout this period and the architectural evidence which indicates that the belltower was constructed in the later medieval period.

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[130] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. See Plate 6.
[131] See Plate 7.
[132] PATERSON, T.G.F. & DAVIES, O., 'Carlingford Church Tower', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume IX, Number 3, (1939), p. 246. See Plate 11. The description of the trefoil window as the 'upper western window' is a confusing one. The window is located in the eastern wall of the church tower, not the western wall. This eastern wall however abuts the western gable of the church, and this may account for its description as a 'upper western window'.
[133] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45.
[134] RMP LH 005-04210: SWEETMAN, P.D., Survey of Church & Tower of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford, (30th January 1992).
[135] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford', (*Sites and Monuments Record*), no page numbers ; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133.

III. ST. MARY'S CHURCH/ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH/CHAPEL FIELD

1. INTRODUCTION

As previously discussed, the 1485 will of Christopher Dowdall lists three churches for Carlingford, the second and third of which are described as 'the parish church of St. Mary of Carlingford' and the 'chapel of St. Michael',[136]The locations of these two medieval churches have never been definitively identified, nor has the reason for St. Mary's being described as a parish church been adequately explained. However, one possible location for this church is at the site of 'Chapel Field', which was briefly discussed by Davies in 1941, Bradley in 1984, Buckley in 1986 and Buckley and Sweetman in 1999, [137] but which has unfortunately never undergone archaeological excavation.

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

As previously mentioned the 1485 will of Christopher Dowdall contains the only surviving reference to the Church of St. Mary at Carlingford.[138] In this document the Church of St. Mary is described as a parish church, and yet all of the surviving evidence, archaeological and historical would tend to suggest that the parish church of Carlingford was in fact the Church of the Holy Trinity. There is no other surviving documentary record of a second parish church at Carlingford in the medieval period so this reference is certainly a confusing one.

3. CARTOGRAPHY

The earliest known cartographical representation of the site of 'Chapel Field' is Bartlett's map of *c.* 1602. On this map the site is clearly located close to the shoreline and is marked as 'Chappel', although there is no architectural detail evident.[139] The site of this church is also noted on the 1624 map of 'O Hanlan's Cvntrie' and in this instance the site is

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[136] GOSLING, (1992), p. 19.
[137] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 11; BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 47-48; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 237.
[138] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1485.
[139] See Figure 4. See also GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.

marked 'Chappell' and the structure is identified with a cross.[140] This site has previously been suggested by Gosling as a possible location for the Church of St. Mary.[141]

4. LOCATION

The site of the church indicated on Bartlett's map of *c.* 1602 and on the 1624 map of 'O Hanlan's Cvntrie' is still known locally as 'Chapel Field'. In 1941 Davies described it as follows:

> *...a church is marked by the shore* [on the map of O Hanlan's Cvntrie] *just outside the Tholsel. The site is a low ridge of boulder-clay, gently rising from the mainland and precipitous on the sea-side. On the cliff-face, at the base of the humus, are large shell-deposits, but no obvious traces of graves or of a church.*[142]

Over forty years later, in 1984, Bradley remarked that:

> *A short distance south east of the town in the townland Liberties of Carlingford, and adjoining the shore, is the 'chapel field', the site of a chapel shown on the late sixteenth century map reproduced by Patterson and Davies (1939). Neither its date nor dedication are known.*[143]

Chapel Field was subsequently included in both the *Inventory* of 1986 and the *Survey* of 1991 with an identical entry in each publication which recorded the site as follows:

> *Church (site). Field known locally as 'Chapel Field' on low ridge at edge of cliff. Church marked at this site on sixteenth-century map. No visible trace.*[144]

5. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERIES

There are no physical remains of either a church or a graveyard currently evident at this site. However in 1992 Gosling noted the fact that 'human bones are occasionally uncovered by winter storms along this stretch of shoreline suggesting that this was indeed the site of a church and graveyard.'[145]

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[140] See Figures 5 & 9. See also GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.
[141] GOSLING, (1992), p. 17. Although he does also acknowledge that it could alternatively be the site of the 'chapel of S. Michael' which is also mentioned in the will of 1485.
[142] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 11.
[143] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 47-48
[144] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 237. The sixteenth century map referred to here must in fact be the seventeenth century map of 'O Hanlan's Cvntrie' as Buckley and Sweetman referenced it in 1991 alongside the entry for Chapel Field.
[145] GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.

6. ETYMOLOGY

The origin's of the name 'Chapel Field' are not recorded and obviously refer to a church which was formerly located within this field. The earliest known references to this field as being the site of a chapel occur on Bartlett's map of *c.* 1602 where it is noted as 'Chappel', and also on the 1624 map of 'O Hanlan's Cvntrie' where it is marked 'Chappell.'[146]

There is a more modern St. Michael's Church which is still utilized in Carlingford to this day. This church was built in 1870[147] but unfortunately there is no recorded reference to an earlier church having been built on the same site as the current St. Michael's. In some cases, medieval churches which were dedicated to St. Michael were located on hills,[148] due to the fact that his cult was strengthened by his alleged apparition on Mount Gargano in Apulia in southern Italy toward the end of the fifth century. Subsequent visions led to the foundation of St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall in the eighth century, and of Mont-Saint-Michel in France in the tenth century.[149] While the site of Chapel Field is certainly not located on a hill, the site of the modern St. Michael's Church is located in a hilly area overlooking the town of Carlingford.

7. CHRONOLOGY

The earliest possible reference to the church at Chapel Field occurred in the 1485 will of Christopher Dowdall which recorded the presence of three churches in Carlingford: the Church of the Holy Trinity, the parish church of St. Mary and the chapel of St. Michael,[150] while the last known reference to this site was made on the 1624 map of 'O Hanlan's Cvntrie'. The only surviving reference to the Chapel of St. Michael is also recorded in the 1485 will of Christopher Dowdall. [151] It is possible that the church at Chapel Field was either St. Mary's or St. Michael's Church. Although both Gosling and O'Sullivan have suggested that if Chapel Field was indeed the Church of St. Mary, then the 'chapel of St. Michael' may simply have been a chantry chapel within either the Church of

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[146] See Figures 4 & 9. See also GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.
[147] http://www.armagharchdiocese.org/parishes/55. See Plate 18.
[148] BARRY, T.B. & HARBISON, P., pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[149] MCMAHON, M., *Saints: The Art, The History, The Inspiration,* (London, 2006), p. 35.
[150] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1485.
[151] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1485.

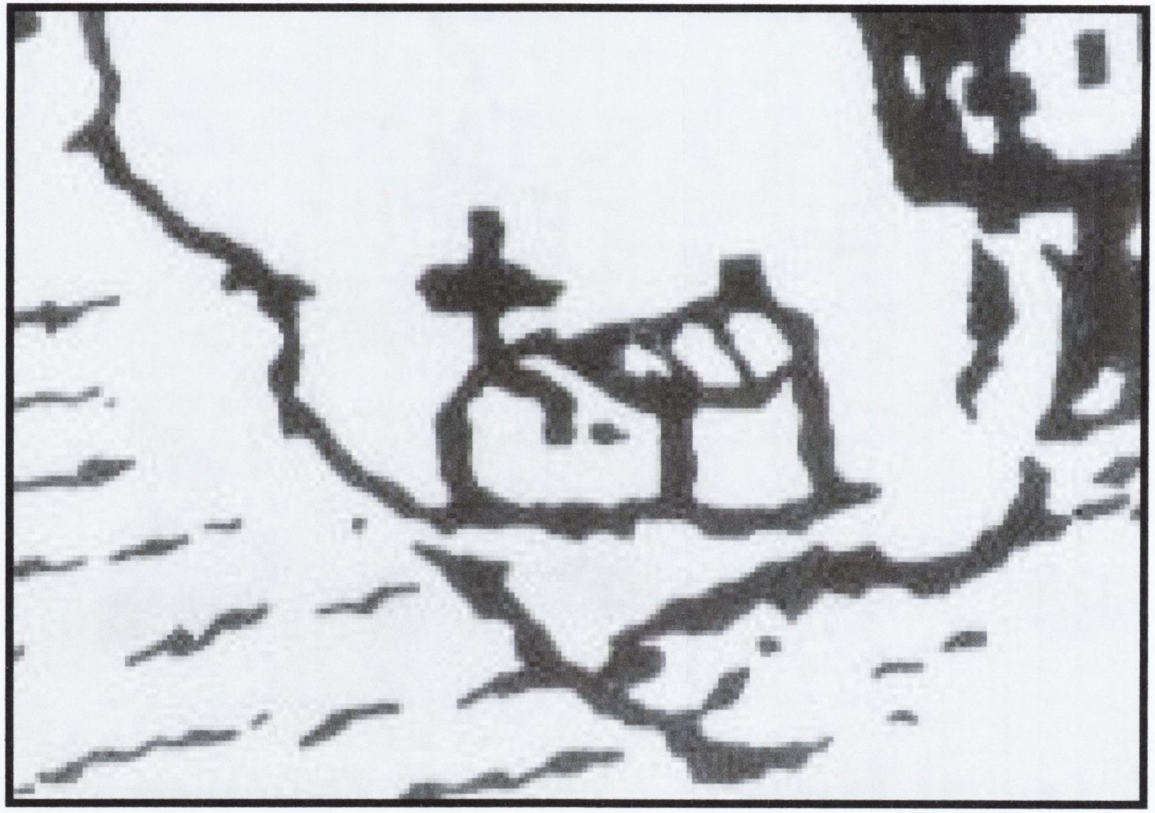


Figure 9 'Chapel Field' as depicted on 'O Hanlans Cvntrie', Map of Carlingford, Newry & Greencastle, (1624).
(Armagh County Museum, Accession Number 392.1935 (SB 688 Shelf E11, room G14)).



Plate 18: St. Michael's Church, Carlingford.

the Holy Trinity or the Church of St. Mary,[152] especially considering the fact that chantry chapels were also established in Dundalk and Ardee at this period.[153]

IV. THE DOMINICAN ABBEY

1. INTRODUCTION

> *This fallen shrine was a Dominican monastery, founded in 1305 by Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster, under the invocation of St. Malachi. It was a very extensive pile, and is still a picturesque ruin. Its architecture was chaste and beautiful for the rude age in which it was built. The only parts that now remain are the long aisles and the central belfry, with the immense pointed windows, now built up, and part of the exquisite Gothic arch which formed the large eastern window; the other parts – the sacristy, the muniment house, the chapter house, the studious cloister – all have been laid as low as sacrilege could lay them.*[154]
>
> **(Anon, 1846)**

Of all of the medieval ecclesiastical remains which have survived in the barony of Lower Dundalk, the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford is certainly the most extensive and most well preserved. The abbey was surveyed in detail by Davies for this 1941 study of the churches of Lower Dundalk,[155] although he was severely hampered by the proliferation of ivy which was evident on the walls of the abbey:

> *The walls are covered with ivy and difficult of access, so that one cannot distinguish joins or patches; if they were cleared, we might discover that part of the chancel is older than the rest of the building.* [156]

The abbey was subsequently listed in the preliminary *Survey of* Louth[157] before being included in both the *Inventory* of 1986[158] and the *Survey* of 1991.[159] It was also included by Bradley in the 'Urban Survey' of 1984.[160] In 1991 pre-development testing was undertaken by Cassidy in a field to the north of the abbey, but no archaeological deposits were recovered.[161] Two years later, in 1993, archaeological excavations were conducted by Channing over a five-week period between 26th April and 28th May.[162] After Channing's

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[152] O' SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009); GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.
[153] O' SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009
[154] ANON, (1846), p. 81.
[155] DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 8-10.
[156] IBID, p. 8.
[157] ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND, (1984).
[158] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 75-76.
[159] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 235-36.
[160] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 46-47.
[161] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=3256
CASSIDY, B., Excavation Report, Carlingford Priory, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1991:093
[162] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=2910

excavation was complete, the abbey underwent extensive restoration works by the Office of Public Works and was subsequently opened to the public as a national monument. In 2004 further monitoring was carried out by Campbell during groundworks for the construction of a sports centre at the southern limit of the archaeological area of the medieval town, on a site adjacent to the Dominican friary.[163]

2. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

The Order of the Dominicans, or Black Friars were founded *c.* 1179 by the St. Dominic and by 1192 they were establishing religious houses in England and by 1224 they had arrived in Ireland. By the time they settled in Carlingford, *c.* 1305, over twenty-four Dominican houses had already been established in Ireland.[164] As previously discussed,[165] after the de Lacy holdings in Carlingford descended to Matilda Botiler's grandson, William de London, his son, also William, sold the manor of Carlingford and all of the de Lacy lands in Cooley and Omeath to Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster, in 1305.[166] Locally, Richard has long been reputed as the founder of the Dominican Priory in Carlingford in 1305, although it is also possible that the foundation was initiated by two Dominican Archbishops of Armagh, who were incidentally also familial brothers, Walter and Roland Joyce.[167] However, Curran and Lennon are both of the opinion that de Burgh was the more likely candidate as the founder of this monastery.[168] Curran has hypothesized that the very size of the church suggests the presence of 'notable conventual buildings and supplementary amenities, all of which point to a wealthy and powerful patron.' More recently Lennon has offered two additional reasons for de Burgh's patronage of Carlingford Abbey. She has surmised that the de Burgh's involvement in King Edward I's

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CHANNING, J., Excavation Report, Carlingford Abbey, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1993:154.

[163] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=12001
CAMPBELL, K., Excavation Report, Liberties of Carlingford, 2004:1076.

[164] GOSLING, (1992), p. 22.

[165] See Chapter I: Introduction, IV. General Historical Background to the Study Area, b. The Anglo-Norman Period, *c.* 1189-1485.

[166] *Calendar of the Gormanston Register,* ed. by J. MILLS & M.J. MCENERY, (Dublin, 1916), p. 149; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 405; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.

[167] LEWIS, S., *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland,* Volume I, (London, 1837), p. 255; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 222; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 75; CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers; GOSLING, (1992), p. 20; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8. The brothers are also referred to in some sources as Roland and Walter Jorz, see for example SMITH, (1999), pp. 91 & 128. Walter held the Archbishopric of Armagh from 1307-11 while Roland succeeded him from 1311-22.

[168] CURRAN, A., 'The Dominican Order in Carlingford and Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVI, Number 3, (1967), p. 143; LENNON, A., 'Anglo-Norman Castles and Religious Foundations in Counties Louth and Down : A Comparison with Examples in England and Wales,' (Ph.D. Thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 2009), pp. 236-58.

Scottish wars, which resulted in the slaying of 'many ecclesiastics and women' at St. Andrews Dominican Abbey in 1296, [169] may have resulted in him seeking atonement through the foundation of a Dominican Abbey at Carlingford nine years later, in 1305. She has also alternatively suggested that de Burgh may have established the Dominican Priory at Carlingford in honour of his father, Walter de Burgh, who had died in 1271 and who had founded a Dominican Abbey at Lorrha, a small village in County Tipperary.[170]

What is certain is that the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford, which had been dedicated to St. Malachy, was described as being 'ruined and destroyed' in 1423 when the friars at Carlingford petitioned Pope Martin V for an indulgence to repair the church.[171] Following the dissolution of the monasteries the site was described in 1540 as a 'strong mansion…in good repair…on every side strongly fortified and will be a very sure defence for the town in case of rebellions'. At this point it consisted of a water mill, belfry, chapter-house, church, dormitory, hall and a kitchen, while the church was stated to be 'reserved for the accommodation of those who resort to the place in large numbers with the fleet of ships every year to catch herrings and other fish.'[172] The allusion to fishing is noteworthy because it would appear to have formed the economic basis for the town's continued existence throughout the later medieval period.[173] The abbey was subsequently leased in July 1541 to Martin Scryne of Carlingford for £5, before being granted in 1552 to Sir Nicholas Bagenal.[174] It was also mentioned, along with its water mill, in official correspondence as the 'Black Friars house' in 1588.[175] It became the subject of a struggle for repossession between the Dominicans and the Franciscans in the 1670s, a dispute which was settled by Oliver Plunkett in favour of the Dominicans in 1671, [176] before being

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[169] *Annála Uladh: Annals of Ulster, Otherwise Annala Senait, Annals of Senat; A Chronicle of Irish Affairs A.D. 431 to A.D. 1540, Volume I, A.D. 431-A.D. 1056*, ed. & trans. with notes by W.M. HENESSY, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1887), 1296; *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131), Part 1,* ed. by S. MACAIRT and G. MACNIOCAILL, The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, (Dublin, 1983), 1296; *Cathal Óg Mac Maghnusa and the Annals of Ulster / Aubrey Gwynn*, ed. by N.Ó MURAÍLE, The McManus Clan Association, (Enniskillen, 1998), 1296. See also *Annals of Loch Cé, Volumes I & II* ed. & trans. by W.M. HENNESSY, The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1939), 1296.

[170] LENNON, (2009), pp. 236-58.

[171] CURRAN, A., 'Further Notes on the Dominicans at Carlingford', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVI, Number 4, (1968), p. 253.

[172] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions,* pp. 245-46; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), pp. 220-22; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.

[173] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34.

[174] CURRAN, (1967), p. 148; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 223.

[175] *Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, Volume* I, ed. by J. MORRIN, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1861), 1588.

[176] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers; O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009).

permanently abandoned by the order in the eighteenth century, when they moved to their present location in Dundalk.[177]

The abbey was recorded in the 1744 *Journal* of Isaac Butler as being ruinous:

> *There is likewise the ruins of a large Abbey, but no monuments, inscriptions, etc., it is at the South end of the town opposite to the castle at the north end.*[178]

It was also depicted by Grose, in 1791, who showed it in much the same condition as it is today. [179] Lewis included the site in his *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* where he described it as being in ruins and consisting of the remains of a possible chapel, tower, turrets and walls:

> *The remains of the Dominican monastery consist principally of the walls of the conventual church, with a square tower supported on lofty pointed arches and 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 which are situated at the extremity of the town farthest from the castle, being overgrown with ivy, have a very interesting and romantic appearance.*[180]

3. CARTOGRAPHY

There is only one surviving pictorial representation of the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford in the medieval period; the map of Carlingford, Newry and Greencastle entitled *O Hanlans Cvntrie* which dates to 1624.[181] As previously discussed, the map illustrates three religious buildings; Roosky Priory outside the town walls to the top left, the Dominican Abbey, also outside the town walls to the direct left and a third structure bearing a cross located within the town wall boundaries.[182]

4. LOCATION

The medieval Dominican Abbey at Carlingford was located just outside the medieval town walls of Carlingford, to the west of the settlement. When viewed from the south-east the abbey appears spectacularly nestled against the backdrop of the Slieve Foy Mountains.[183]

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[177] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers; GOSLING, (1992), p. 23; O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[178] DEANE, (1922), p. 100.
[179] See Figure 10. See also BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46.
[180] LEWIS, (1837), p. 255.
[181] See Figures 5 & 11.
[182] See Figures 5, 6, & 11.
[183] See Plate 19.



