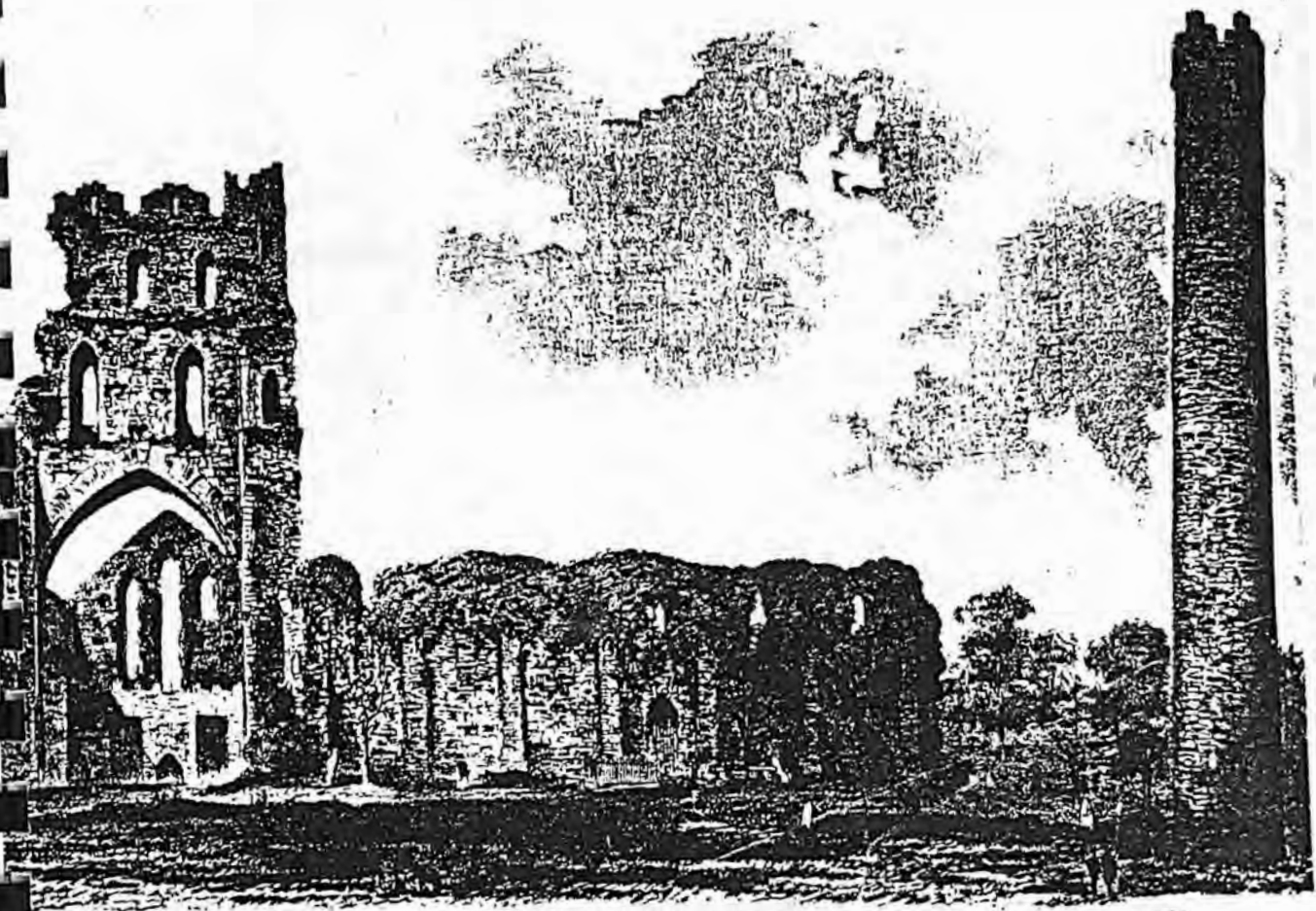


# COUNTY KILDARE



NORTH VIEW OF THE RUINS OF THE KILDARE CATHEDRAL AND ROUND TOWER.

VOL. 1

THE URBAN ARCHAEOLOGY  
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COUNTY KILDARE

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Towns pose one of the most formidable problems faced by archaeology today. Lived in and occupied over long periods of time, and often covering quite large areas, they are the most complex form of human settlement that we know of. Deep archaeological deposits have accumulated in most towns as a result of the long period of occupation and, accordingly, towns are among the most important areas of our heritage. However, towns are also the homes of modern communities, and are the centres of present-day business, industry and cultural life. The requirements of modern life has brought considerable change to many towns with extensive road widening, building schemes, housing estates and industrial development. The demolition of buildings and the digging of deep foundations has brought about irrevocable change in the appearance of towns, and change, in this century, means more thorough destruction than anything that has gone before. The problem for archaeology is not one of preservation, although this may be desirable, but of recording standing buildings and archaeological levels before they are destroyed. The unfortunate truth is that what is not recorded now has little chance of ever being recorded later.

By its nature archaeology is concerned with the past of ordinary people. The fragmentary building remains, pottery sherds and scraps of worked stone or wood which the

archaeologist discovers cannot be used to reconstruct political movements or great administrative changes. These parts of our past can only be glimpsed from documents, from what people who were alive at the time have observed themselves or heard related. Archaeological data, however, can tell us a great deal about the everyday life of ordinary people and the quality of that life in terms of the technological and economic resources of the particular time and place in question.