Figure 10: Carlingford Abbey, 1793, by Daniel Grose.
(http://www.kennys.ie/images/books/KMP0000185.jpg).

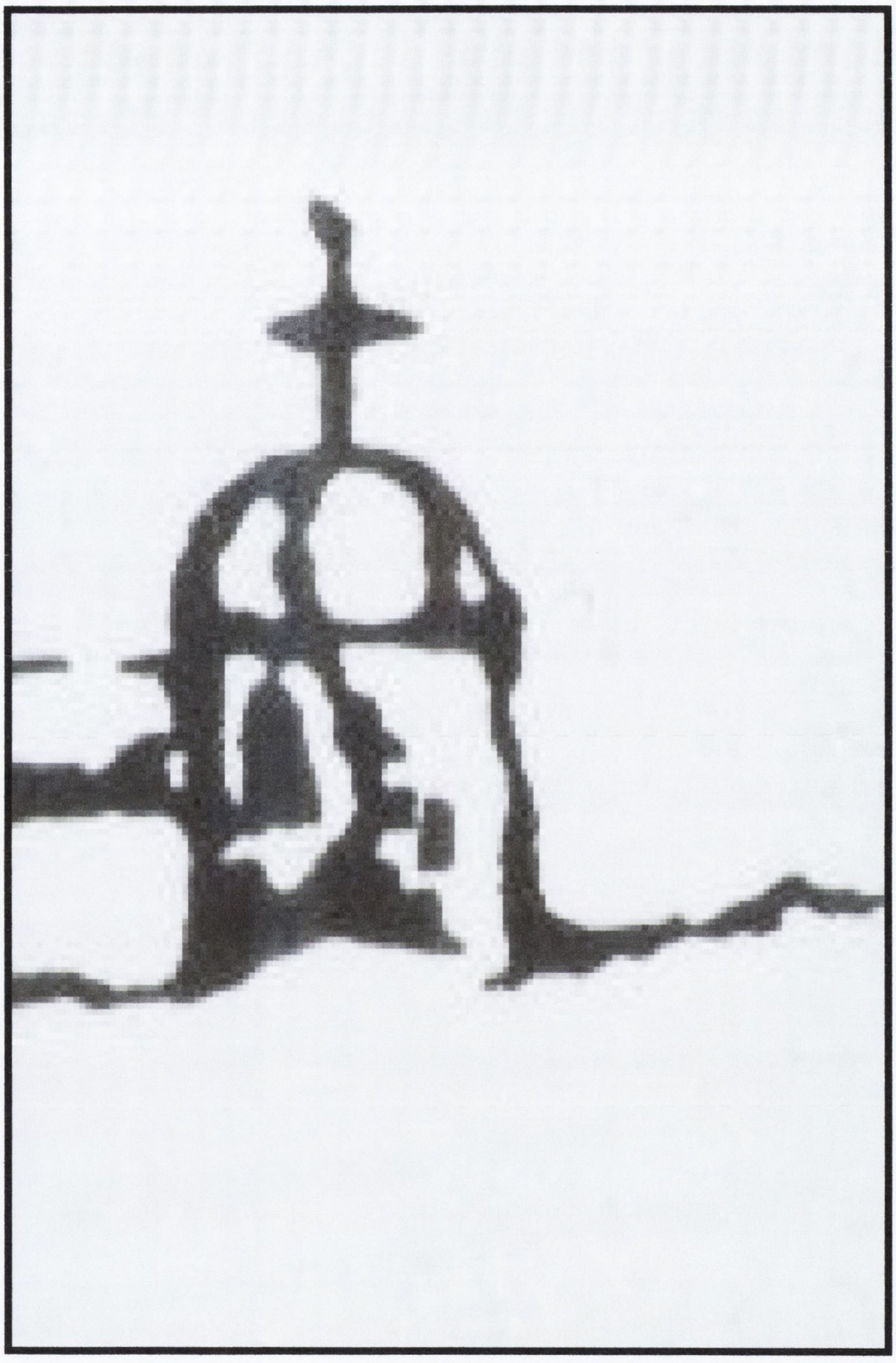


Figure 11: The Dominican Abbey at Carlingford as depicted on *'O Hanlans Cvntrie', Map of Carlingford, Newry & Greencastle, (1624).*
(Armagh County Museum, Accession Number 392.1935 (SB 688 Shelf E11, room G14)).



Plate 19: The Dominican Abbey at Carlingford, viewed from the east, with the Slieve Gullion Mountains in the background.

5. SIZE

The internal dimensions of the chancel of the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford measure 14m by 7m,[184] giving an internal area of 98 square metres. The internal dimensions of the nave are 22m by 7m[185] which indicates an internal area of 154 square metres. These measurements indicate that the total internal area of the church was 252 square metres,[186] by far the largest church under review in this study area, although of course its dimensions are really only comparable to those evident at Roosky, which is the only other site in Lower Dundalk which shows archaeological evidence of having developed as some form of religious foundation in the later medieval period,[187]the remaining sites all apparently having functioned as parishes churches, chapels of ease, or chantry chapels.

The dimensions evident at Roosky indicate that overall the church may have had an approximate internal area of 170 square metres, that the internal area of the chancel was 36 square metres, while the nave would have been 119 square metres in area. As previously mentioned, research conducted by Ó Carragáin into the size and function of church buildings in early medieval Ireland would signify that both the churches at Roosky and the Dominican Abbey were churches of large size, with an important function.[188] Although of course, this conclusion is compromised by the fact that the extant archaeological remains at Roosky and the Dominican Abbey are representative of the churches of later medieval religious foundations.

6. MORPHOLOGY

The church of the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford was a nave and chancel structure which was divided by a belltower, with possible parts of the domestic range located *c.* 20m to the south of the church.[189] The nave appears to have been significantly altered in the later medieval period with the addition of crenellations to the west wall and the placing of small towers at the south-western and north-western angles.[190] In 1941

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[184] BUCKLEY, (1986), p.75.
[185] IBID, p.75.
[186] See Figures 12 & 13.
[187] See Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford, IV. Roosky Priory, 4. Size.
[188] Ó CARRAGÁIN, T., 'Church Buildings and Pastoral Care in Early Medieval Ireland,' in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK, & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), p. 108.
[189] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234.
[190] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 235-6.

Davies noted that tower rested on two lofty pointed arches framing a barrel vault made with wicker-centring. [191]

7. MASONRY STYLES

In 1941 Davies made little comment upon the masonry of this structure, except to note that the quoins were constructed from what he termed 'rough semi-ashlar' and that the tower was composed from ashlar,[192] in 1984 Bradley noted that the masonry was primarily of coursed slate with sandstone quoins,[193] while in 1991 Buckley and Sweetman concluded that the masonry was composed of roughly coursed limestone blocks and greywacke.[194]

8. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

a. WINDOWS

The chancel as it stands today has the remains of a large east window, three windows in the north wall and one in the south wall evident.[195] The east window has been almost completely destroyed and at the time of Buckley and Sweetman's survey was partially blocked up,[196] although it was reopened during the restoration works undertaken by the Office of Public Works following Channing's excavation in 1992.[197] It has a two-centred pointed arch of moulded and chamfered sandstone on the outside, while the inner one is constructed with small limestone slabs and has a keystone. There is no evidence of tracery or any indication of the original number of lights in the window. [198] When Bradley examined the window in 1984 he noted that it was missing its base and most of its jambs that it had a plain external chamfer with an eroded protrusion, which he thought may originally have been a carved stone head. He also noted the presence of a small chamfered light just above the window. [199]

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[191] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), p. 8.
[192] DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), pp. 8-10.
[193] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46.
[194] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234.
[195] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 75-6; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234.
[196] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 234-5.
[197] See Plates 19 & 20.
[198] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235.
[199] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46. See Plates 19 & 20.

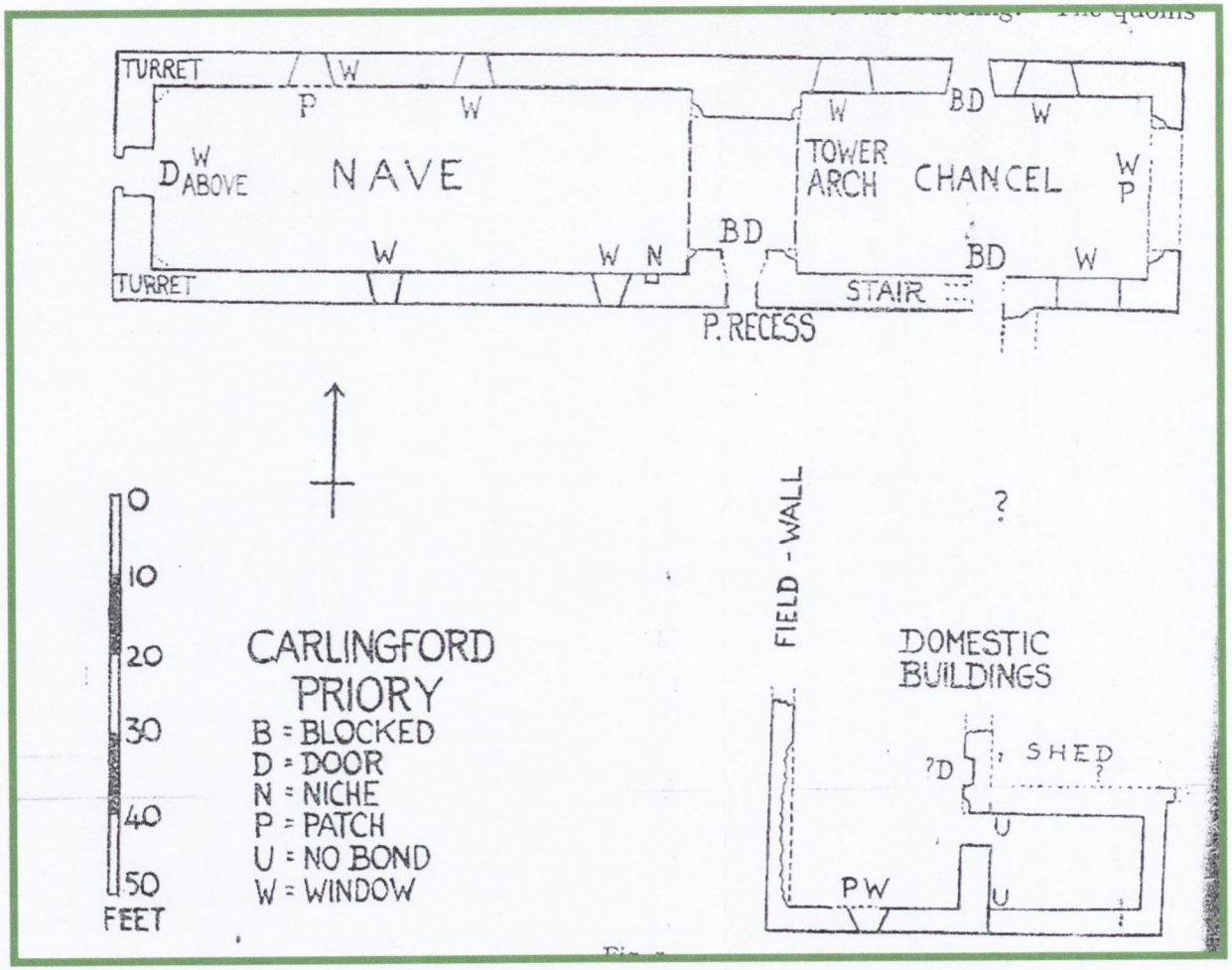


Figure 12: Plan of the Dominican Priory, Carlingford, by Davies.

(DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), pp. 7-23).

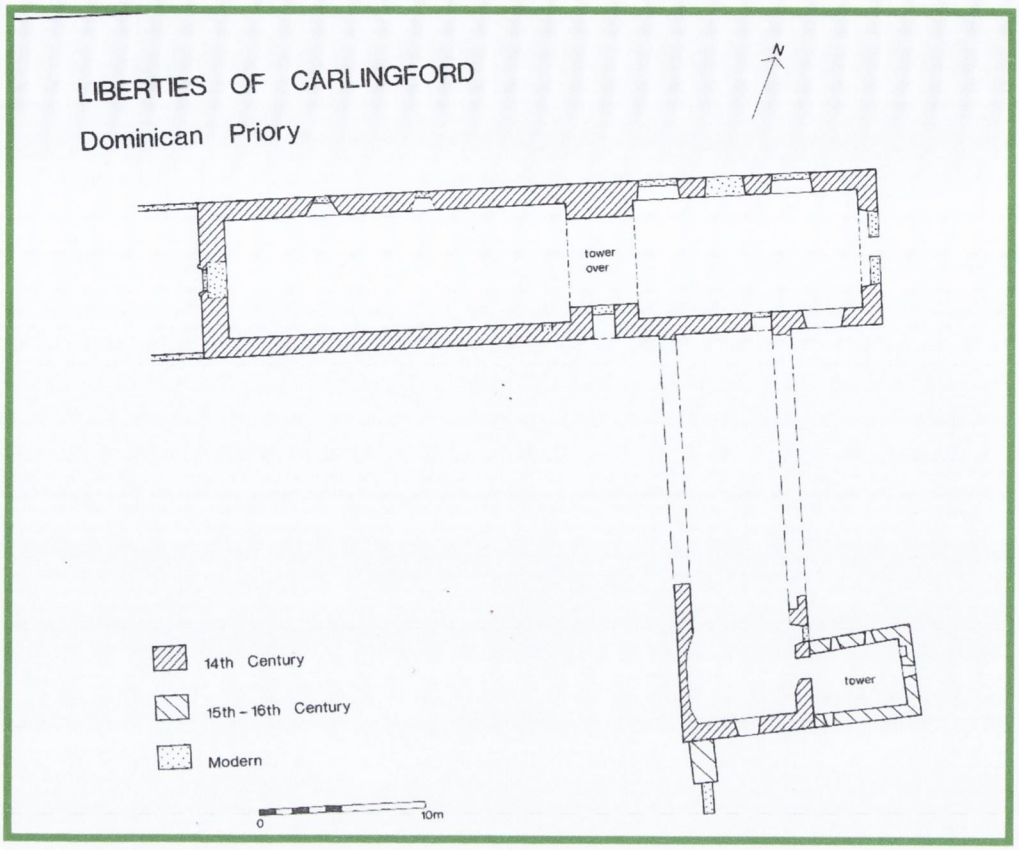


Figure 13: Plan of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford, by Buckley & Sweetman.
(BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991)).

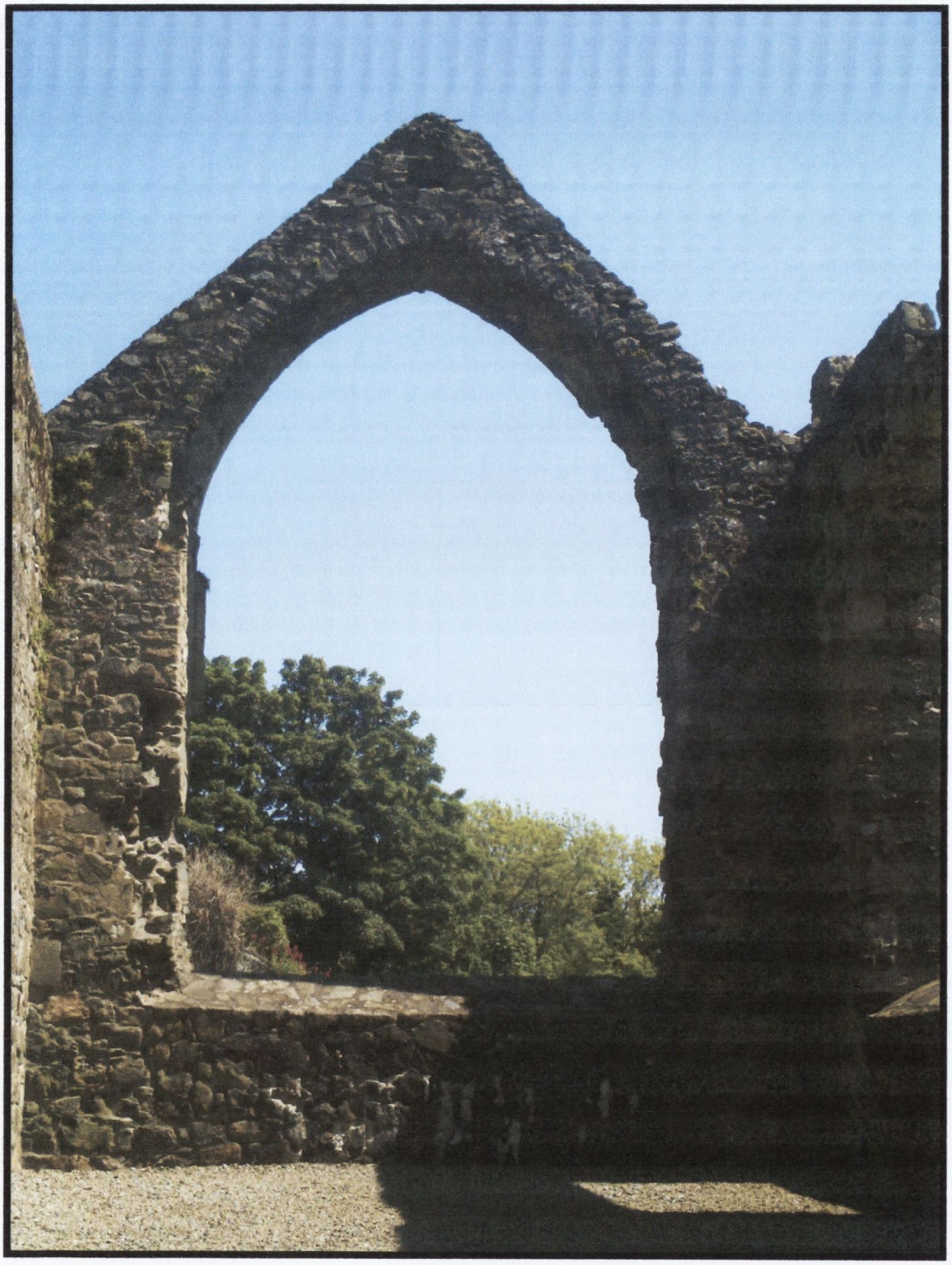


Plate 20: Interior of east window at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

There are three additional windows in the north wall of the chancel, which at the time of Bradley and Buckley and Sweetman's examinations were also either completely or partially blocked up. [200] The easternmost one has been reopened, and was clearly altered at some point, now having a flat arch,[201] whereas the other two have two-centred arches of small greywacke slabs with keystones. One has been reopened[202] while the second is still blocked up.[203] None of these windows appears to have remains of carved or moulded stone evident, although cut sandstone blocks appear to have been used in the jambs of the embrasures. [204] In the south wall of the chancel there is only one flat-headed window which is located at the east end of the wall, which has a flat arch evident, and which appears to be missing its jambs. [205] Davies in 1941 gave a different description of the chancel windows noting that:

> *The chancel has four large windows with ashlar internal jambs, but their tracery has disappeared. The two on the north are blocked, the one on the south-west is rectangular, while that on the east has a wide-pointed ope, whose sill has deteriorated so much that the church is now entered from this side. Two heads flanking this window are said to be concealed in the ivy.*[206]

The remains of the original west window are visible on the inner face of the present west wall and appear on the outside built in tufa stone. [207] In 1984 Bradley described this window as being 'pointed',[208] Buckley and Sweetman described it as having a 'two-centred rounded arch'. [209] However, from the stonework evident in the west wall, this window would appear to have been pointed.[210]

In 1991 Buckley and Sweetman recorded that the original windows in the north wall of the nave were blocked up, but that the outline of three large ones; with flattened arches of greywacke slabs were visible in the fabric of the wall, although none had any dressed stone visible. [211] Bradley, on the other hand, had noted that there were four windows in the north wall at the time of his survey, all of which were built up. He

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[200] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235.
[201] See Plate 22.
[202] See Plate 23.
[203] See Plate 24.
[204] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235.
[205] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235. See Plate 25.
[206] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10.
[207] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plates 26 & 27.
[208] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47.
[209] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[210] See Plates 26 & 27.
[211] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.

remarked that three of these had segmental arches while the fourth was pointed.[212] There are in fact four windows now opened in the north wall of the nave, three large and one small.[213] The remains of three similar but smaller segmental arched windows can be seen high up in the south wall of the nave, above the line of the cloister roof.[214] A row of square holes with a string course immediately above them can be seen below the windows in the south wall. [215] They appear to have been used to carry a further structure outside the nave, almost certainly the roof of the cloister walk.[216] Davies, in 1941, noted only two windows in the south wall and two windows in the north wall of the nave, possible because the remaining two windows were obscured with ivy. He also recorded a large west window which was also covered with ivy.[217]

b. DOORWAYS

The south wall of the chancel has a doorway which gives access to the claustral area and to the tower and which is pointed on the inside, and has a horizontal masonry arch outside. [218] There is a second blocked doorway almost in the centre of the south wall of the chancel with an arch of small greywacke slabs and a keystone.[219] There is also evidence for a doorway in the north wall of the chancel.[220] There is also evidence for a door which was located under the south side of the tower and which has rough external jambs and an internal round-headed masonry arch, the outer arch has been removed.[221] In the centre of the west wall at ground level there are the remains of a doorway which had been blocked at the time of Bradley and Buckley and Sweetman's surveys[222] but which was reopened during the restoration works which were undertaken by the Office of Public Works in the 1990s.[223] The doorway has a two-centred pointed arch constructed of hammer- or punched-dressed moulded limestone with stop-labels. The remaining jamb stones are also of limestone and are punch-dressed and chamfered. It would appear that the doorway had

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[212] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 46-47.
[213] See Plates 28, 29, 30, 31 & 32.
[214] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plates 33, 34 & 35.
[215] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[216] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[217] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10.
[218] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46. See Plates 36 & 37.
[219] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235. See Plate 38.
[220] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46. See Plate 39.
[221] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47. See Plate 40.
[222] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 46-47; BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 75-6. BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[223] See Plates 41 & 42.



Plate 21: Exterior view of the north wall of the chancel of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

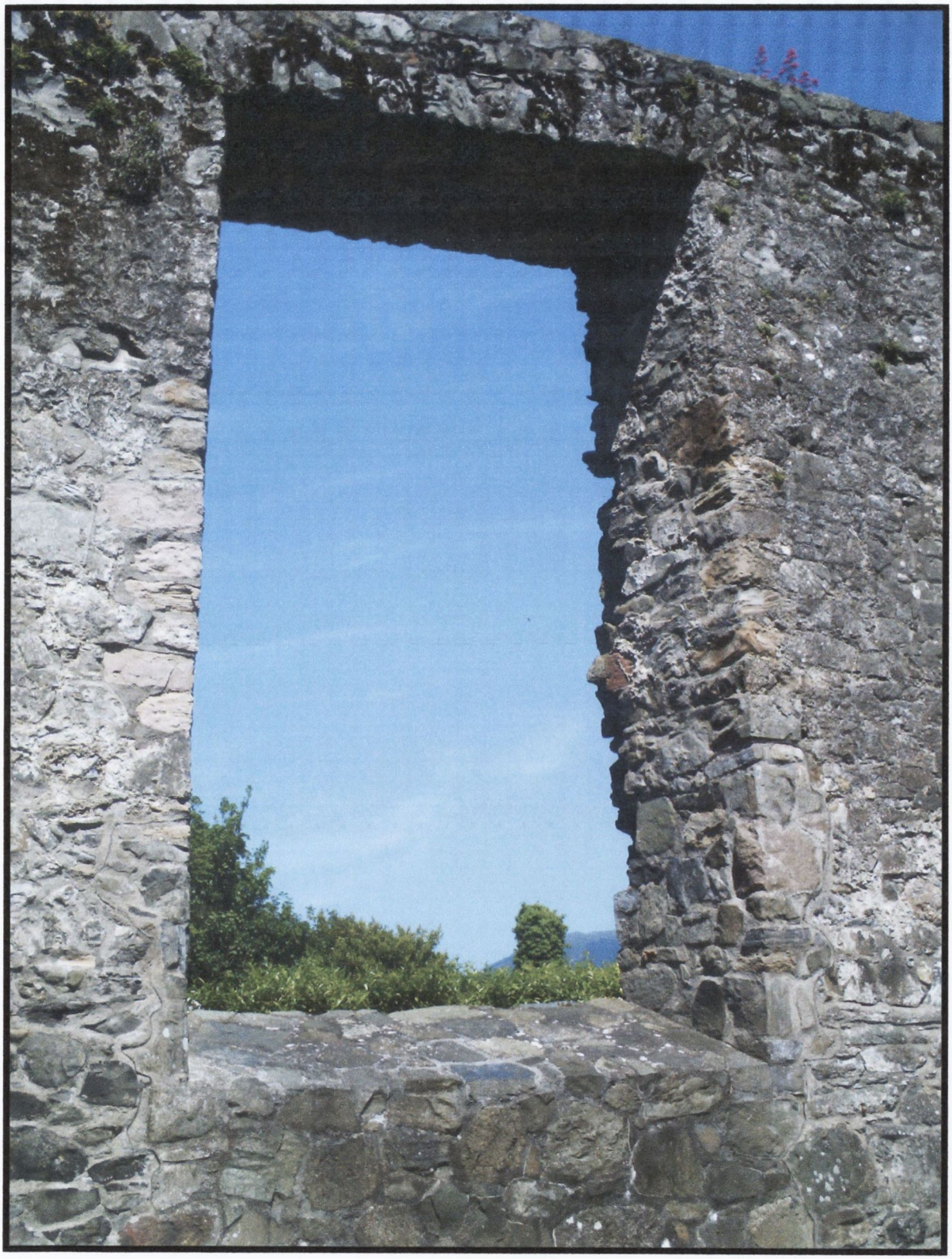


Plate 22: Interior of east window located in the north wall of the chancel of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 23: Interior of the blocked-up middle window in the north wall of the chancel of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

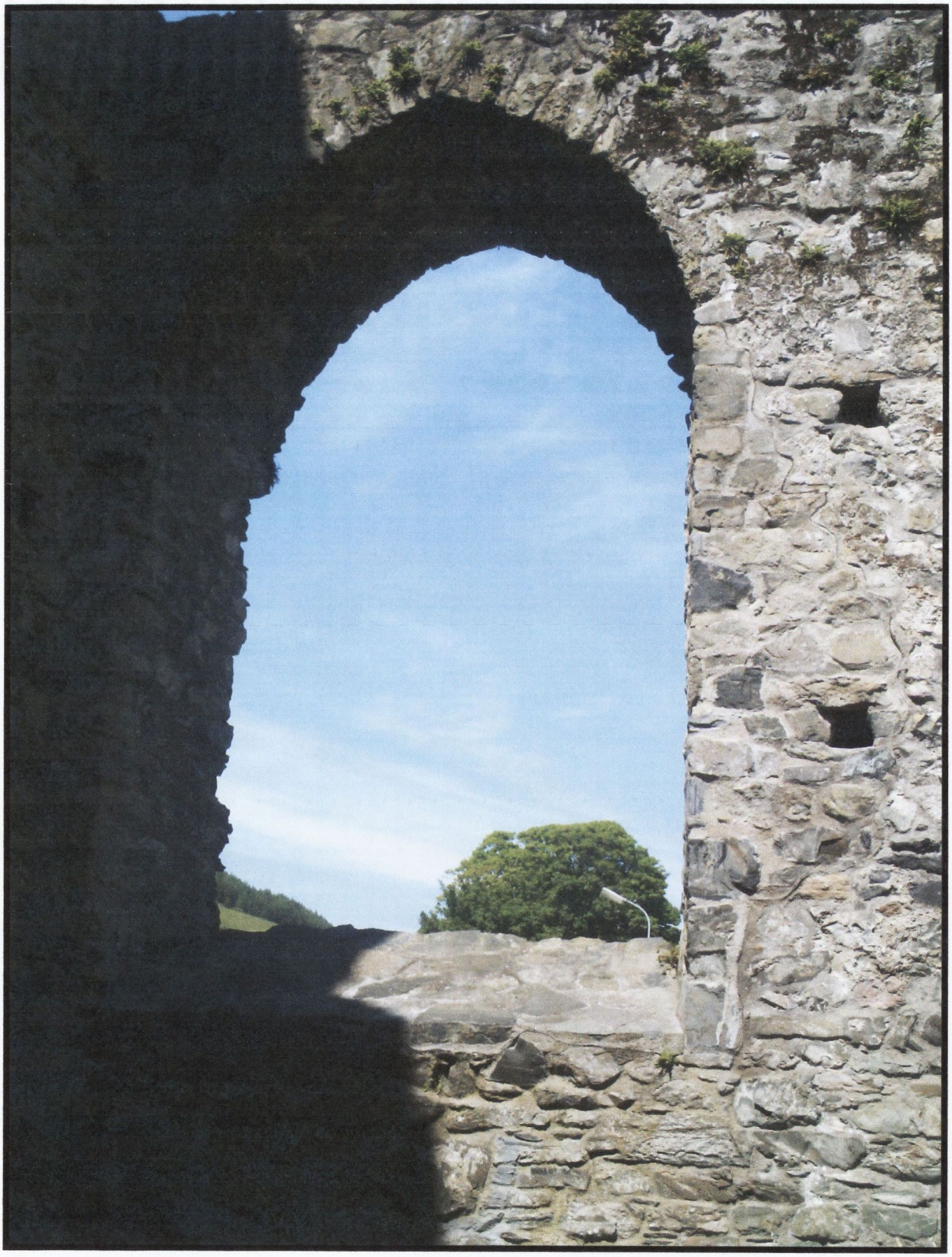


Plate 24: Interior of the west window in the north wall of the chancel of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 25: Interior of east window in the south wall of the chancel of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 26: Exterior view of the remains of the original west wall window.



Plate 27: Interior view of the west wall window of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 28: Interior of west window in north wall of the nave at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 29: Interior of middle window in north wall of the nave at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

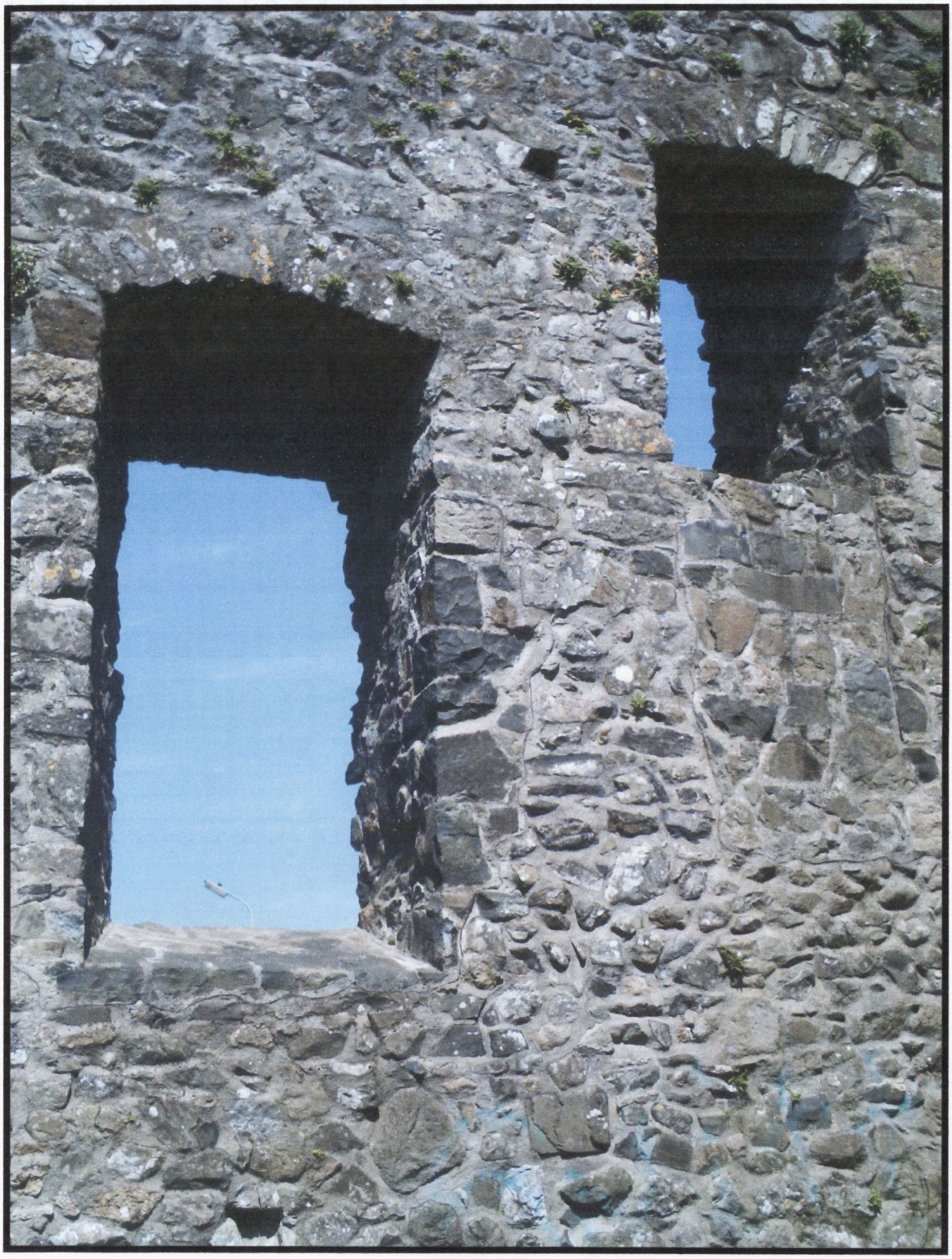


Plate 30: Interior of the east windows in the north wall of the nave at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

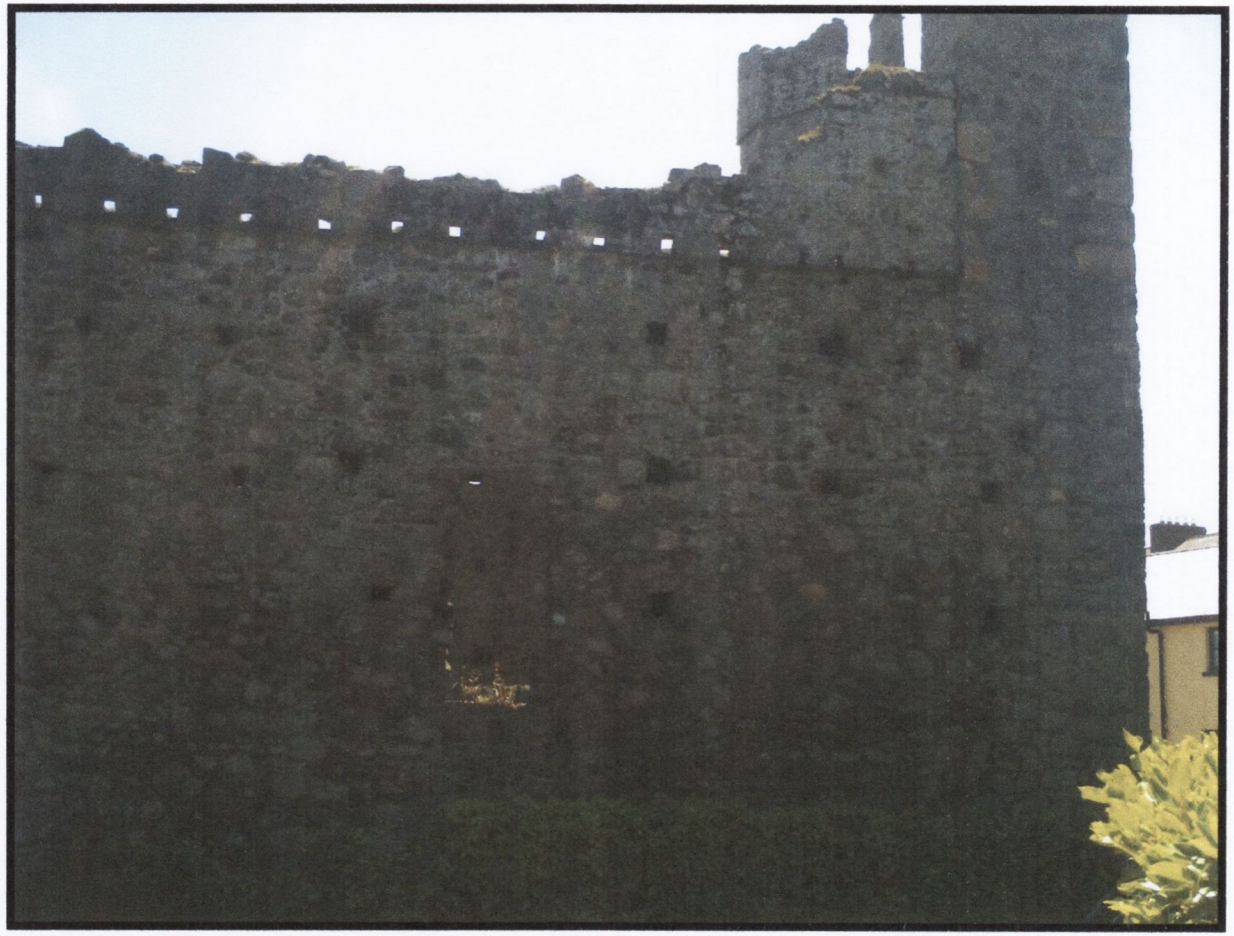


Plate 31: Exterior view of west window in north wall of the nave at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 32: Exterior view of the middle and east windows in the north wall of the nave at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 33: Interior of the west window in the south wall of the nave at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 34: Interior view of the middle and east windows in the south wall of the nave at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 35: Exterior view of the three windows in the south wall of the nave at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 36: Interior of the doorway in the south wall of the chancel at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 37: Exterior view of the doorway in the south wall of the chancel of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 38: Exterior view of the partially blocked doorway in the south wall of the chancel at the Dominican Priory, Carlingford.