Urban archaeology may be defined as the study of the evolution and changing character of urban communities from their earliest origins until modern times; more especially it is concerned with the reconstruction of the natural and human environment within which and as part of which human actions take place. A methodical definition such as this, however, should not obscure the fact that urban archaeology is fundamentally concerned with the past of ordinary citizens, of the form of their houses and streets, of the business of their markets and workshops, of the style and arrangement of their churches, of health and disease, of the variety of cultural, religious and economic activity; in short, it is concerned with the life and death of communities ancestral to our own.

#### Development of Urban Archaeology

For long the study of the urban past has largely been the preserve of historians, sociologists and geographers and it

is only recently that the potential of archaeology to uncover the past has been realised. Part of the reason for this is the general lack of awareness that almost all towns have archaeological deposits. This stems in part from the incomprehension of the ordinary man-in-the-street that a town which is lived-in can have archaeological deposits at all: purely because it is lived in, one tends to think that everything of past ages, unless it is visibly standing has been swept away. In part it also stems from the fact that the construction on a vast scale of buildings requiring deep foundations has only occurred recently, and it is only as a consequence that archaeological deposits have come to light. It is also due to the fact that, in previous centuries, archaeological methods and techniques were not advanced enough to take advantage of opportunities even if they did arise. Until relatively modern times the buildings of one generation have been constructed upon the foundations of the last. As structure replaced structure the ground level rose slightly and over the centuries, in cities such as Dublin, considerable depths of archaeological deposits have accumulated.

It was at Novgorod in Russia that the potential of urban archaeology was first revealed. There, organic remains were found in large quantities and it became possible to reconstruct entire streetscapes and to chronicle the changes which happened in them as one generation succeeded the next (Thompson 1967). Gradually as excavation took place in England and Germany it became apparent that the rich

archaeological material in towns was not just a side-light on urban life but it could contribute greatly to our understanding of the archaeology of entire periods and regions. In Ireland the first scientific excavations were commenced at Dublin Castle in 1961 and excavations were to continue in Dublin for the next twenty years. The interest aroused by the High Street and, later, the Wood Quay excavations was widespread and it created an interest in the archaeology of other towns. To date, excavations have taken place in about twenty Irish towns.

Urban sites are important to the archaeologist for a number of reasons. Firstly, in all towns archaeological deposits form the earliest archive. Only a handful of Irish towns are referred to prior to 1200 AD and it is only during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that references become anyway common. Yet the urban life of many towns has continued unbroken since the twelfth or early thirteenth century, while the origins of others lie in the Viking, Early Christian and Prehistoric periods. Even when references occur they rarely throw much light on daily life and tend to be more concerned with political and administrative events. Indeed, most individual properties within towns have no documentation relating directly to them until the late-seventeenth or early-eighteenth century. To all intents and purposes, then, individual sites within towns may have remained completely prehistoric, in so far as they have no documentation, until the seventeenth century or later. Accordingly, archaeological excavation is important if one is

to gain any knowledge of the initial period of a town's foundation or of how a particular area evolved and was used.

Secondly, towns usually possess a much greater depth of stratigraphy than any other type of archaeological site. Stratified deposits are important because they preserve the sequence of developments on a particular site and the wealth of finds associated with urban sites means that it is usually possible to date both structures and layers quite closely. This is particularly important because it makes it possible to establish tight chronologies for artefacts.

Thirdly, the archaeology of a region cannot be understood without knowing what happened to the towns within it. Each town is a unique expression of the history of its area and the destruction of its archaeology would leave an irreplaceable gap in knowledge of the evolution of the region.

The recovery of this information is threatened, however, by the increasing redevelopment and gradual expansion of our cities and towns. It is very difficult to foresee the effects of this redevelopment when the extent of archaeological deposits is generally not known to the Planning Authority and it has happened in the past that the archaeological significance of a site has only become apparent when building work was about to commence. It is important then that the areas containing archaeological deposits should be identified if the potential of this important part of our heritage is to be realised.



## Purpose and Aim of the Present Survey

The Urban Archaeology Survey was established with monies allocated for the purpose by the Minister for Finance in 1982. Its purpose was to compile a corpus of archaeological information on Ireland's towns and to present it in such a way that it could be used effectively by the archaeologist, urban planner, property developer, or interested layman. In this regard the survey has been guided by a submission prepared by the Royal Irish Academy on Urban Archaeology which recommended that the report should have four aims:

1. "To evaluate critically the archaeological potential, both above and below ground of the listed towns".
2. "To emphasise areas where the archaeological deposits could be preserved by the judicious use of new building techniques and the presentation of open spaces, etc."
3. "To assess the level of destruction of the original townscape".
4. "To measure the effects of urban expansion on originally rural archaeological sites".

The chronological cut-off point beyond which material would not be included was 1700 AD.

The identification of sites which were urban centres before 1700 AD is not without difficulties. In many cases such an identification is dependent on the survival of documentary evidence. However, it was felt that it was better

to follow the existing work of Graham (1977) and Martin (1991) rather than impose new criteria. Accordingly the sites which are included here are those for which there is evidence of their status as boroughs prior to 1700 AD.