Plate 39: Interior view of the blocked doorway in the north wall of the chancel at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 40: External view of the partially blocked doorway under the south side of the tower at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 41: Exterior view of the doorway in the west wall of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 42: Interior view of the doorway in the west wall of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

an inner arch of cut stone which has now been completely removed. [224] Davies also included this doorway in his survey in 1941:

> *Part of the outer face of the west door survives. The arch-stones have gone, but the drip-moulding, with shallow concave chamfer and horizontal bar-terminals, survives. The arch was slightly pointed. The door is rather massive, and probably not older than the sixteenth century.* [225]

Buckley and Sweetman did not offer any possible date of construction for this doorway. Bradley, however, was of the opinion that it was of late fifteenth or perhaps early sixteenth century date.[226]

c. BELLTOWER

One of the most interesting features of this abbey, in terms of dating is the belltower which is centrally placed between the nave and chancel of the church.[227] Although originally dated to the fourteenth century by Curran, who was of the opinion that it had been built at the time of the original construction,[228] he later amended this view in light of documentary evidence which suggested that it 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.[229] In 1991 Buckley & Sweetman stated that this tower was a later addition although they dated it to the first half of the *fourteenth* century and quoted Curran's 1968 article. [230]This however, must simply have been a typing error, as it is in Curran's article of 1968 that he states his amended view that the tower dates to *c.* 1423. Thus, it seems that Buckley and Sweetman must have intended to date the tower to the fifteenth and not the fourteenth century. Bradley however construed these features differently and he remarked that

> *Although there is a straight joint with the nave on the ground floor, which would suggest that the tower is an insertion, the stair providing access to it is built into the thickness of the chancel wall indicating that both are contemporary.* [231]

According to Leask one almost standard feature of Dominican priories in Ireland was a tower, often not constructed during the original phase of building but inserted at a later date. [232]

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[224] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[225] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10. See Figures 12 & 14.
[226] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47.
[227] See Plates 43, 44, 45 &46.
[228] CURRAN, (1967), p. 143.
[229] CURRAN, (1968), p. 253.
[230] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235.
[231] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46.

The tower itself is rectangular in plan with the remains of a stairwell in its south-east angle. It only extends out as far as the inner faces of the nave and chancel walls, except at the south-east where it projects to the outer face of the chancel wall in order to accommodate the stairs. [233] It has two floor levels above the arch, or vault, with rectangular openings in the west and east facades at the lower level and in the upper level at the west side. [234] Access to the tower was gained from the first-floor level of the domestic range which adjoined the south side of the chancel via the doorway, which is now blocked in the south wall of the tower. Buckley and Sweetman have contended that there must also have been access to the chancel via stairs from first floor-level and from the domestic range. [235] A limestone corbel at the first floor level in the south wall may indicate the former presence of a wooden gallery and stairs which would have led to the choir. The rectangular openings gave entrance to the lofts over the nave and chancel. Over the rectangular openings in the first-floor level of the tower there are inverted V-shaped over sailings which represent the original line of the roof and appear to be of dressed sandstone. The tower angle which carries the stairwell projects slightly eastwards from the line of the tower.[236]

The tower arches have simple chamfers, which were noted by both Davies and Bradley,[237] and are surmounted by masonry-arches which Davies believed were possibly contemporary with the west door. [238] He also noted that in 1941 there were small rectangular towers in the belltower just below the nave and chancel roof, and others, probably rounded headed, on at least three sides above the coping.[239] Both Davies and Bradley noted that a portion of the wicker centring on which the arch was built was still visible in 1941 and 1984.[240] This feature was not however noted by Buckley and Sweetman, and is not currently evident on the tower. Bradley also noted that although part of the vault had collapsed, the rectangular hole for a bell-rope was still present.[241]

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[232] LEASK, H.G., *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings, Volume II, Gothic Architecture to A.D. 1400,* (Dundalk, 1958), p. 132. See also LENNON, (2009), p. 248.
[233] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235.
[234] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235.
[235] BUCKLEY & SWEETM33AN, (1991), p. 235.
[236] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235.
[237] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46.
[238] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10.
[239] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10.
[240] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46.
[241] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46.

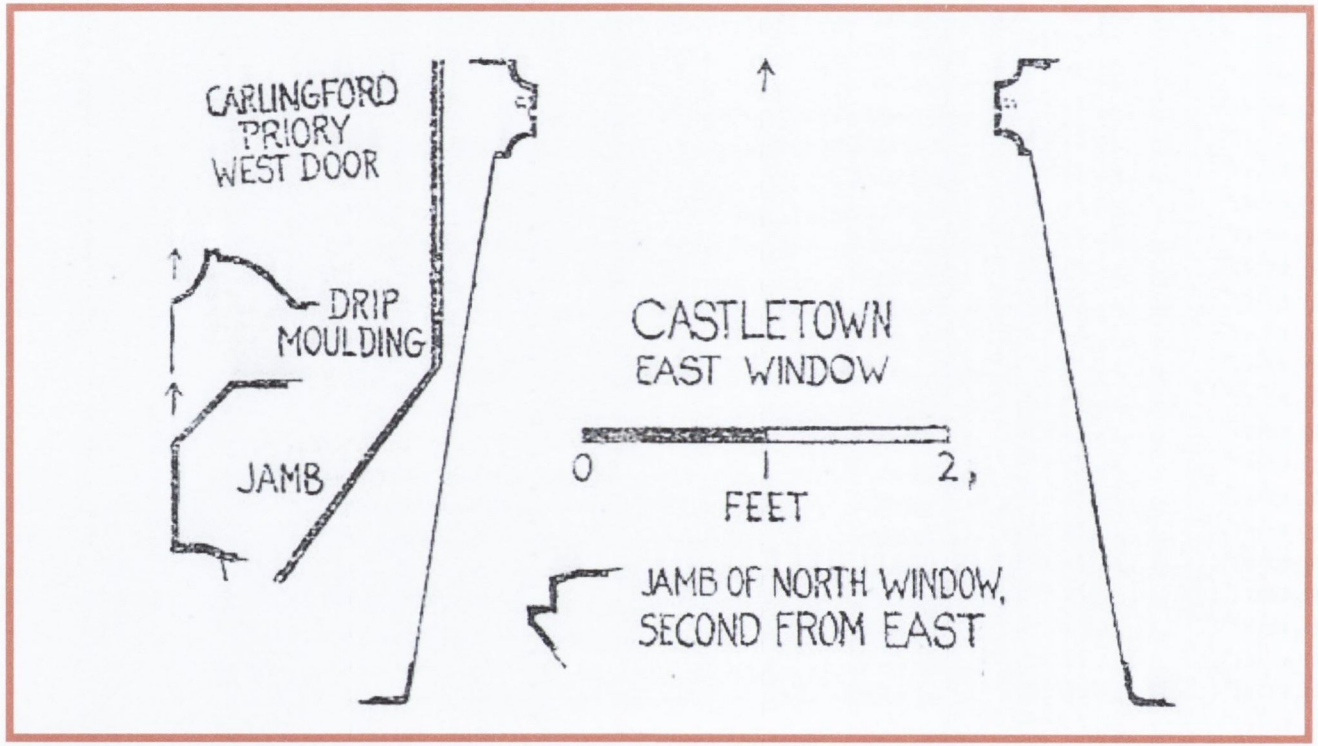


Figure 14: Door jamb and moulding from the western doorway at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford as recorded by Davies in 1941.
(DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), pp. 7-23).

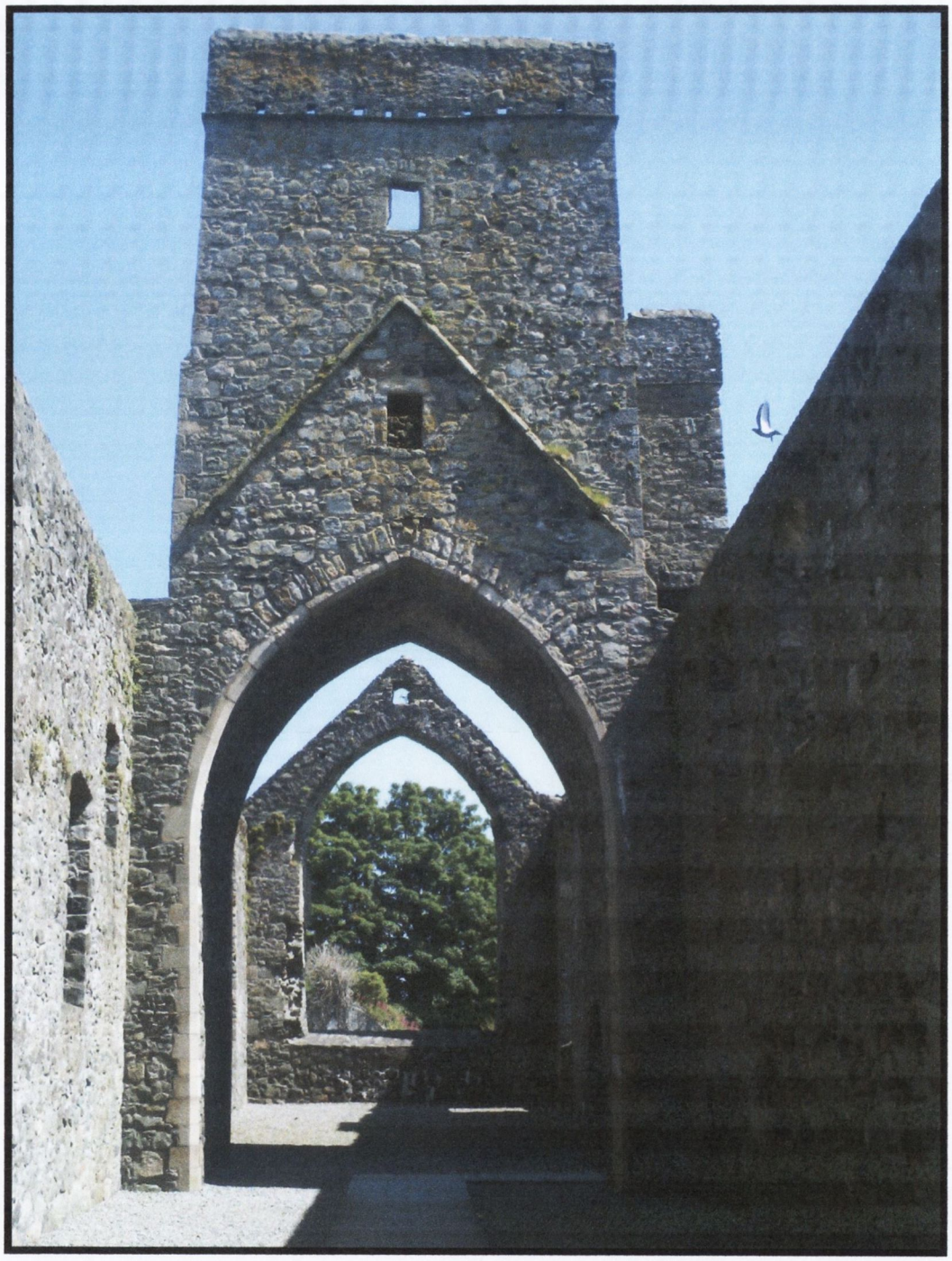


Plate 43: The west side of the tower at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 44: The east side of the tower at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 45: The south side of the tower at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

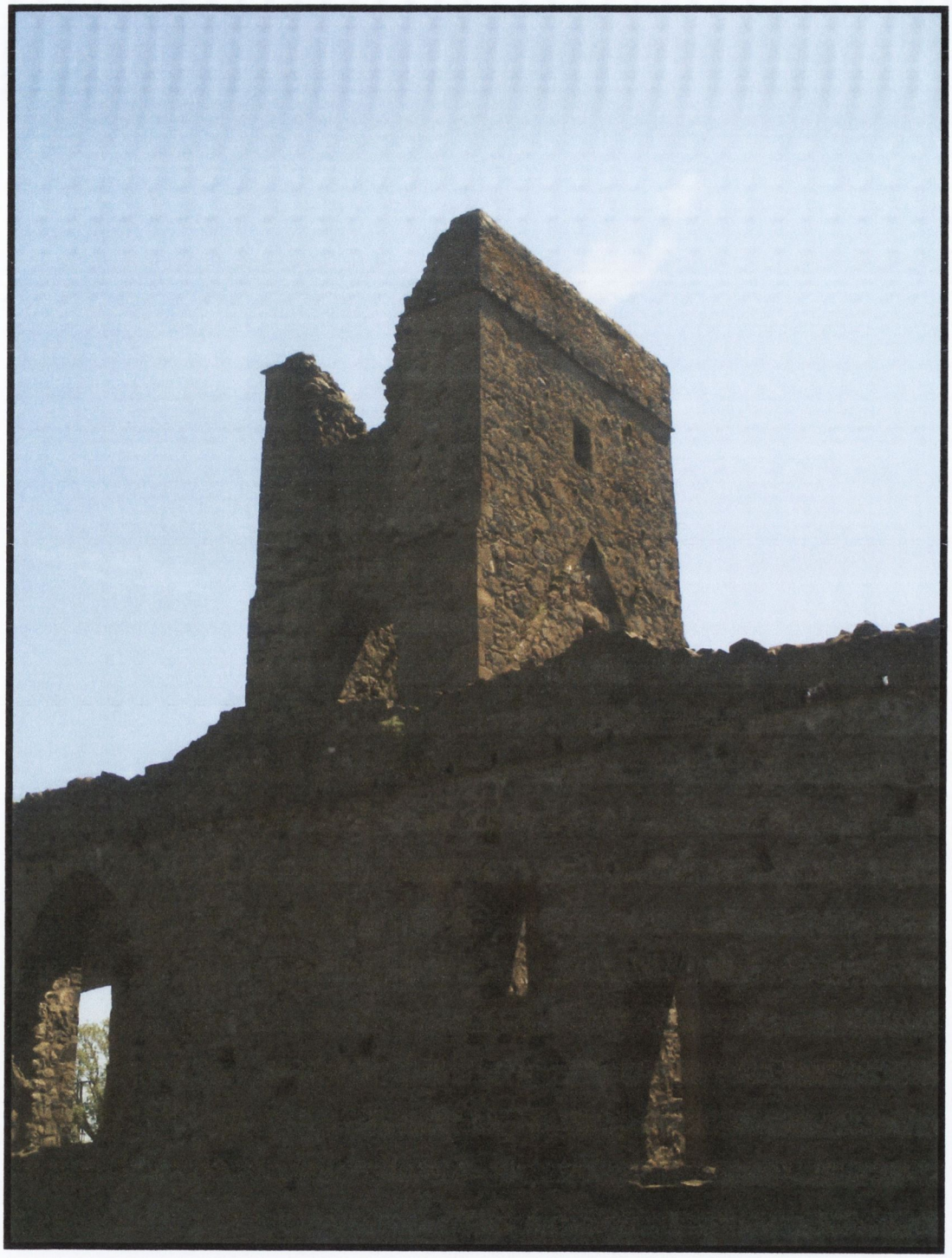


Plate 46: The north side of the tower at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

d. AUMBRIES, PISCINAS, CREDENCES & NICHES

In the chancel, at the east end of the south wall there is a small niche with a high narrow inverted V-shaped arch, [242] its original function has never been established.

e. CORBELS

A limestone corbel at the first floor level in the south wall may indicate the former presence of a wooden gallery and stairs which would have led to the choir, while two corbels evident on the exterior of the west wall carry a machicolation.

f. MACHICOLATIONS

There is one machicolation carried on two corbels evident on the exterior of the west wall. [243] This is a feature which is strategically placed above the western doorway of the church clearly highlights the defensive nature of this structure. In addition to the machicolation there are two turrets evident in the north-west and south-west angles with a crenellated parapet in between.[244] These defensive precautions were most likely necessitated by the fact that the abbey had been constructed outside the relative safety of the town walls, as was often the case with Dominican foundations.[245]

g. FIREPLACES

There is one example of a fireplace evident, located in one of the buildings which is situated to the south of the church, commonly referred to as the west building which contains a window which was later converted into a fireplace and which has a small rectangular window placed just above it.[246]

h. STONE CARVINGS

As previously discussed, in 1941 Davies in his description of the ruined east window commented that it:

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[242]DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 47.
[243] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 48.
[244] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47. See Plates 48, 49 & 50.
[245] LENNON, (2009), p.253.
[246] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 51.

> *has a wide-pointed ope, whose sill has deteriorated so much that the church is now entered from this side. Two heads flanking this window are said to be concealed in the ivy.*[247]

When Bradley examined the window in 1984 he noted an eroded protrusion, which he thought may originally have been a carved stone head.[248] Although these carvings were not mentioned by Buckley and Sweetman in 1991 and are unfortunately not evident on site today, they were photographed at some stage prior to 1992 and included in the *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford.* [249]

To date, no comprehensive survey of all of the known medieval stone heads of Co. Louth has been conducted. Only twelve carvings have been included in the *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* in the section entitled *Medieval Stone Heads*, and, according to Buckley and Sweetman, all of these appear to date to the late medieval period.[250] Along with a mouth-puller located at Castletown, there are two stone heads listed at Carntown tower house which were used as corbels;[251] at Bawn Church there are seven which were used on the windows as hood moulding stoppers;[252] only one survives in the grounds of Beltichburne House, its original function is unclear,[253] and finally, there is one surviving carving set into the outside of the south wall of Killincoole tower house.[254] The two heads at the Dominican Abbey of Carlingford were only published after the completion of the *Survey,* while an additional head is listed along with these two for Carlingford the *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford.*[255] Gosling also included this third head in *Carlingford Town: An Antiquarian's Guide* in 1992 and described it as being situated high up on the external face of the south gable of a late medieval two-storeyed house on Newry St.[256]

Overall, out of a total of twelve known sites of medieval stone heads in Co. Louth,[257] six were either at medieval churches or monasteries, with a total of twenty

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[247] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10.
[248] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46. See Plates 19 & 20.
[249] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. See Plates 52 &53.
[250] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 361.
[251] IBID, (1991), p. 362.
[252] IBID, (1991), p. 361.
[253] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 361-62.
[254] IBID, pp. 362-63.
[255] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.
[256] GOSLING,(1992), pp. 45-46. There is a photograph of both the head and the house where it is located on p. 46.
[257] Castletown, Carntown, Bawn, Beltichburne, Killincoole, Mellifont, St. Nicholas's Church Dundalk, Louth Abbey, Carlingford, Glapistol, Lisrenny and Clonmore.



Plate 47: Niche in the south wall of the chancel at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 48: The machicolation on the west wall of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

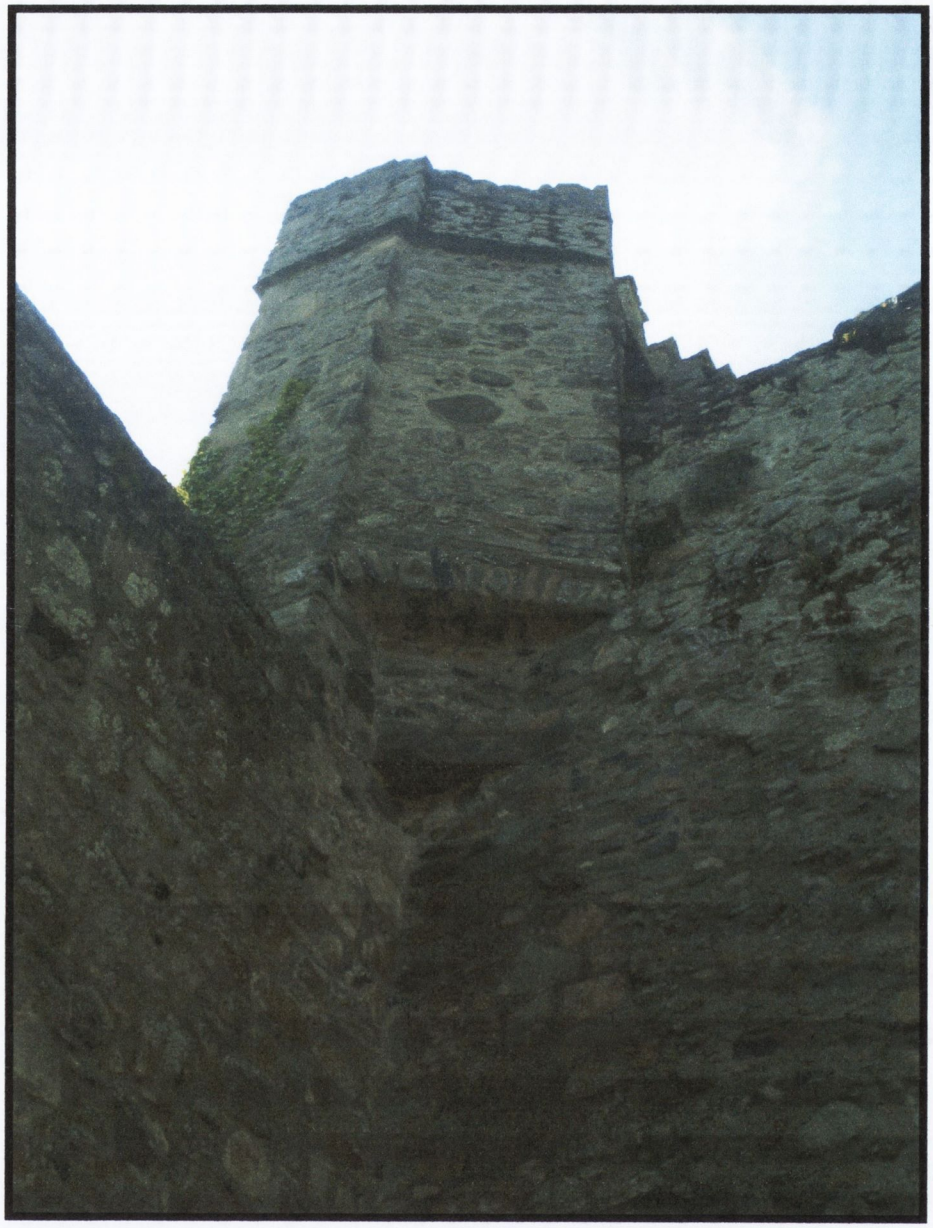


Plate 49: Interior view of the turret at the south-western corner of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 50: Interior view of the turret at the north-western corner of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 51: The fireplace located in the south wall of the west building at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 52: Carved stone head I located at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.
(CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford,* (Carlingford, 1992)).



Plate 53: Carved stone head II located at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.
(CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford,* (Carlingford, 1992)).

carvings between them,[258] while a further three sites were medieval tower houses with a total of five heads between them.[259] The remaining examples cannot be classified in either of these categories and are located at Beltichburne, Carlingford, (Newry St.) Glapistol, and Lisrenny. Unfortunately, until a fully comprehensive national survey of all other comparable stone heads throughout the thirty-two counties of this country is completed, it is impossible to accurately postulate upon the significance the Carlingford carvings in a national context of distribution.[260]

9. ANCILLARY BUILDINGS

In 1941 Davies noted the presence of some monastic buildings located to the south of the chancel which had survived 'to a fair height but without architectural features.'[261] Today it can be observed that an external string course in the south wall of the nave marks the line of the cloister roof in this area while the gable line of the east range is preserved as a line of slates in the south wall of the chancel.[262] Situated *c.* 20m to the south of the nave and chancel are the remains of a rectangular building of two periods which, according to Buckley were probably part of the monastic range. [263] Bradley however was of the opinion that these buildings represented the south wall of the east range together with a portion of what may have been the prior's castle.[264]

Buckley and Sweetman have surmised that the eastern building is of later date because it is butted against the remains of the west building. In 1991 they noted that:

> *The eastern side is built somewhat in the style of a tower house, having a combination of slit and rectangular windows, and is probably contemporary with the later fortification of the priory.* [265]

The west building is in a much more ruined state and appears to have been part of the earlier domestic range. It has a north-south orientation with a standing gable at the south. The building originally extended northwards and was joined to the nave wall were there is

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[258] Bawn (7), Dominican Abbey, Carlingford (2), Mellifont (4), Louth Abbey (4), St. Nicholas's Church Dundalk (2), and Clonmore (1).
[259] Castletown (2), Carntown (2), and Killincoole (1).
[260] For a more detailed discussion on the medieval stone heads located in Co. Louth see HOUSSAYE, V., '"Image of Lust"? The Origin and Function of the Castletown Mouth-Puller', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XXV, Number 4, (2004), pp. 349-359.
[261] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10. See Plate 54.
[262] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 55.
[263] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76. See Plate 54.
[264] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47.
[265] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.

clear evidence of tie stones. [266] The south gable contains a window which was later converted into a fireplace and a further small rectangular window over.[267]There are quoin stones and slit windows evident in the east building which are punch dressed and late medieval in date.[268] At the time of Bradley's survey in 1984 he noted the presence of ogee headed windows in these buildings which were indicative of a fifteenth century date.[269] However although the windows themselves are still clearly evident any remaining ogee headed mouldings must have been destroyed.[270]

10. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERIES

a. EXCAVATED BURIALS

During the course of Channing's excavation of the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford, in the early 1990s, a considerable collection of skeletal remains were recovered from this site. The bones came from six different cuttings on the site and after they had been excavated they were examined by Buckley who found that in general, preservation was very good. At the time she commented that even though only 13 individuals were excavated in situ, there were a large number of disarticulated bones found in each cutting which probably represented disturbed burials and which 'probably indicate that burial was intensive over a long period of time.' [271]

In summary, her main findings were as follows. There was a high ratio of males to females with all except one of the in situ burials being male. Buckley noted that although this has also been the case at some other sites, particularly the Holy Trinity Church, in this case the sample was too small to draw any firm conclusions. The percentage of infant and juvenile burials was 40% indicating that the cemetery was in use by the general population, however the true proportion of adult female individuals could not be determined due the to disturbed nature of the site. Bone fractures were mostly of a minor nature likely to have been caused by falls and there was only one example of a weapon wound. [272] In conclusion, Buckley commented that 'this small area of church reveals an intensive level of

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[266] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[267] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 51.
[268] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 56.
[269] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47.
[270] See for example Plate 57.
[271] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford', (*Sites & Monuments Record*), no pg. numbers.
[272] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford', (*Sites & Monuments Record*), no pg. numbers.



Plate 54: The east and west buildings of the domestic range located to the south of the chancel of the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.



Plate 55: The external string course in the south wall of the nave marking the line of the cloister roof in this area, along with the gable line of the east range which is preserved as a line of slates in the south wall of the chancel.



Plate 56: Exterior view of a slit window in the south wall of the west building.



Plate 57: Interior view of window in the south wall of the west building at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

burials in the post medieval period and if so many of the burials had not been disturbed they would have revealed some useful information on the health of the individuals of this period. However there are general indications of a high level of nutritional stress throughout childhood leaving the population susceptible to chronic infection throughout life. Dental hygiene does not appear to be good and a number of individuals had lost a number of teeth. Degenerative disease appeared to be severe and extensive but this probably reflects the relatively high proportion of older adults.'[273]

11. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

In 1991 predevelopment testing conducted by Cassidy in a field to the north of the Dominican Priory uncovered no archaeological deposits at all.[274] However, as previously mentioned, in 1993 archaeological excavations were conducted by John Channing over a five-week period between 26th April and 28th May. The work was funded by the Office of Public works and facilitated conservation of the site. One of the most significant findings of this excavation was that post-medieval burial activity had continued inside the church structure and thus little undisturbed medieval strata were encountered. The excavations also revealed the original doorway surface at the west end of the church. According to Channing the tower separating the chancel and nave was clearly a later addition because its south wall was found to sit over a foundation plinth; something which was not matched on the northern side. At the time of the excavation Channing noted that 'the plinth may be related to an earlier structure associated with the adjacent mural stairway.'[275]

Finally, in 2004 monitoring was carried out by Campbell during groundworks for the construction of a sports centre at the southern limit of the archaeological area of the medieval town, on a site adjacent to the Dominican Abbey. Topsoil removal revealed that the ground had been disturbed by previous development however the finds consisted solely of tarmac and other items of modern date.[276]

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[273] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford', (*Sites & Monuments Record*), no pg. numbers.

[274] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=3256
CASSIDY, B., Excavation Report, Carlingford Priory, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1991:093

[275] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=2910
CHANNING, J., Excavation Report, Carlingford Abbey, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1993:154.

[276] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=12001
CAMPBELL, K., Excavation Report, Liberties of Carlingford, 2004:1076.

12. CHRONOLOGY

Although no documentary evidence survives to indicate the exact date of foundation of the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford, it has generally been believed to have been established in 1305, the year when Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster came into possession of the manor of Carlingford.[277] After this date there are five significant primary references to this abbey in the medieval period; 1423, 1540, 1541, 1552 and 1558. In 1423 the abbey was described as 'ruined and destroyed' when Pope Martin V was petitioned for an indulgence to repair the church.[278] Following the dissolution of the monasteries the site was described in 1540 as a 'strong mansion...in good repair...on every side strongly fortified.'[279] The abbey was subsequently leased in July 1541 to Martin Scryne of Carlingford for £5, before being granted in 1552 to Sir Nicholas Bagenal.[280] It was also mentioned, along with its water mill, in official correspondence as the 'Black Friars house' in 1588.[281]

Although Buckley and Davies were of the opinion that this abbey was extensively rebuilt in the sixteenth century, [282] the archaeological evidence extant at this site indicates that the original church was constructed in the fourteenth century, while the tower was a later addition, probably dating to the fifteenth century, and possibly dating to some point after the indulgence of 1423 to repair the church was granted.[283] Additionally, the ogee-headed windows evident in the buildings to the south of the church indicate that at least some part of this domestic range is also of fifteenth century date.[284]

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[277] *Calendar of the Gormanston Register,* ed. by J. MILLS & M.J. MCENERY, (Dublin, 1916), p. 149; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 405; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[278] CURRAN, A., 'Further Notes on the Dominicans at Carlingford', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume XVI, Number 4, (1968), p. 253.
[279] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions,* pp. 245-46; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), pp. 220-22; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.
[280] CURRAN, (1967), p. 148; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 223.
[281] *Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, Volume* I, ed. by J. MORRIN, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1861), 1588.
[282] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 8; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76.
[283] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 46-47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[284] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 46-47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.

V. THE ASSOCIATED URBAN SETTLEMENT

> *The first thing that strikes us on looking at this ancient town is the want of uniformity in building. It is thoroughly Celtic, in its total disregard of the 'unities' of architecture; but not the less picturesque on that account are the roofless castles, the mouldering Abbey overrun with ivy, the taper tower of the church, and the cottages and dwellings, with trim shrubberies and green grass plats.*[285]
>
> **(Anon, 1846)**

The strategic advantages for the Anglo-Normans in choosing to establish a town at Carlingford is well-documented and indeed the topographic distinctiveness of the site is acutely apparent even today. Carlingford Lough itself is a well positioned sea inlet which is located almost centrally between Belfast and Dublin.[286] The political significance of the lough has endured throughout many centuries and today it is unique in that the political border between Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland occupies a central position for much of its length,[287] and it has long been recognised as an advantageous port of entry for invaders and traders alike. [288] In fact up until around 1600, communication routes between three of the pivotal urban centres of the region, Dundalk, Carlingford and Newry were, for the most part, maritime.[289]It is now proposed to make a succinct investigation of the other extant medieval stone monuments in Carlingford. Of course an in-depth archaeological examination of them falls outside the remit of this study, but it is certainly worthwhile to consider the different periods of construction work in Carlingford as evidenced by these monuments and how it correlates to phases of building on the ecclesiastical sites in order to determine if periods of extension and repair may have been influenced by socio-economic factors.

The Anglo-Norman town at Carlingford appears to have sprouted up around King John's Castle, the imposing thirteenth century fortress constructed of roughly coursed limestone blocks and greywacke which is sited upon an imposing natural outcrop of rock overlooking the lough.[290] The construction of the castle has been traditionally attributed to King John himself during a visit to Carlingford in 1210.[291] This theory has been effectively

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[285] ANON, (1846), p. 77.
[286] MCSTAY, M. & MCEVOY, C., *Carlingford Lough,* (Donaghdee, 2004), p. 7.
[287] COLPI, T., *Tourism in Carlingford Louth: South Shore,* Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Strathclyde, (1979), p. 8.
[288] MCSTAY, & MCEVOY, (2004), p. 13.
[289] TEMPEST, H.G., *Gossiping Guide to Louth and Parts of Surrounding Counties: Descriptive and Historical,* Second Edition, (Dundalk, 1920), p. 98.
[290] See Plate 58.
[291] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. *Annála Uladh*, 1210.

disproven, not only by the fact that it would have been logistically impossible to construct a stone castle of its size in such a short space of time, but also by the archaeological examinations and surveys which have been undertaken at the castle in the decades after the castle underwent conservation work by the Office of Public Works in the 1950s.[292] For example it is now generally believed that the western portion of the castle pre-dates King John's visit and was probably commissioned by Hugh de Lacy *c.* 1190.[293] Sweetman however, having surveyed the castle in 1986 has a more precise chronology for the dating of the castle:

> *King John is credited with its building but the type of gateway and the shape of the tower at the SW angle suggest a slightly earlier date, and possible around the turn of the twelfth century would be more appropriate for the west half of the structure.*

Additionally, Sweetman is of the opinion that the eastern portion of the castle is considerably later and he has dated it to *c.* 1262 on the basis of a record in a pipe roll which states that a payment was made for quarrying and transport of stone to Carlingford and Greencastle in this year.[294]There are some other clues as to the chronological development of this castle still evident in its fabric. Sweetman has dated the massive cross-wall to the second half of the thirteenth century. [295] At ground level in the south-east angle the window embrasures are slightly shallower than those in the rest of the curtain wall and have pointed arches constructed of two pieces of punch-dressed sandstone.[296] A massive curtain wall divides the earlier western courtyard from the eastern wing which contained the living quarters. The eastern section was constructed in the mid 13th century and has alterations and additions dating from the 15th and 16th centuries.[297]After this the next definite phase of building at the castle can be dated to the second half of the sixteenth century. This is based upon a number of features, notably the north-south wall which contains a chimney breast with fireplaces in its east and west facades at ground-floor level and a further one in the east face at first floor level. The one at first floor level has a large sandstone lintel standing on its edge. The one in the west façade has punch-dressed side stones. The east-west cross-wall has the remains of arcading at the first floor level and two blocked doorways

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[292] King John's Castle was surveyed in 1964, 1965 & 1986. The 1986 survey was carried out by P.D. Sweetman. See RMP LH 005-04202, King John's Castle, Carlingford.
[293] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford,* (Carlingford, 1992), no pg. numbers.
[294] RMP LH 005-04202, King John's Castle, Carlingford; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 320.
[295] RMP LH 005-04202, King John's Castle, Carlingford; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 322.
[296] RMP LH 005-04202, King John's Castle, Carlingford; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 322.
[297] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.