In the reports the material is presented as follows: the situation of the site is outlined and a brief account of its archaeological and historical background is provided. This is followed by an archaeological inventory which endeavours to catalogue both extant sites and those which are known from documentary sources. Although the amount of information on each town may vary the catalogue follows the same format for each entry, firstly detailing the information on streets and street pattern, and following this with an account of the domestic buildings, market places and economic features such as quays and industrial areas. The seigneurial castle and town defences are described next together with the religious buildings of the town. The evidence for suburbs and activity outside the walls is then outlined and the inventory concludes with a summary of the archaeological excavations and a list of the stray finds. The inventory is followed by an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site.

## INTRODUCTION TO CO. KILDARE

The urban network which characterises the modern county is the product of growth and development over the past twelve hundred years. The earliest urban centre was the monastery of Kildare which was a flourishing centre in the late seventh century. It is only in recent years that scholars have realised that 'monastic towns', such as Kildare, existed in Ireland before the coming of the Vikings who were to establish the port towns of Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Limerick and Wexford. Kildare is one of the few centres, however, which had urban functions at this early date and its indigenous origins give it a great importance in Irish archaeology. Leixlip, whose name is derived from the Old Norse for salmon leap, is the only settlement which suggests any direct Viking presence in the county. By the twelfth century, however, it is possible that Castledermot, Old Kilcullen, and Naas also functioned as 'monastic towns', a development which was probably brought about by the growth of Viking commerce.

The county of Kildare was established by the Anglo-Normans shortly after their penetration into the area in the 1170s. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it included parts of the modern counties of Laois, Offaly and Carlow within its jurisdiction but by the sixteenth century it had shrunk to its present size (Otway-Ruthven 1958-9). The

Anglo-Norman settlement concentrated in the eastern and southern parts of the county. The Anglo-Normans were great economic developers and they founded towns more for economic than defensive reasons. They were intended to be market-places for the produce of the newly conquered soil and their function as strongholds only came later. They also established boroughs, settlements which had the legal privileges of towns but seem to have functioned as large villages.

During the initial years of the Anglo-Norman invasion Kildare seems to have been regarded as the principal town and this is probably why it gave its name to the new county. By the close of the Middle Ages, however, Naas was the largest town and it has remained the administrative centre to the present-day. In the south of the county the Anglo-Normans established two large towns at Athy and Castledermot, and contemporary documentation suggests that Moone and Ardscull were also sizeable settlements. Smaller boroughs in this area were Ardree, Kilkea and Dunmanoge. In east Kildare, Ballymore Eustace and Rathmore were important centres on what was then the main road south from Dublin. Clane appears to have been the largest centre north of Naas and smaller boroughs were established at Celbridge, Cloncurry, Kill, Leixlip and Dughterard. Rathangan is the only known Anglo-Norman borough in west Kildare, an area which was not densely settled by the Anglo-Normans, perhaps because so much of it was bogland. Immediately south of Kildare town was the borough of Silliothill, and more or less centrally placed within the

county was Old Kilcullen where the Anglo-Norman borough succeeded a well-known early ecclesiastical site.

In all, there is evidence for twenty Anglo-Norman boroughs and towns within Kildare. There may have been other boroughs, however, such as Maynooth, the centre of the FitzGerald's great castle, but the historical documentation is lacking and we simply do not know. It has been suggested by Otway-Ruthven (1958-9, map) that there were boroughs at Carbury, Straffan and Tipper but despite an intensive search of published and unpublished sources, we were unable to uncover any evidence that they were boroughs. In one case the documentary evidence for the borough survives but knowledge of the site's whereabouts is unknown. This is the borough of Ounlost mentioned as having burgesses c.1320 (Martin 1981, 40).

It is interesting to note that many of Kildare's medieval boroughs were settlements prior to the coming of the Anglo-Normans. Castledermot, Kildare, Kill, Moone, Naas, Old Kilcullen, and Dughterard were ecclesiastical sites, documented before the Anglo-Norman invasion. Ardscull and Clane are referred to in the early annals, and place-name evidence suggests that Ardree, Athy, Celbridge, Cloncurry, Dunmanoge, Kilkea, Leixlip, Rathangan and Rathmore were already centres of activity before 1170. The fact that the Anglo-Normans chose these locations for their boroughs suggests that they may have had village-like settlements at the time of their arrival. The medieval boroughs and towns of

Kildare afford a special opportunity of examining the transition from pre-Norman to Anglo-Norman settlements.

The fourteenth century was a period of economic decline in Ireland and this was particularly apparent in Anglo-Norman Kildare exposed as it was to attacks from the O Mordha and O Conchobair Failge. Athy was burned in 1308 and again in 1374; Castledermot was sacked by the MacMurroughs in 1405 and again in 1427. The capture of these towns, both substantial centres, indicates the military capabilities of the Irish, on the one hand, but the weakness of the Anglo-Norman colony, on the other. Many of the smaller boroughs were abandoned about this time and have remained deserted ever since.

In the years after 1495, however, Gearoid Mor, the great earl of Kildare, engaged on a virtual reconquest of south Kildare building castles at Athy, Castledermot, Kildare, and Kilkea. These provided protection for the townsmen and gave a stimulus to town growth which continued into the sixteenth century. In particular, this is the time when Athy developed into a large town largely because of its function as a garrison town in the plantation of Laois and Offaly.

The seventeenth century, despite its wars, was a century of economic improvement but only one new town was established, Harristown, founded by the FitzEustaces. The older centres of Celbridge, Clane, Kill, and Rathangan revived in importance at this time but the fact that only one new town was established within the county suggests that the medieval urban network was functioning adequately.

In the eighteenth century, the construction of the Grand Canal created the towns of Robertstown and Monasterevin, while Prosperous developed around its linen mills. Kilcullen became an important bridging point with the development of the new route south, away from Rathmore-Ballymore Eustace to Naas-Kilcullen, and Old Kilcullen was abandoned in favour of the new centre completely. Newbridge, one of the county's larger towns today, only developed after 1816 with the construction of the Curragh Camp and the army barracks there.

This report is concerned with the twenty-one sites which had urban functions prior to 1700 A.D. (Fig. 1). The report provides an account of the archaeological remains at each site and an assessment of the town or borough's importance to archaeological research. It outlines the areas within the towns where archaeological deposits are likely to survive and highlights the potential of these sites to increase our knowledge of the development of urban life in Ireland. Finally, recommendations are made as to how this potential can be best realised. Each town is provided with a map outlining its zone of archaeological potential in which the following colour code is used:

Pink: the zone of archaeological potential.

Red: extant archaeological monuments.

Purple: sites of known monuments.

Some of Kildare's boroughs are now deserted, but others such as Athy, Castledermot, Celbridge, Clane, Kildare, Kill,

Leixlip, and Naas are expanding towns ripe for urban redevelopment in the near future. Uncontrolled redevelopment at any of these sites will destroy the fragile archaeological heritage of Kildare's towns and it is the hope of this report that the recommended steps will be taken in order to ensure that urban development and archaeological research may go forward together and benefit from one another.



## ARDREE

Ardree is located about 2 Klm south of Athy on a ridge overlooking the river Barrow. It was the site of an early Anglo-Norman borough but nothing is known of the pre-Norman settlement here and even the original Irish form of the name remains unclear.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ardree was granted to Thomas le Fleming by Strongbow before 1176 (Orpen 1892, 1.3113) and he is almost certainly to be identified with the Thomas of Flanders for whom Hugh de Lacy built a castle c.1182 "in the furthest part of Ui Muiredhaigh, separated from Ui Buidhe by the waters of the Barrow" (Scott and Martin 1978, 195). This castle, presumably a motte, was most likely located at Ardree (Orpen 1907, 249; Scott and Martin 1978, 340 n.371). Ardree was the centre of Thomas' manor and a borough was established there under his patronage or that of Milo de Stanton, his successor as lord of Ardree before the close of the twelfth century. In a charter dating to the 1190s Hugh Dullard granted two burgages in Ardree to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin (Gilbert 1899, 168). Although Otway-Ruthven (1961, 169) suggests that Milo de Stanton moved the manorial centre to Mounmohenok (Dunmanoge) by the beginning of the thirteenth century, it would appear that the borough continued to function and references occur

to Nicholas FitzAustin, provost, and William FitzElye, catchpole of Andree, in an undated charter, perhaps fourteenth century, in the Register of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist, Dublin (Brooks 1936, 252). In 1297 sixty cows were stolen from Andree (Mills 1905, 177-8, 197). In 1318 the king granted a weekly market to Milo le Poer who then held Andree (Tresham 1828, p. 25 no. 179). Thereafter nothing more is heard of the borough which probably collapsed in the course of the fourteenth century. The population did not vanish completely, however, and the census of 1659 returned a population of twenty-four for Andree (Pender 1939, 405).

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. SITE OF THE BOROUGH
2. DOMESTIC HOUSES
3. MOTTE
4. CHURCH
5. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

##### 1. SITE OF THE BOROUGH

No earthworks survive to show the exact location of the borough but it was almost certainly close to the church. it may have stretched towards Andreigh cross-roads on the north and towards the river Barrow on the west.

## 2. DOMESTIC HOUSES

No structures survive but documentary references indicate their former existence. In 1306 William de Athy complained that William de Poer had pulled down his houses at Ardree and carried their timber to his own house at Dunlost where he had burned it (Mills 1914, 268). This would suggest the presence of timber buildings. In 1593-4 Sir Piers FitzJames FitzGerald and his family were burned to death in his "little castle that was but thatched with straw or sedge in his town of Ardree" by Walter Reagh and the sons of Fiach Mac Hugh O'Byrne (Hamilton 1890, 228; Gilbert 1882-91, i, 205), indicating that there was at least one fortified house structure here in the Later Middle Ages.

## 3. MOTTE

According to Giraldus Cambrensis Hugh de Lacy built a castle, almost certainly at Ardree, for Thomas de Flanders c.1182 (Scott and Martin 1978, 195). In a grant before 1199 Milo de Stanton granted St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin, "the site in which the castle was located with the entire yard (orto)" (Gilbert 1889, 162). This presumably indicates that the functional life of the castle was at an end. Orpen (1907, 249) suggested that the old burial ground at Ardree was built on an artificial mound which may have been the original motte.

#### 4. ARDREE CHURCH

Milo de Stanton granted the church of Ardree and five messuages north of it to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin (Gilbert 1889, 162). This grant was probably contemporary with his grant of the church of Mounmohenok to St. Thomas' which dates to before 1199 (Gilbert 1889, 161; McNeill 1950, 27). The grant was confirmed by Adam de Stanton, Milo's son and heir (Gilbert 1889, 163, 367) but the church of Ardree did not remain in the possession of St. Thomas' for long. It was listed among the possessions of the diocese of Dublin which were confirmed to the archbishop by Prince John before 1199 (McNeill 1950, 24), and when Henry de Londres, archbishop of Dublin 1213-28, confirmed St. Thomas' in possession of its churches he pointedly excluded Ardree (Gilbert 1889, 295). The church of Ardree was granted to Philip de Bray c.1213-14 when he was instituted as first precentor of St. Patrick's Cathedral (White 1957, 4). The church seems to have been of importance during the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It had at least two attached clergy and had a number of annexed chapels (Gilbert 1889, 161, 163, 367).