Plate 58: King John's Castle, Carlingford.

immediately below. The remaining complete pillar of the arcade, which is octagonal, is of punch-dressed limestone. Having considered all of the extant archaeological evidence Sweetman has deduced that:

> *It would appear from the type of dressing on the arcading and on one of the fireplaces as well as from the existence of the fireplaces and chimney breast, that this area of the castle was rebuilt in late medieval times, probably in the second half of the sixteenth century.* [298]

There is also evidence for post-medieval fortification of the castle. In the central part of the E wall of the hall at basement level there is large doorway, now blocked, which exits to a platform outside the castle walls. The doorway is 2m wide and is directly opposite the present steps which descend to the basement level of the E portion of the hall. According to Sweetman, this doorway and the platform area must be a post-medieval addition to the castle, and they may be the remains of a gun-port and platform.[299] The castle commanded an important defensive position on the Lough but by the 16th century it was described as being in a wretched condition and remained so until the OPW undertook conservation work in the 1950s.[300]

Also of significance for typological dating are the two extant medieval tower houses at Carlingford. The first of these, the Mint, owes its name to the fact that the right to mint coinage was granted to Carlingford in 1467 although it is now widely believed that the building was never used as a Mint.[301] The Mint, like King John' Castle is constructed from roughly coursed limestone rubble and greywacke. It is a three storeyed fortified town house which has been dated to the fifteenth or sixteenth century and was most likely the residence of one of the merchant families of Carlingford. Undoubtedly its most interesting feature is its five highly embellished limestone windows, the patterns and motifs on which have been dated to the sixteenth century and are an example of the influence of Celtic Renaissance on art during this period of Irish history.[302] There are three windows in the E wall at ground level facing onto Tholsel Street. They have mood mouldings and ogee-headed arches of smoothly-dressed limestone. Two are single-lighted while the third has a double light. The arches are constructed of two stones and have highly decorated panels between the arches and the hood mouldings. The decoration consists mainly of broad interlace but a horse and

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[298] RMP LH 005-04202, King John's Castle, Carlingford; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 323.
[299] RMP LH 005-04202, King John's Castle, Carlingford; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 323.
[300] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.
[301] RMP LH 005-04205, Tower House, 'Taaffe's Castle', Carlingford; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 323-25; CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.
[302] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. See Plates 14-17.

the bust of a man are also depicted. In the east wall there are two double-light windows at first floor level which are divided by mullions and transoms and have window seats. The south one is blocked from the outside while the north one has four panels under the hood moulding, three of which are decorated with interlace, the fourth being plain. At the second floor level there is a further window with twin lights and two-stone rounded arches. It has a hood moulding but no decorated panels. The jamb and sills tones on all windows are decorated with deep punch-marks, sometimes making geometrical designs normally of lozenge or wheel-like patterns. There is a large machicolation c. 1.2m wide resting on double sandstone corbel directly over the doorway and extending down from the battlements to c. 2m above the arch of the doorway. The doorway for the most part has been destroyed with only the original lower jamb stones extant. The jambs are of smoothly dressed limestone with various geometric designs lightly punched into their surfaces. There is a well-preserved wide wall-walk with stepped crenellations and irregularly-spaced small opes which Leask interprets as pistol loops. However since they are situated so high up it is unlikely that they were used for pistols but rather for muskets. The south wall shows clearly the line of the roof of an earlier building which was lower than that of the present structure and must have extended eastwards.[303]

Taaffe's Castle was situated in the old harbour front which suggests that the building was the residence and trading depot of an important member of this merchant class.[304] Business was conducted on the bottom floor and the upper floors contained the living quarters. Its architecture indicates two phases of construction, the main tower of early sixteenth century date and a later sixteenth century extension. The building derives its name from the Taaffe family who became Earls of Carlingford in 1661.[305] It is four storeys high, excluding the wall-walk level, and is constructed of roughly coursed greywacke and limestone rubble and boulders with a very few hammer or punch-dressed blocks but with some finely dressed quoin stones.[306] The main doorway, situated in the W end of the S wall has a two-centred arch constructed of nine large blocks of dressed limestone.[307] The original doorway which gave access to the passage and stairwell is nor blocked and is situated in the west wall close to the north-west angle. There is a machicolation supported

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[303] RMP LH 005-04208, Tower House, 'The Mint', Carlingford. BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 323.
[304] See Plate 59 & Figure 15.
[305] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.
[306] RMP LH 005-04205, Tower House, 'Taaffe's Castle', Carlingford; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 323-25.
[307] RMP LH 005-04205, Tower House, 'Taaffe's Castle', Carlingford; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 325.



Plate 59: Taaffe's Castle, Carlingford.



Figure 15: *Carlingford Castle,* painted *by* Henry Brocas Senior *c*1800, and which demonstrates the old shoreline upon which Taaffe's Castle was built.
(Published by the National Museum of Ireland).

on corbels at the parapet level directly over this doorway. The E wall which has a slight base batter has a very fine central window at second floor level with hood moulding, decorated corner panels and a cusped ogee-headed arch of punch-dressed limestone. At first-floor level in the north-east angle there is a small mural chamber with the remains of a slit window right in the angle with an ogee head which was a some stage used as a gun loop. At first and second-floor levels in the S wall there are two similar windows, finely punch-dressed with chamfers on their stone arches and with glazing bar holes in their jambs.[308] The crenellations have been removed but part of the parapet survives at the north side. At the north side of the castle a slightly later building has been added. It is probably of late sixteenth century date but considerable alterations have taken place in modern times especially with the removal of most the windows. However, the north gable wall is original and has a now-blocked double-splayed ope in the centre of the ground floor level as well as an ope with a single-stone rounded arch slightly chamfered and lightly punch-dressed. At first floor level in the west wall there is a blocked doorway with a two-centred punch-dressed limestone arch. The east and west walls are crenellated and there is a wall-walk which oversails by c. 0.1m and has drain holes which are at a slightly lower level in the north gable than in the other walls. The south-east angle has the remains of a wall which projects southwards and contains part of an arch. This is obviously part of a bawn wall with an entrance through it, which ran southwards from the castle. The broken wall only extends outwards by c. 0.3m but there is an indication that it had a wall-walk. The remains of the hood moulding in the east wall of the annexe are similar to others in the original building as is the small round arch and chimney stack n the north wall. It would appear from this evidence that there is little difference in the date of the two structures both being late sixteenth century.[309]

The Carlingford town defences appear to have enclosed a roughly rectangular area of about 8 hectares, but the precise course of the wall is not known. According to Bradley there are no known early maps of topographical importance for Carlingford. The supposed line of the wall is based upon remaining fragments and the position of the Tholsel Gate. A section of the wall exists at the north-west side of the town at Back Lane and to the south-east of the Tholsel. The wall at Back Lane is built on a slope, is constructed of uncoursed rubble, stands to a height of c. 3m and is c. 1m thick. This section of the wall contains four

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[308] RMP LH 005-04205, Tower House, 'Taaffe's Castle', Carlingford; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 326.

[309] RMP LH 005-04205, Tower House, 'Taaffe's Castle', Carlingford; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 329.

loops which indicate that it is late medieval in date. The section of the wall to the south-east of the Tholsel Gate is similar to the position at Back Lane and also contains loops.[310] In 1326 Edward II granted a charter to the Bailiffs of Carlingford to levy murage for the building of a town wall. Only a small fragment of the medieval wall survives, it contains a number of externally splayed musket loops which indicate that this portion dates to the fifteenth century when firearms were first introduced to Ireland. This particular wall had an external ditch which helped strengthen its defences. Town walls were not only used as a means of defence, they also served as boundaries between Gael and Norman and as a custom barrier to ensure that goods entering the town did so via the town gates where taxes were levied.[311]

Usually referred to as the Tholsel, the only surviving town gate at Carlingford stands at the south-east side of the town and gave access to the main street, as it does today.[312] It is a sub-rectangular gatehouse and has a flattened barrel-vaulted entranceway with segmental arch of small greywacke slabs and keystone. It is built of limestone blocks, greywacke, roughly coursed, and was originally three storeys high. The upper portion of the north-east angle has obviously been rebuilt and an early window head incorporated. The north wall has an opening with a two-centred arch directly over the main entranceway. This opening is a later alteration and has no original cut stone remaining. The south wall also has an opening with a two-centred arch but it has an original window jamb on its west side of hammer dressed limestone with glazing bar holes and is chamfered. The building has been much altered and repaired as can be seen in the stonework of the south wall of the east angle, the north wall of the north angle, the windows of the first floor and the insertion of early medieval cut stone from some other building.[313]The Tholsel is the only surviving town gate in Carlingford and one of a few extant in Ireland. Contemporary with the 15th century town wall it functioned as a toll gate where taxes were levied on goods entering the town. It is recorded in 1834 that the building was used by the Corporation of Carlingford for meetings and a Parliament is said to have convened there and made laws for the Pale. It was also used as a town gaol in the eighteenth century. Originally three storeys high, its present appearance is due to alterations made in the nineteenth century.[314]

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[310] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 352.
[311] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.
[312] See Plate 60.
[313] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p.352.
[314] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.



Plate 60: The Tholsel, Carlingford.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The north Louth town of Carlingford is home to a host of surviving medieval monuments which include King John's Castle, an early thirteenth century stone castle, Taaffe's Castle and the Mint, two fifteenth-sixteenth century tower houses, a fourteenth century Dominican Abbey, the Church of the Holy Trinity which incorporates a later medieval church tower, the Tholsel, a later medieval town gate, two carved stone heads and some remaining portions of the original town wall. The town itself is strategically located upon the banks of Carlingford Lough, a well positioned sea inlet which is located almost centrally between Belfast and Dublin.[315] In addition to Holy Trinity Church and the Dominican Abbey, documentary sources indicate the existence of two other churches in this town in the medieval period, the Church of St. Mary and the Church of St. Michael.

a. SURVEYS & EXCAVATIONS

The Church of the Holy Trinity was surveyed in 1939 by Paterson and Davies,[316] in 1984 by Bradley, [317] and finally, in 1992 by Sweetman.[318] In addition to these surveys, three excavations, one conducted by Moore and Gleeson in 1992,[319] and two undertaken by McConway and Bermingham in 1999,[320] have been conducted on site. The exact locations of the churches of St. Mary's and St. Michael's have never been satisfactorily established. However, one possible location for one of these churches is the site of 'Chapel Field', which was briefly discussed by Davies, in 1941, by Bradley, in 1984, by Buckley, in 1986, and finally, by Buckley and Sweetman in 1999.[321] This site has never been archaeologically excavated. The Dominican Abbey at Carlingford was surveyed in 1941 by Davies,[322] in

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[315] MCSTAY& MCEVOY, (2004), p. 7.
[316] PATERSON, & DAVIES, (1939), pp. 246-47.
[317] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45.
[318] SWEETMAN, (RMP LH 005-04210, 30th January 1992).
[319] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133.
[320] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=552; MCCONWAY, C., Excavation Report, Church Lane, Carlingford, 1999:553; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554. See also BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford', (*Sites & Monuments Record*).
[321] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 11; BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 47-48; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 237.
[322] DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 8-10.

1984 by Bradley, [323] in 1986 by Buckley[324] and by Buckley and Sweetman in 1991.[325] Archaeological excavations were conducted at this site in 1991 by Cassidy,[326] in 1993 by Channing,[327] and in 2004 by Campbell.[328]

b. HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Historical sources indicate that there was an Anglo-Norman settlement developing at Carlingford from the late 1180s.[329] The earliest known documentary reference to the church at Carlingford only occurred in 1237,[330] with a further reference to the advowson of the 'whole Church of Carlingford' surviving in a charter dating to between 1260-1280.[331] The church at Carlingford was again recorded in 1302,[332] 1313, [333] 1375, [334] and 1411.[335] A will dating to 1485, which has been preserved in the *Dowdall Deeds,* lists three churches for Carlingford; the Church of the Holy Trinity, the parish church of St. Mary and the chapel of St. Michael.[336] There are also two surviving sixteenth century references to the church at Carlingford which occurred in 1535[337] and 1541.[338] In the early seventeenth century the church at Carlingford was recorded in 1620,[339] 1622[340] and in 1633.[341] In 1658, an inquisition by the English Commonwealth found that the church was out of repair,[342]

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[323] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 46-47.
[324] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 75-76.
[325] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 235-36.
[326] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=3256
CASSIDY, B., Excavation Report, Carlingford Priory, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1991:093
[327] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=2910
CHANNING, J., Excavation Report, Carlingford Abbey, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1993:154.
[328] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=12001
CAMPBELL, K., Excavation Report, Liberties of Carlingford, 2004:1076.
[329] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 7.
[330] LESLIE, (1911), p. 163; LAWLESS, (1916), p. 11. BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45; GOSLING, (1992), p. 17. O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[331] LESLIE, (1911), pp. 158 & 163; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 41; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[332] LESLIE, (1911), pp. 158 & 163; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 41; O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[333] MACIOMHAIR, (1960-61), p. 86.
[334] *The Register of Milo Sweteman,* 1375; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.
[335] *Extracts Relating to Co. Louth from the Calendar of the Register of Primate Nicholas Fleming,* 1411.
[336] *Dowdall Deeds,* (1960), 1485. GOSLING, (1992), p. 19.
[337] O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 66.
[338] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions,* p. 108; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[339] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2005).
[340] *The State of the Dioceses in the Province of Ulster, Anno Domini 1622*; LESLIE, (1911), p. 164.
[341] LESLIE, (1911), p. 164; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May, 2005).
[342] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658*, p. 37-38; LESLIE, (1911), p. 164; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90; O'SULLIVAN, pers. comm., (May 2009).

and finally, in 1692, the church was once again out of repair but the chancel was described as being roofed.[343]

The earliest possible reference to the church at 'Chapel Field' occurred in the 1485 will of Christopher Dowdall,[344] while the last known reference to this site was made on the 1624 map of 'O Hanlan's Cvntrie'. The only surviving reference to the Chapel of St. Michael is also recorded in the 1485 will of Christopher Dowdall. [345] The Dominican Abbey at Carlingford is believed to have been established in 1305, the year when Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster came into possession of the manor of Carlingford.[346] In 1423 the abbey was described as 'ruined and destroyed' when Pope Martin V was petitioned for an indulgence to repair the church.[347] Following the dissolution of the monasteries the site was described in 1540 as a 'strong mansion...in good repair...on every side strongly fortified.'[348] The abbey was subsequently leased in July 1541 to Martin Scryne of Carlingford for £5, before being granted in 1552 to Sir Nicholas Bagenal.[349] It was also mentioned, along with its water mill, in official correspondence as the 'Black Friars house' in 1588.[350]

c. CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

There are six cartographic representations of the medieval town of Carlingford which are important for this study. Baptista Boazio's *County of Louth and District in 1599* which depicts a number of towers at Carlingford, [351]while Richard Bartlett's *Map of the Moyry Pass and Cooley Peninsula, c. 1602* illustrates the town walls, King John's Castle, a tower located within the town wall boundaries, which could possibly indicate the Church of the Holy Trinity, as well as a building located near the shoreline and entitled *Chappel.*[352] Also of note is the map of Carlingford, Newry and Greencastle entitled *O Hanlans Cvntrie* which dates to 1624.[353] The map appears to depict three religious buildings; Roosky Priory

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[343] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45.
[344] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1485.
[345] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1485.
[346] *Calendar of the Gormanston Register,* (1916), p. 149; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 405; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[347] CURRAN, (1968), p. 253.
[348] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions,* pp. 245-46; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), pp. 220-22; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.
[349] CURRAN, (1967), p. 148; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 223.
[350] *Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, Volume* I, 1588.
[351] See Figure 3.
[352] See Figure 4.
[353] See Figures 5 & 6.

outside the town walls to the top left, the Dominican Abbey, also outside the town walls to the direct left and a third structure bearing a cross located within the wall boundaries, marked D.[354] The *Down Survey Map of 1657* records the town walls of Carlingford along with a tower.[355] Mathew Wrenn's 1766 representation of Carlingford illustrates King John's Castle along with some unnamed structures, while Taylor and Skinner's map of 1777 depict both Roosky Priory and the Dominican Abbey.[356]

d. LOCATION

In terms of location, the Church of the Holy Trinity is situated in the south-east corner of the town of Carlingford on prominent shoreline on the top of a hill which is of strategic and defensive significance.[357]It is probable that the Church of the Holy Trinity stands on the site of the original medieval parish church of Carlingford.[358] The site of 'Chapel Field' which was recorded on Bartlett's map of *c.* 1602 and on the 1624 map of 'O Hanlan's Cvntrie' is located at a short distance to the south-east of the town on a low ridge at the edge of a cliff on an area of raised shoreline,[359] while the medieval Dominican Abbey at Carlingford is located just outside the medieval town walls of Carlingford, to the west of the urban settlement.[360]

e. SIZE & MORPHOLOGY

Due to the fact that the main body of the Church of the Holy Trinity, as it survives today, dates entirely to the post-medieval period, it is impossible to speculate upon the size of the original structure or to classify it as a church of small, medium or large size. It is also impossible to classify the original structure as being a unicameral or bicameral church, although the existence of a medieval church tower at this site can assist to a certain degree with a morphological classification. The lack of physical remains at the site of 'Chapel Field' make it similarly impossible to discuss its size or morphology.