The church site is situated on the highest point of the ridge overlooking the river Barrow. The ground slopes gradually away to the south, east and north. On the west there is a drop of c.3 m to the road. An overgrown rise in the centre of the churchyard may represent collapsed masonry. There is no evidence for ancient remains. Two stretches of wall are present on the south side of the graveyard but both

appear to be of recent origin.

## 5. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

Seven glazed pottery sherds of thirteenth/ fourteenth century date and five unglazed sherds were picked up by Survey staff in topsoil removed by Athy U.D.C. from the small field immediately north of the graveyard in order to facilitate access to the graveyard.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Andree is a good example of a deserted medieval borough. The documentary sources indicate that it was established at an early date in the Anglo-Norman conquest of Leinster but it is not clear why this particular site was chosen. There is no evidence for pre-Norman activity and the site affords the interesting opportunity of examining an Anglo-Norman borough founded on virgin soil.

It is difficult to gauge the exact extent of the borough but it was almost certainly located in the immediate vicinity of the church. The documentary sources indicate that there were wooden houses within the borough and it is to be expected that their remains survive below ground level, together with pits and industrial debris. Sherds of thirteenth/ fourteenth century pottery have been found immediately north of the churchyard and indicate that

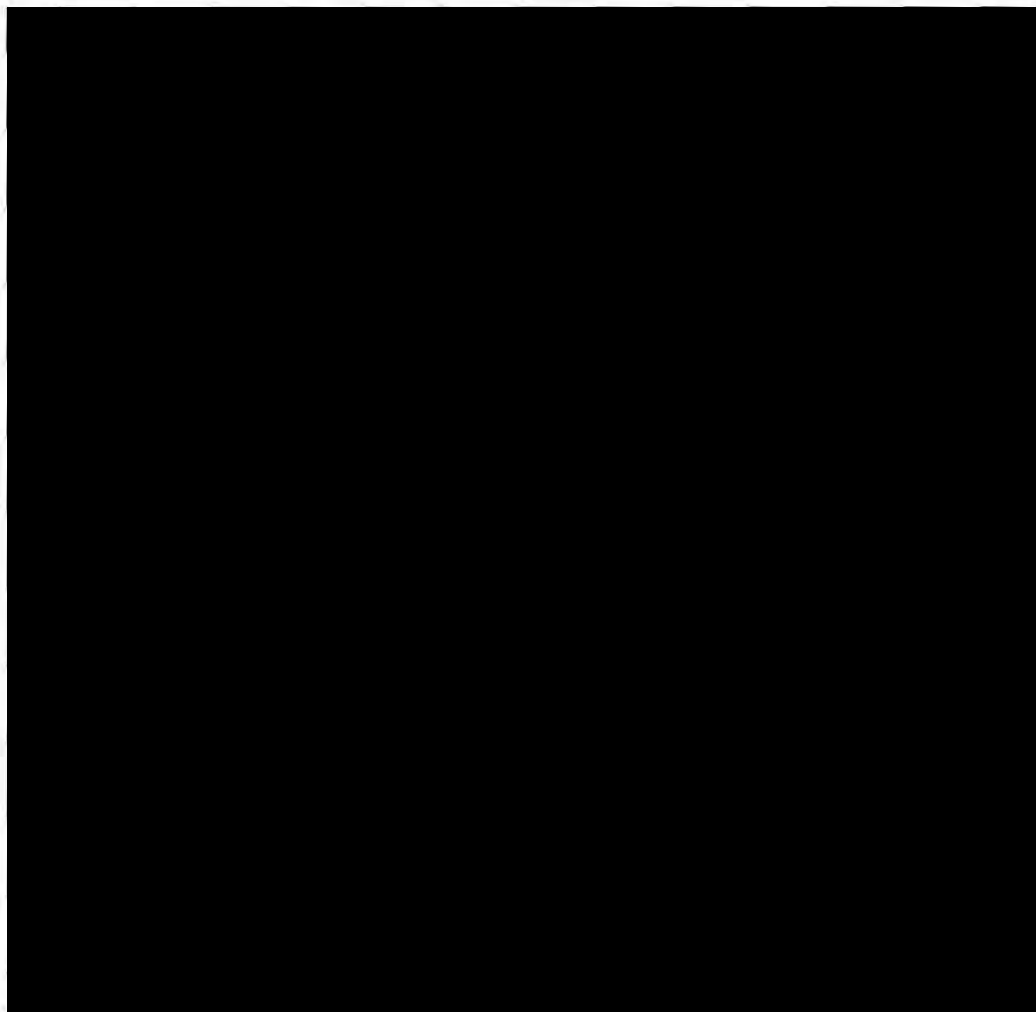
archaeological deposits are present in this area. The church itself may be built on top of the motte constructed by Hugh de Lacy but it would require excavation in its vicinity or within the grounds of Ardreigh House to determine if this is the case or not. The borough may have extended towards the mill but there is a considerable drop in ground level here. The mill itself may well have been built on the site of a medieval structure.

Archaeological deposits have been disturbed in the construction of the new access way, north of the churchyard, and have probably been removed during the landscaping of the grounds of Ardreigh House. Elsewhere, however, there is little evidence for disturbance and it is likely that archaeological deposits are intact over parts of the site. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of this settlement, and the nature of its houses, streets, and defences, if any.

In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough was occupied during the Middle Ages. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough is under pressure from prospective housing developments because of its position, close to Athy. A number of new houses have been built in this area and it is important that any future development should be monitored otherwise archaeological information is liable to be lost needlessly.

### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 2) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Andree. This is based essentially on the church, and because there is a lack of information at present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.







## ARDSKULL

Ardscull is a deserted borough situated on the Dublin -  
Athy road some 4K1m north-east of Athy. It occupies a  
commanding position on a hill which rises only slightly above  
the 300' contour but which affords extensive views in all  
directions. The placename is derived from the Irish Ard Scol  
but its meaning and ultimate derivation are unclear.  
O'Donovan (O.S. Letters, Kildare, ii, 237) explained it as  
"the hill of the shouts" or alternately "the hill of the  
heroes", while Hogan (1910, 48) has suggested "the hill of  
the schools". Both O'Donovan and Hogan note the tradition in  
the Book of Lecan that Ardscull was the site of a battle  
between the Laigin and Mumhain in the second century AD.  
There are no documentary references to Ardscull before the  
coming of the Normans but the presence of a possible  
souterrain in the motte and the evidence for enclosures  
around the church site may indicate that there was settlement  
here before the late twelfth century.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1282 it was noted that William de Mohun had held  
Ardscull until his death and that there were one hundred and  
sixty burgages there (Sweetman 1875-86, ii, 448). The same  
document also mentions the presence of a mill and a church  
and it implies that Ardscull was a settlement of some

importance in the late thirteenth century. William de Mohun held Ardscurr as part of his lands of Moone (Orpen 1911-20, iii, 101) and it may be assumed that, like Moone, Ardscurr had originally formed part of the seigneurial demenses of the lords of Leinster and had passed to the de Mohun family through the marriage of Reginald de Mohun to Isabel de Ferrers, grand-daughter and heiress of William Marshall, who had succeeded Strongbow as lord of Leinster (Orpen 1911-20, iii, 97, 101). Marshall established a borough at Moone during the first decade of the thirteenth century and it is likely that Ardscurr was established at this time also. In this respect it is interesting to note that both boroughs had the same number of burgages, 160, during the late thirteenth century. The origins of the borough remain obscure, however, but references to the provost and catchpole of Ardscurr in an undated charter in the Register of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist, Dublin, demonstrate that it has an autonomous municipal authority (Brooks 1936, 252-3).

Holinshed records that Ardscurr was burned in 1286 by Philip Stanton (Miller and Power 1979, 200), while in 1316 Edward Bruce defeated the justiciar's army 2 Klm north of Ardscurr at Skerries (Brewer and Bullen 1871, 131). Subsequently the borough fades out of history and it may not have survived beyond the fourteenth century. In 1299 John de Mohun surrendered all of his lands in Kildare to the crown. These included his demense at Ardscurr and the borough was probably surrendered also (Sweetman 1875-86, iv, 115-17; Mills 1914, 29). John de Mohun's lands were in turn granted

by the king to John Wogan, the justiciar in 1305 (Sweetman 1875-86, v, 127-8), and Ardscull probably passed to the Wogan family. In 1346 thirty of the O'Dempseys were slain at Ardscull by Thomas Wogan and Walter Lenfant (Butler 1849, 34). By the sixteenth century, however, Ardscull belonged to the earls of Kildare. After the attainter and forfeiture of the lands of Gerald, earl of Kildare, Ardscull was leased to Martin Pelles of Athy in 1544 (7 RDKPRI, 76: no. 445) but it seems to have returned to the earls of Kildare because the Civil Survey records that the earl owned two-thirds of Ardscull in 1654 (Simington 1952, 90). The other third was held by Nicholas Wolfe and, in 1591, an Edmund Wolfe was recorded as holding some part or all of Ardscull (Ir Rec Comm 1826, Co. Kildare, James I, no. 34). None of these later references, however, give any indication that the borough was still in existence. The census of 1659 recorded a population of thirty-six at Ardscull (Pender 1939, 403).

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. SITE OF BOROUGH
2. THE MOTTE
3. CHURCH
4. OTHER FEATURES

## 1. SITE OF BOROUGH

The precise site of the borough is lost but there are two potential locations, one on the hill beside the motte, the other near the old churchyard. The borough is described as having one hundred and sixty burgages and these would have occupied a considerable area. Castledermot, for instance, was of the same size.

Rocque's map of Ardscull in 1756 shows an "old road" running north-eastwards roughly parallel to the then modern road to Dublin, and c. 150 m east of it, on the south side of the motte (Athy Estate maps TCD). About 150-200 m due south of the motte this old road widens out, possibly into a market-place, which may denote the site of the borough. The aerial view (Fig. 3) shows different field systems to those delineated on the O.S. map, and Rocque's "old road" is apparent as two parallel lines, south-east of the motte. None of these features is visible on the ground because of intensive tillage.

A siting on this hilltop would have been very exposed for a settlement, however, and it is possible that the borough was located on lower ground away from the motte, in a manner similar to the borough of Dunamase, co. Laois. In that case the area near the former church is the most likely centre of occupation. Two sherds of thirteenth/ fourteenth century pottery were found while field walking in the immediate vicinity of the church, indicating that there was activity in that area during Anglo-Norman times.