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[354] See Figure 5, & 6.
[355] DOLAN, (1928), pp. 247-49; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 12.
[356] See Figure 8.
[357] OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. B20.
[358] GOSLING, (1992), p. 17; O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 54; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), pp. B19-B20.
[359] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 11; BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 47-48.
[360] See Plate 19.

The internal dimensions of the chancel of the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford indicate that the total internal area of the church was 252 square metres,[361] by far the largest church under review in this study area, although it should be noted that its dimensions are really only comparable to those evident at Roosky, which had an internal area of 170 square metres, and which is the only other site in Lower Dundalk which shows archaeological evidence of having developed as some form of religious foundation in the later medieval period,[362]the remaining sites all apparently having functioned as parishes churches, chapels of ease, or chantry chapels. The church of the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford was a nave and chancel structure which was divided by a belltower, with possible parts of the domestic range located *c.* 20m to the south of the church.[363]

f. MASONRY STYLES

The only surviving medieval masonry at the Church of the Holy Trinity survives in the body of the church tower, which is composed of limestone.[364] The earliest construction work evident in this building appears to date to the late sixteenth century, although a surviving trefoil window in the tower appears to be earlier and possibly dates to the fifteenth century. Although there is no surviving masonry at the site of 'Chapel Field', the masonry evident at the Dominican Abbey includes roughly coursed limestone blocks and greywacke with some sandstone quoins, and displays construction work dating from the fifteenth to the sixteenth centuries.[365]

g. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Despite the fact that no archaeological detail at all has survived at the site of 'Chapel Field', a host of important architectural features have survived intact at the Church of the Holy Trinity and the Dominican Abbey.

At the Church of the Holy Trinity there is a pointed doorway of seventeenth century date evident in the main body of the church.[366] However, the most important

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[361] See Figures 12 & 13.
[362] See Chapter II: Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Settlement at Carlingford, IV. Roosky Priory, 4. Size.
[363] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234.
[364] See Plate 2.
[365] DAVIES, (1941b), pp. 8-10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234.
[366] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers.

architectural feature of this church is the three-storeyed crenellated belltower which has generally been dated to the fifteenth or sixteenth century and which appears to have been renovated in the seventeenth century.[367] There is a trefoil window evident in the upper eastern wall of this tower and this feature, which incorporates a stone carving of three birds, possibly martlets, on the base of the hood moulding. This window along with the thickness of the batter of the walls may suggest a fifteenth century date of construction for the tower.[368] The *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford,* published in 1992, contains a photograph of over the east window of the Holy Trinity Church.'[369] In 1939 Gough-Meissner highlighted an interesting altar slab at this church which he believed was contemporary with the seventeenth-early eighteenth century and which was possibly with a similar altar stone in St. Nicholas' Church, Dundalk.[370]

The chancel of the Dominican Abbey has the remains of a large east window, three windows in the north wall and one in the south wall evident.[371] The eastern window has a two-centred pointed arch of moulded and chamfered sandstone on the outside, while the inner one is constructed with small limestone slabs and has a keystone. There is no evidence of tracery or any indication of the original number of lights in the window. [372] None of these windows appears to have remains of carved or moulded stone evident, although cut sandstone blocks appear to have been used in the jambs of the embrasures. [373]
The remains of the original west window are visible on the inner face of the present west wall and appear on the outside built in tufa stone. [374] There are in fact four windows now opened in the north wall of the nave, three large and one small.[375] The remains of three similar but smaller segmental arched windows can be seen high up in the south wall of the nave, above the line of the cloister roof.[376]

The south wall of the chancel has a doorway which gives access to the claustral area and to the tower and which is pointed on the inside, and has a horizontal masonry arch outside. [377] There is a second blocked doorway almost in the centre of the south wall of the

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[367] IBID, no pg. numbers. See Plate 6.
[368] PATERSON, & DAVIES, (1939), p. 246.
[369] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. See Plate 13.
[370] GOUGH-MEISSNER, (1939), p. 247; RMP LH 005-04210: Church & Graveyard of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford.
[371] BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 75-6; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 234.
[372] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235.
[373] IBID, p. 235.
[374] IBID, p. 236. See Plates 26 & 27.
[375] See Plates 28, 29, 30, 31 & 32.
[376] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plates 33, 34 & 35.
[377] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46. See Plates 36 & 37.

chancel with an arch of small greywacke slabs and a keystone.[378] There is also evidence for a doorway in the north wall of the chancel.[379] There is also evidence for a door which was located under the south side of the tower and which has rough external jambs and an internal round-headed masonry arch, the outer arch has been removed.[380] In the centre of the west wall at ground level there are the remains of a doorway which had been blocked at the time of Bradley and Buckley and Sweetman's surveys[381] but which was reopened during the restoration works which were undertaken by the Office of Public Works in the 1990s.[382] Bradley, however, was of the opinion that it was of late fifteenth or perhaps early sixteenth century date.[383]

The belltower which is centrally placed between the nave and chancel of the church.[384] Although originally dated to the fourteenth century by Curran, who was of the opinion that it had been built at the time of the original construction,[385] he later amended this view in light of documentary evidence which suggested that it 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.[386] In the chancel, at the east end of the south wall there is a small niche with a high narrow inverted V-shaped arch, [387] its original function has never been established. A limestone corbel at the first floor level in the south wall may indicate the former presence of a wooden gallery and stairs which would have led to the choir, while two corbels evident on the exterior of the west wall carry a machicolation.[388] This is a feature which is strategically placed above the western doorway of the church clearly highlights the defensive nature of this structure. In addition to the machicolation there are two turrets evident in the north-west and south-west angles with a crenellated parapet in between.[389] There is one example of a fireplace evident, located in one of the buildings which is situated to the south of the church, commonly referred to as the west building,

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[378] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 235. See Plate 38.
[379] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46. See Plate 39.
[380] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47. See Plate 40.
[381] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 46-47; BUCKLEY, (1986), pp. 75-6. BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[382] See Plates 41 & 42.
[383] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47.
[384] See Plates 43, 44, 45 &46.
[385] CURRAN, (1967), p. 143.
[386] CURRAN, (1968), p. 253.
[387]DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 47.
[388] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 48.
[389] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47. See Plates 48, 49 & 50.

which contains a window which was later converted into a fireplace and which has a small rectangular window placed just above it.[390] In 1941 Davies noted the presence of two heads flanking the east window of the chancel.[391] When Bradley examined the window in 1984 he noted an eroded protrusion, which he thought may originally have been a carved stone head.[392] Although these carvings were not mentioned by Buckley and Sweetman in 1991 and are unfortunately not evident on site today, they were photographed at some stage prior to 1992 and included in the *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford.* [393]

h. ANCILLARY BUILDINGS

There is currently no archaeological evidence extant at either the Holy Trinity Church or the site of 'Chapel Field' for ancillary buildings. However, an external string course in the south wall of the nave of the Dominican Abbey marks the line of a cloister roof in this area while the gable line of the east range is preserved as a line of slates in the south wall of the chancel.[394] Situated *c.* 20m to the south of the nave and chancel are the remains of a rectangular building of two periods which possibly formed either a part of the monastic range,[395] or alternatively the south wall of the east range together with a portion of what may have been the prior's castle.[396] The eastern building appears to be of later date as it is butted against the remains of the west building. It is constructed in the style of a tower house and may be contemporary with the later medieval fortification of the abbey.[397] The west building is in a much more ruined state and appears to have been part of the earlier domestic range. [398] The south gable contains a window which was later converted into a fireplace and a further small rectangular window over.[399] There are quoin stones and slit windows evident in the east building which are punch dressed and late medieval in date.[400] At the time of Bradley's survey in 1984 he noted the presence of ogee headed windows in these buildings which were indicative of a fifteenth century date.[401] However

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[390] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 51.
[391] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 10.
[392] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46. See Plates 19 & 20.
[393] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. See Plates 52 &53.
[394] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 55.
[395] BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76. See Plate 54.
[396] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47.
[397] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[398] IBID, p. 236.
[399] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 51.
[400] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236. See Plate 56.
[401] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 47.

although the windows themselves are still clearly evident any remaining ogee headed mouldings must have been destroyed.[402]

i. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED CEMETERIES

In the early 1990s twenty extended inhumations were excavated by Moore and Gleeson from underneath the Church of the Holy Trinity. All were buried in simple grave cuts with no evidence of coffins or other grave goods.[403]Of the 20 in situ burials 10 were males, 6 were females and 4 were juveniles. At least 15 of the disarticulated remains were male, 9 were female and 4 were juveniles.[404] The skeletal report indicated that the antemortem tooth-loss rate was high and hypoplastic defects in the enamels were noted in several individuals. Several examples of periostitis of the lower end of the tibiae were found and one example of osteomyletis of a tibia was found among the disarticulated remains. There were 2 examples of major trauma to the skull, one was a result of trephination, a form of cranial surgery, and the other had suffered a large sword wound. Both individuals appear to have survived their trauma. Two bones were dated using the C 14 method; one bone was found to have a calibrated age range of AD 1517-1666, while the other sample had a calibrated age range of AD 1442-1650.[405] The skeletal remains were reburied in the graveyard which surrounds the Holy Trinity Church.[406]

Seven years after the discovery of these skeletons, additional human remains were discovered by Conway and four human skeletons in total were discovered lying just outside the modern walls of the graveyard. It was determined that the skeletons were at least several hundred years old, but, in the absence of associated datable artefacts a more accurate age was not determined.[407] Pathology analysis was carried out on site by Buckley, who determined that all four were young adult males and all bore sword cuts on their skulls. One individual had a healed head wound in addition to a fresh sword mark.[408]

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[402] See for example Plate 57.

[403] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133.

[404] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133.

[405] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford', (*Sites and Monuments Record*), no page numbers.

[406] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133.

[407] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=552; MCCONWAY, C., Excavation Report, Church Lane, Carlingford, 1999:553.

[408] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford', (*Sites and Monuments Record*), no page numbers.

Considering the available evidence, it was the opinion of Conway that these four individuals were infantry men, struck down from horseback in a late medieval/early post-medieval skirmish.[409]

One further archaeological excavation took place at the Holy Trinity Church in 1999 by Bermingham and at this time two extended inhumations, oriented east-west, were discovered. [410] Apart from coffin nails, there were no grave-goods found in association with these burials, although a bone pin/handle was found in the machined-off topsoil within a metre of the later of the two burials. Bermingham also noted that the two burials which she discovered were possibly contemporaneous with the burials excavated by Moore and Gleeson, as they shared a number of similarities. [411] However the use of coffins in the burials external to the church indicated a slightly later date and the absence of coffin nails or any trace of wood in the burials excavated by Moore and Gleeson suggested that those burials were simple inhumations in which coffins were not used.[412]

There are no physical remains of either a church or a graveyard currently evident at this site. However in 1992 Gosling noted the fact that 'human bones are occasionally uncovered by winter storms along this stretch of shoreline suggesting that this was indeed the site of a church and graveyard.'[413]

During the course of Channing's excavation of the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford, in the early 1990s, a considerable collection of skeletal remains were recovered from this site. Thirteen individuals were excavated in situ, although there were also a large number of disarticulated bones found in each cutting which probably represented disturbed burials and which indicated burial over a long period of time. [414]

There was a high ration of males to females with all except one of the in situ burials being male. The percentage of infant and juvenile burials was 40% indicating that the cemetery was in use by the general population. Bone fractures were mostly of a minor nature likely

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[409] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=552; MCCONWAY, C., Excavation Report, Church Lane, Carlingford, 1999:553.

[410] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554.

[411] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554.

[412] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554.

[413] GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.

[414] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford', (*Sites & Monuments Record*), no pg. numbers.

to have been caused by falls and there was only one example of a weapon wound. [415] Degenerative disease appeared to be severe and extensive but this probably reflects the relatively high proportion of older adults.'[416]

j. EXCAVATED ARTEFACTS

With the exception of several coffin nails, and one bone pin/handle which were uncovered in Bermingham's 1999 excavation at the Church of the Holy Trinity [417] no additional artefacts or grave goods have ever been discovered at this site. However archaeological excavations undertaken at the Dominican Abbey by Channing in 1993 proved more fruitful and resulted in the discovery of the original doorway surface at the west end of the church.[418] Despite the lack of physical finds uncovered during the course of the excavations at these two sites it should be acknowledged that they constitute the most extensive and informative of any of the excavations which have taken place at any of the medieval churches and church sites of Lower Dundalk.

k. ETYMOLOGY

The fact that the parish church of Carlingford was named after the Holy Trinity; the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, bears significant religious connotations. The exact date of this dedication is not known, but the will of Christopher Dowdall confirms that the church was known by this name from at least 1485.[419] The name of the town itself, Carlingford, initially seems to support the tentative evidence which suggests that there may have been some form of Viking settlement located at Carlingford in the pre-Norman period, while the placename Carlingford itself, which is derived from the old Norse *Kerlingafjorthr*, or 'the old woman's fjord', [420] certainly suggests that the Lough was utilized by the Vikings, research conducted by Bradley for the 'Urban Archaeological Survey of Co. Louth' has

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[415] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford', (*Sites & Monuments Record*), no pg. numbers.
[416] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Dominican Abbey, Carlingford', (*Sites & Monuments Record*), no pg. numbers.
[417] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=553; BERMINGHAM, N., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Heritage Centre, Carlingford, 1999:554.
[418] http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Search.php?county=Louth&id=2910
CHANNING, J., Excavation Report, Carlingford Abbey, Carlingford, (Dominican Priory), 1993:154.
[419] *Dowdall Deeds,* (1960), 1485.
[420] MARSTRANDER, (1915), p. 28; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 33.

concluded that the precise nature of their activity and settlement in the region is uncertain.[421]

The origin's of the name 'Chapel Field' are not recorded and possibly refer to a church which was formerly located within this field. The earliest known references to this field as being the site of a chapel occur on Bartlett's map of *c.* 1602 where it is noted as 'Chappel', and also on the 1624 map of 'O Hanlan's Cvntrie' where it is marked 'Chappell.'[422] There is a more modern St. Michael's Church which is still utilized in Carlingford to this day. This church was built in 1870[423] but unfortunately there is no recorded reference to an earlier church having been built on the same site as the current St. Michael's. In some cases, medieval churches which were dedicated to St. Michael were located on hills,[424] due to the fact that his cult was strengthened by his alleged apparition on Mount Gargano in Apulia in southern Italy toward the end of the fifth century.[425]

I. CHRONOLOGY

The Church of the Holy Trinity, along with the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford and the medieval church at Faughart, are three unique sites in this study area in the sense that they can all be chronologically analyzed using a combination of documentary, architectural and archaeological evidence derived from excavation. Historical sources indicate that there was an Anglo-Norman settlement developing at Carlingford from the late 1180s.[426] as previously discussed, the earliest known documentary reference to the church at Carlingford only occurred in 1237, [427] with sporadic references to this church occurring in throughout the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the final reference recorded for 1692, when the church was out of repair but the chancel was described as being roofed.[428]

The only surviving portion of the Holy Trinity Church which dates to the medieval period is the three-storeyed crenellated belltower which has generally been dated to the

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[421] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 33.
[422] See Figures 4 & 9. See also GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.
[423] http://www.armagharchdiocese.org/parishes/55. See Plate 18.
[424] BARRY, T.B. & HARBISON, P., pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[425] MCMAHON, (2006), p. 35.
[426] OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 402; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 34; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 7.
[427] LESLIE, (1911), p. 163; LAWLESS, (1916), p. 11. BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45; GOSLING, (1992), p. 17. O'SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009).
[428] BRADLEY, (1984), p. 45.

fifteenth or sixteenth century and which appears to have been renovated in the seventeenth century.[429] The most reliable chronology for the construction of this tower has been compiled by Sweetman who has identified three main phases of building. The first, which involved the building of the tower, probably took place in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, the second, which entailed the adding of the church with possible re-setting of the tower doorway in the church, was conducted in the seventeenth century, and the third and final phase of construction which resulted in drastic alterations to the church in the nineteenth century with the addition of new windows, especially the east windows, and the blocking of the medieval doorway.[430] In addition to this, two human bones excavated from the grounds of the Holy Trinity Church in 1992 were dated using the C 14 method; one bone was found to have a calibrated age range of AD 1517-1666, while the other sample had a calibrated age range of AD 1442-1650.[431] These calibrations, although inexact, indicate the possibility that burial practices were ongoing at this church in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and tentatively support the documentary records which suggest that the church continued in use throughout this period and the architectural evidence which indicates that the belltower was constructed in the later medieval period.