## 2. THE MOTTE

It is remarkable that there are absolutely no medieval references to this enormous hill-top motte situated in a commanding position affording extensive views in all directions. On analogy with other mottes, however, and it may be assumed that it was built in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. The first clear reference to the motte is in 1654 when the Book of General Orders noted a request from the inhabitants of Co. Kildare for the State to contribute £30 "towards the finishing of a Fort that they have built at the Mote of Ardscoll ... & that the same may be a garrison" (Omurethi 1896-8, 188). There is no indication that the motte was garrisoned in the seventeenth century but it is likely that the complex of buildings noted on the motte in 1789 belong to the mid-seventeenth century rather than to the Middle Ages (Gough 1789, iii, pl. opp. p. 483).

### Description (Figs. 3-4)

Large oval-shaped mound, surrounded by a ditch and bank, now planted with trees. The long axis is orientated east-west, and the mound tapers from its basal dimensions of 125 m (east-west) by 88 m (north-south) to a summit measuring 46 by 31 m, which is enclosed by a bank. This bank rises between 4-5 m above the level of the interior and ranges in width from 10.5 m on the north to 13.5 m on the east. The entrance was on the west where there is an opening through the upper bank and a causeway across the ditch. There is no

evidence for internal structures on the summit although an eighteenth century account by Beaufort (in Gough 1789, 483) shows the former presence of structures on the interior (Fig. 4). North of the entrance is a crescentic-shaped area, 28 by 14 m on which Beaufort shows a large rectangular building. South of the entrance is a small sloping platform, 24 by 5 m. Beaufort shows an elongated structure on the east side of the summit, and south of it was an opening which he says led to either a well or a "cave" (? souterrain).

The ditch is between 6 and 7 m wide and the external bank is 10 m wide and rises to a height of 2 m above the ditch bottom. The bank broadens on the east side where it forms a sloping crescentic platform, measuring 30 by 14 m. Traces of a rectangular structure survive at the north end of this platform and Beaufort's plan shows further buildings to the south. On the south side of the platform Beaufort shows a rectangular enclosure which is represented now by two eastwardly projecting banks, lacking their returns. These are 2 m in width and 80 cm high.

A sub-rectangular area is visible from aerial photographs on the north side of the motte. This may be the remains of a ploughed-out bailey. Field walking in the area uncovered sherds of post-medieval pottery and a furnace bottom.

### 3. ARDSCULL CHURCH

The first recorded reference to the church of Ardscull occurs in a list of the deaneries of the diocese of Dublin, probably dating to the later 1270's, in which the church was noted as belonging to the common fund of St. Patrick's cathedral, Dublin (Gilbert 1895, 147). This is repeated in 1294 (20 RDKPRI, 61: no. 150). It may be that Ardscull was acquired by St. Patrick's along with the church of Moone, given to St. Patrick's c.1222, because the sixteenth century Repertorium Viride noted that Ardscull was a chapel of the mother-church of Moone (White 1941, 211). Otherwise, nothing is known of the history of this church.

#### Description

The church lies within a circular stone-walled enclosure, 1 Klm south-east of the motte. The aerial photograph (Fig. 5) shows that the enclosure was originally surrounded by two widely spaced banks and there was a rectangular enclosure attached to the north-east corner of the outer bank. The fields in which these banks lie have been extensively tilled and no features survive above ground. A large quantity of stone is piled up around the perimeter of the graveyard and it probably represents field clearance. Within the graveyard is a raised rectangular area denoting the church site but there are no standing remains. No pre-1700 monuments are present.

#### 4. OTHER SITES

##### Mill

The presence of a mill, belonging to the de Mohuns, is recorded in 1282 (Sweetman 1875-86, ii, 448) and 1299 (Sweetman 1875-86, iv, 309-10; v, 115-17). Since there does not appear to be any convenient source of water power it may be assumed that this was a windmill.

##### Moated Site

This site, known as Ardnacuth was ploughed down c. 1890 (Omurethi 1896-8, 195). It was some 850 m south-east of the motte and is denoted today by a stony area flanked by two low ridges within the tilled field. During its destruction in the nineteenth century, the local farmer "came across a large number of animal bones and teeth, a horse's and a cow's skull, as well as a sort of iron bill hook, about a foot in length, with teeth, and a socket for the insertion of the handle. In the north-eastern corner of the rampart he came across an unflagged chamber, full of black barley and ashes, of which he drew away twenty-seven cartloads, and used it as manure. Just outside this find, in the trench, in one place, was a very soft dry spot, down which his shovel went as if through water; the length of his shovel and his arm did not reach the bottom. He did not examine it further (Omurethi 1896-8, 194). The "unflagged chamber" referred to was probably a grain-drying kiln.



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Ardscull is an example of a deserted borough. It is clear from the documentary sources that it was a large and important settlement in thirteenth century Kildare. Today, however, the only indicators of its former greatness are the motte and the ruined churchyard. The precise site of the borough is unknown and, at present, it is only possible to say that it was probably situated on the ridge near the motte or in the fields near the churchyard. It will require excavation in these areas to determine which location is the correct one. The extent of the borough is unknown as is the nature of its houses, streets, and defences, if any. The old church is surrounded by enclosures which suggest that it may be a site of pre-Norman date and, if so, would have been an important determinant effecting Anglo-Norman settlement in the area. Nothing is known of the form, layout or extent of this church site. The motte is an outstanding site, one of the largest in the country, yet its date of construction remains unknown as does the layout of its original buildings, and the nature of the seventeenth century alterations. The possibility of a souterrain in the mound indicates that this may be a pre-Norman site but only excavation can satisfactorily determine this. The historical evidence suggests a decline in the fortunes of the borough during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries but the nature of this decline remains unclear.