The only surviving evidence relating to chronology for the church at 'Chapel Field' indicates that there was a church in existence here in 1485, while the site was also recorded on two maps dating to 1602 and 1624.[432] It is possible that the church at Chapel Field was either St. Mary's or St. Michael's Church. Although both Gosling and O'Sullivan have suggested that if Chapel Field was indeed the Church of St. Mary, then the 'chapel of St. Michael' may simply have been a chantry chapel within either the Church of the Holy Trinity or the Church of St. Mary,[433] especially considering the fact that chantry chapels were also established in Dundalk and Ardee at this period.[434]

As previously mentioned, although no documentary evidence survives to indicate the exact date of foundation of the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford, it has generally been believed to have been established in 1305, the year when Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster

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[429] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, (1992), no pg. numbers. See Plate 6.
[430] RMP LH 005-04210: SWEETMAN, P.D., Survey of Church & Tower of the Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Church, Carlingford, (30th January 1992).
[431] BUCKLEY, L.A., 'Skeletal Report : Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford', (*Sites and Monuments Record*), no page numbers ; http://www.excavations.ie/Pages/Details.php?Year=&County=Louth&id=3116
GLEESON, C. & MOORE, D., Excavation Report, Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford, 1992:133.
[432] *Dowdall Deeds,* 1485.
[433] O' SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009); GOSLING, (1992), p. 17.
[434] O' SULLIVAN, H., pers. comm., (May, 2009

came into possession of the manor of Carlingford.[435] After this date there are five significant primary references to this abbey in the medieval period; 1423, [436] 1540, [437] 1541, [438] 1552[439] and 1558. [440] Although Buckley and Davies were of the opinion that this abbey was extensively rebuilt in the sixteenth century, [441] the archaeological evidence extant at this site indicates that the original church was constructed in the fourteenth century, while the tower was a later addition, probably dating to the fifteenth century, and possibly dating to some point after the indulgence of 1423 to repair the church was granted.[442] Additionally, the ogee-headed windows evident in the buildings to the south of the church indicate that at least some part of this domestic range is also of fifteenth century date.[443]

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[435] *Calendar of the Gormanston Register,* (1916), p. 149; OTWAY-RUTHVEN, (1968), p. 405; BRADLEY, (1984), p. 46; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 8.
[436] CURRAN, (1968), p. 253.
[437] *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions,* pp. 245-46; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), pp. 220-22; OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY, (2007), p. 10.
[438] CURRAN, (1967), p. 148; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 223.
[439] CURRAN, (1967), p. 148; GWYNN & HADCOCK, (1970), p. 223.
[440] *Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth,* 1588.
[441] DAVIES, (1941b), p. 8; BUCKLEY, (1986), p. 76.
[442] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 46-47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.
[443] BRADLEY, (1984), pp. 46-47; BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), p. 236.

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1998 O'Conor described medieval parish churches as 'lonely and insignificant places today', despite being the category of church with which medieval people would have had greatest familiarity.[1] The medieval churches of the barony of Lower Dundalk could well fit this description as a regional grouping of 'lonely and insignificant' structures; only one out of a total of sixteen sites is still occupied and maintained.[2] Only seven sites have extant masonry remains, [3]while the remaining nine sites have no surviving structural remains evident on site at all.[4]

2. LOCATION

What is perhaps most significant about the locations of the medieval ecclesiastical sites of Lower Dundalk is that the early medieval settlements (with the exception of Cornamucklagh) and the later medieval churches (with the exception of Knocknagoran) were all positioned in the fertile south and south-eastern portions of the Cooley Peninsula, indicating a distinct avoidance of the central mountainous portions of the isthmus and a singular preference for the more agriculturally viable low-lying plains which span the periphery of this land mass. The early medieval monastic site at Cornamucklagh and the medieval church of Knocknagoran were located in the mountainous upland of Omeath, in the north east of the barony, a factor which appears to have hindered their settlement development; Cornamucklagh did not survive the Viking attacks of the ninth and tenth centuries, while the church at Knocknagoran was subsumed into the large parish of Carlingford in 1658. [5]

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[1] O'CONOR, K.D., *The Archaeology of Medieval Rural Settlement in Ireland,* Discovery Programme Monograph No. 3, Discovery Programme/Royal Irish Academy, (Dublin, 1998), p. 17.

[2] The Holy Trinity Church, Carlingford.

[3] Faughart, Roosky, Ballymascanlan, Mountbagnall, Templetown, the Church of the Holy Trinity & the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford.

[4] Proleek, Cornamucklagh, Castletowncooley, Willville, Grange, Muchgrange, Knocknagoran, St. Mary's Church & St. Michael's Church, Carlingford.

[5] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* transc. by J.B. LESLIE, *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume VII, Number 1, (1929), pp. 37-38. See also O'SULLIVAN, (2005), p. 90.

3. PARISH BOUNDARIES

Today there are only three parishes in the barony of Lower Dundalk: Ballyboys; Ballymascanlan and Carlingford. It would appear, however, that in the medieval period there were at least six parishes in the barony of Lower Dundalk; Carlingford, Omeath, Faughart, Ballyboys,[6] Ballymascanlan, and the Newtown of Cooley, or Mountbagnall, as it is now referred to.[7] The modern parish of Ballyboys formerly belonged to the parish of Newtown Cooley, or Newtown Bagnal, and its parish church would have been at Mountbagnall, which now forms part of the modern parish of Carlingford.[8] The churches of Ballymascanlan and Faughart and the enclosures at Proleek now form part of the modern parish of Ballymascanlan.[9]The modern parish of Faughart is located in the barony of Lower Dundalk, while the Faughart Church itself is currently located within the modern parish of Ballymascanlan, in the barony of Lower Dundalk. However, documentary evidence indicates that the medieval parish of Faughart was located within the boundaries of the barony of Lower Dundalk, and that Faughart Church functioned as the parish church. In the 1658 inquisition into the parishes of County Louth the parish of Ballymascanlan was recorded, [10] as was the parish of Faughart, with the church described as being out of repair.[11]

The churches located at Cornamucklagh, Knocknagoran, Roosky, Carlingford, Grange, Muchgrange, Willville, Templetown, Castletowncooley and Mountbagnall are all currently included in the modern parish of Carlingford. In 1658 Carlingford, Castletowncooley, Grange, Corbally (which is part of Willville) and Muchgrange were all listed as being part of the parish of Carlingford which at this point was conjoined with the parish of Omeath.[12] The only churches not accounted for here were Ballymascanlan, Faughart and Mountbagnall, which were at this point still functioning as individual

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[6] In 1475 'Balliboys' is described both as a parish and a prebend with Thomas Halpenny as the latter, who was also the Collector of the Subsidy for the Deanery of Dundalk. LESLIE, J.B., *Supplement to "Armagh Clergy and Parishes"*, (Dundalk, 1948).

[7] It should also be noted that the modern parish of Castletown, which is located in the neighbouring barony of Upper Dundalk also has jurisdiction over a small portion of land which used to firm part of the parish of Ballymascanlan. The parish churches of these five parishes were the Church of the Holy Trinity, Knocknagoran Church, Faughart Church, Ballymascanlan Church, and Mountbagnall Church respectively.

[8]DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Baronies of Lower and Upper Dundalk', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941b), (1941b), p. 7.

[9] IBID, p. 7.

[10] *Inquisitions Concerning the Parishes of Co. Louth, 1658,* pp. 35-36.

[11] IBID, p. 35.

[12] IBID, p. 37.

parishes. Only the parish status of the church at Templetown was not accounted for in the documentary record and it is possible that it either formed part of the extensive parish of Carlingford, or alternatively, functioned as a parish church on its own.

4. SIZE

Where possible the dimensions of the churches under review were studied in an attempt to calculate internal area and in order to determine if there was a direct relationship between the size of these sites and their status and function in the medieval period, in line with recent research conducted by Ó Carragáin.[13] It was possible to calculate the approximate size of seven of the sites: Faughart Church, Roosky Priory, Cornamucklagh, Mountbagnall Church, Templetown Church, Muchgrange Church and the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford. Faughart Church was found to have an internal area of 84 square metres, qualifying it as a church of middle size. Roosky Priory had an approximate internal area of 170 square metres, which would signify a church of large size, with an important function. The overall internal area of the surviving earthworks extant at Cornamucklagh may have been as much as 340 square metres, exactly twice the size of the interior of the church at Roosky. Mountbagnall also appears to have been a church of middle size with an internal area of 114 square metres. Templetown was found to have an internal area of 83.16 square metres, also qualifying it as a church of middle size. Muchgrange was the only church in this group which was a structure of small size, with an internal area of 55 square metres. Finally, the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford was found to have an internal area of 252 square metres, signifying a church of large size.

5. MORPHOLOGY

The churches under review in this study were all found to be either unicameral or bicameral in form. In the cases of those structures which were bicameral, all of them were found to consist of the divided nave and chancel form, except for the church at Faughart. At Faughart the surviving morphology indicates the possible existence of a solid dividing wall with an entranceway between the twelfth century western end of the structure and the

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[13] Ó CARRAGÁIN, 'Church Buildings and Pastoral Care in Early Medieval Ireland,' in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK, & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), pp. 91-123.

later medieval eastern gable. It is therefore possible that the eastern end of this structure is representative of a later medieval priest's residence as defined by Bermingham.[14]

When Oliver Davies surveyed the medieval church sites of Lower Dundalk in 1941, apart from a brief reference to manorial churches in his introduction he did not state throughout the course of his report which individual churches he was referring to.[15] Moreover, he asserted that there is a lack of evidence to suggest that the various Anglo-Norman lords who are recorded as having founded numerous churches in the county, adopted standard methods. Rather, he alleged, they seem to have respected local conditions.[16] Again, he did not expand upon this point, which is presumably an architectural one, and it is not entirely clear at all what is meant here. In addition to this he states that there are a number of 'hilltop' and ''quasi-hilltop' churches in Louth, although he does not outline the prerequisites for these site types, nor did he name the individual examples he is referring to.[17]

Over forty years later, Buckley & Sweetman, having surveyed the same church sites, concluded that the medieval parish churches of Louth appeared to be built to a set plan in most cases, all having a certain number of architectural features in common, such as a bell-cote on the west gable, opposing doorways in the nave and the use of hammer dressed limestone or hard grey sandstone in the windows and doorways. With regard to the distribution in the county, they stated that the siting of medieval parish churches did not appear to have any set pattern and no preference was shown for particular types of location, except for a few which are situated close to mottes such as Glebe East and Faughart Upper. They alleged that there are only five churches in Louth which could be categorised as manorial and finally, they concluded by adding that 'their [the parish church's] situation almost certainly reflects political determinants rather than physical constraints'.[18]Other than this, they did not comment in any great detail upon manorial churches in Louth, except to observe, in the chapter on motte castles in Louth, that if the English model of a medieval

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[14] BIRMINGHAM, H., 'Priests' Residences in Later Medieval Ireland', in *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Territory and Building,* ed. by E. FITZPATRICK & R. GILLESPIE, (Dublin, 2006), pp. 169 & 170-75.

[15]DAVIES, O., 'Old Churches in County Louth: Introductory', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society,* Volume X, Number 1, (1941a), p. 6.

[16] DAVIES, (1941a), p. 5.

[17] IBID, p. 5.

[18] BUCKLEY, V.M. & SWEETMAN, P.D., (eds), *Archaeological Survey of County Louth,* The Stationery Office, (Dublin, 1991), p. 218.

settlement were to be followed, one would expect to find more churches and village sites close to mottes.[19]

To date the *Archaeological Survey of County Louth* has recognised only five of the medieval churches of Louth as 'manorial';[20] however, it is likely that there were several more sites which could be categorized as such. In the barony of Lower Dundalk there are only surviving documentary references which specifically record the manors at Faughart and Carlingford, although it is certain that the church at Mountbagnall, located as it was in such close proximity to a motte would have also been located within the boundaries of a medieval manor. It is significant that, in a recent study of manorial settlement in County Limerick, Keegan has found that the settlement evidence for all of the manors shows a distinct preference for locations on the better agricultural land below the 122m OD contour in the eastern two-thirds of the study area.[21] As previously discussed, with the exception of Knocknagoran, all of the medieval church sites of Lower Dundalk are located in the low-lying fertile peripheral lands of the Cooley peninsula.

6. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES & MASONRY STYLES

Evidence for medieval church windows has been discovered at Faughart Church, Templetown Church, the site of Grange Church the Church of the Holy Trinity, and the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford. Medieval doorways have been recorded at five of the sites under review; Faughart, Templetown, Roosky, the Church of the Holy Trinity and the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford. The archaeological evidence indicates the existence of belltowers at the Holy Trinity Church and the Dominican Abbey in Carlingford, while documentary evidence also suggests the existence of some form of tower at Grange Church. Evidence for piscinas and unidentified niches were noted at Templetown, Ballymascanlan, and at the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford. There was only evidence for the construction of a machicolation and a fireplace at one of the sites under review; the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford, while evidence for ornate stone carving survived at Faughart, (a carving of a bishop), Mountbagnall, (a possible mason's mark) the Holy

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[19] BUCKLEY & SWEETMAN, (1991), pp. 281-82.
[20] IBID, (1991), p. 281.
[21] KEEGAN, M., 'The Archaeology of Manorial Settleemnt in West County Limerick in the Thirteenth Century', in *The Manor in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland,* ed. by J. LYTTLETON, T. O'KEEFFE, (Dublin, 2005), p. 27.

Trinity Church (window carving of three martlets)and the Dominican Abbey (two stone heads).

Medieval masons operating in the barony of Lower Dundalk would have had access to local belts of Silurian greywackes which extend as far as Carlingford, as well as an abundance of tertiary granites and carboniferous limestone,[22] and this is well in evidence at the seven sites where there are surviving masonry remains; Faughart Church, Ballymascanlan Church, Mountbagnall Church, Templetown Church, Roosky Priory, and the Church of the Holy Trinity and the Dominican Abbey at Carlingford. The earliest masonry styles evident in Lower Dundalk appear to have been at Mountbagnall and Ballymascanlan where the structures are composed of granite and greywacke. The masonry at the Dominican Abbey in Carlingford is primarily composed of roughly coursed limestone blocks and greywacke and displays fourteenth century construction work with fifteenth century additions. The tower of the Holy Trinity Church is also composed of limestone although the earliest construction work evident in this building appears to date to the late sixteenth century, although the surviving trefoil window in the tower appears to be earlier and possibly dates to the fifteenth century. The church at Templetown is similarly composed of roughly coursed limestone boulders, blocks and greywacke and would appear to date to the fifteenth-sixteenth century. The east window, in particular suggests a fifteenth century date, although the doorway evident in the south wall is much earlier, possibly dating to the fourteenth century. The remains of Roosky Priory are composed of built from uncoursed rubble granite and greywacke and have no distinguishing architectural features, although they appear to be of late medieval date. The church at Faughart is also constructed from granite and greywacke and is representative of two distinct periods of building; the west end of the church possibly dating to the twelfth century and the east end dating to the later medieval period.

7. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ASSOCIATED GRAVEYARD

The associated cemeteries also included in this study were located at Faughart, Mountbagnall, Templetown, the Church of the Holy Trinity and Dominican Abbey, Carlingford. Evidence for a possible ninth century high cross as well as a possible round tower was uncovered at Faughart, while medieval burials were discovered during

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[22]VAUGHAN, A., 'The Geological Background', in *Archaeological Survey of County Louth*, ed. by V.M. BUCKLEY & P.D. SWEETMAN, The Stationery Office, Government of Ireland, (Dublin, 1991), p. 8.

archaeological excavations at Faughart, the Holy Trinity Church and the Dominican Abbey, Carlingford. Evidence for traditions of holy wells with medieval origins was found at both Faughart and at Templetown.

8. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis was intended as a regional study of the archaeology of medieval rural and urban ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk, Co. Louth, from *c.* 1000-1650. In the absence of excavation, the primary aim of this thesis was to devise a methodology for the consistent study of the archaeology of the sixteen medieval ecclesiastical sites which are known to have existed in this barony throughout the study period. The thesis adopted an interdisciplinary approach because as well as incorporating the extant archaeological data available from fieldwork, a wide range of primary source, cartographical and aerial photographical material was also employed in a bid to present the most balanced assessment of the archaeological evidence possible.

The primary aim of this thesis was to make an archaeological analysis of the patterns of ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk from *c.* 1000-1650 and the main findings can be synopsized as follows: In the early medieval period the extant archaeological and historical evidence suggests that ecclesiastical settlement in the barony of Lower Dundalk was represented by at least four religious foundations at Faughart, Proleek, Roosky and Cornamucklagh. Historical evidence has indicated that the two early medieval ecclesiastical settlements at Faughart and Roosky were originally female foundations, while that at Cornamucklagh was a male community. Compared with overall distribution patterns of pre-Norman ecclesiastical establishments for Co. Louth, it was discovered that the settlement pattern apparent for this barony is one of the sparsest and contrasts greatly with the denser concentrations of contemporary sites in the more southerly regions of the county. Moreover, it was also found that the settlements at Faughart and Roosky were re-used by the Anglo-Normans in the period after 1189 while that at Cornamucklagh is likely not to have survived the ravages of the Viking raids of the ninth and tenth centuries.

This initial pattern of ecclesiastical settlement was greatly altered by the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in north Co. Louth in the late twelfth century. In the period following the Anglo-Norman incursion into Louth it was found that in addition to the two sites at Faughart and Roosky, which were subsumed by the Anglo-Norman settlers, at least eight

new parish churches were established at Templetown, Mountbagnall, Knocknagoran, Ballymascanlan, Grange, Muchgrange, Castletowncooley and Willville, although none of them appear to have survived in use after the end of the medieval period *c.* 1650. What is perhaps most significant about these new foundations was that all of them, except for Knocknagoran, were located in the fertile south and south-eastern portions of the Cooley Peninsula, indicating a distinct avoidance of the central mountainous portions of the isthmus and a singular preference for the more agriculturally viable low-lying plains which span the periphery of this land mass. There were also three churches and a Dominican priory established at the medieval town of Carlingford, in the north-east of the barony. During the fourteenth, fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries the medieval town of Carlingford appears to have prospered and was ranked with Coleraine, Carrickfergus and Dundalk as one of the main trading ports on the east coast. However from the seventeenth century on Carlingford declined as a significant medieval town and by 1744, as recorded in the Journal of Isaac Butler,[23] the town was in a state of ruin.[24]

Finally, it was found that the process of sub-infeudation of this barony does not appear to have been as intensive as that experienced in the adjoining barony of Upper Dundalk, and it would seem that this settlement tendency was due to both the political friction which emerged between the rival Anglo-Norman de Lacy and de Verdun families at a critical period in the colonization process, and the geographical considerations which ensured that only certain portions of the peninsula could be effectively and safely colonized. Ultimately these restricted trends of settlement were to have a profound impact upon the development of the medieval church in the barony of Lower Dundalk, not only in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but for the duration of the entire medieval period.

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[23] DEANE, J. (ed), 'Extracts from Isaac Butler's Journal, 1744', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Journal,* Volume V, Number 2, (1922), pp. 93-106.

[24] CARLINGFORD LOUGH HERITAGE TRUST, *Medieval Town Trail of Carlingford,* (Carlingford, 1992), no pg. numbers.

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[1] Individual file numbers for all Sites and Monuments Record Files & Topographical Files are referenced at relevant stages throughout the thesis.

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