From the point of view of answering these questions it is

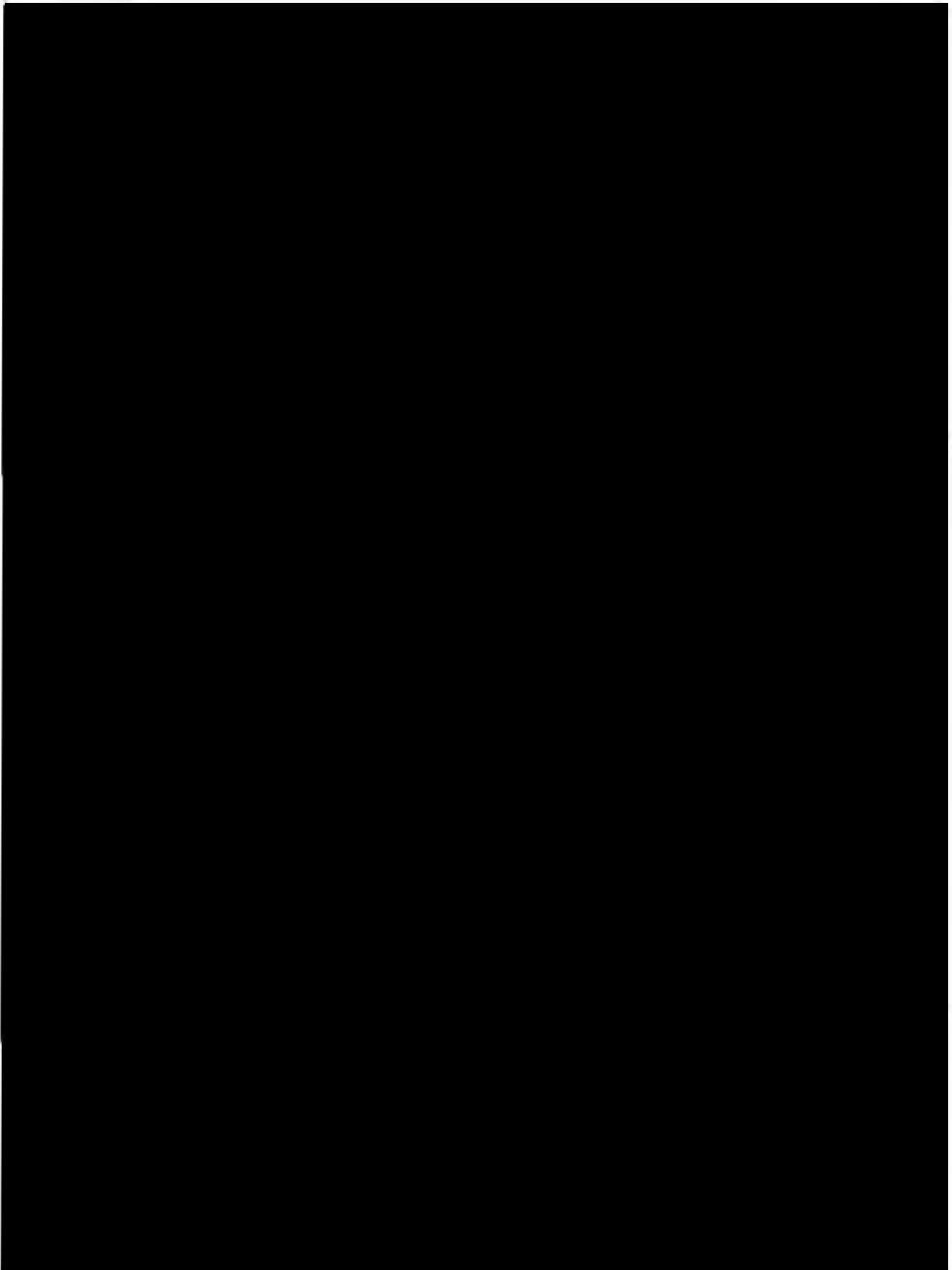
to be regretted that the area has been subjected to deep ploughing. This has effectively destroyed all superficial evidence for the borough with the exception of the motte and church site. Accordingly it is likely that archaeological deposits have been destroyed over much of the shaded area on Fig. 6, and it is likely that only deeply-cut features such as trenches and pits will have survived. The recovery of these pit and trench-bottoms is important, however, because it will shed light on the exact whereabouts of the borough and its original extent. From the evidence of the documentary sources it is likely that the thirteenth and the seventeenth centuries will be the ones best represented in the archaeological record.

In summary, the borough was an important site in the thirteenth century and may have been the scene of human activity in Early Historic times. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough is not under direct threat from commercial development but its close position to Athy makes it likely that it will come under pressure from housing developments in the near future.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 6) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Ardscull. This outlines the maximum area that the thirteenth

century borough is likely to have occupied. It includes an area on the ridge around the motte and a second area in the vicinity of the old churchyard. The area of the moated site is also outlined.





## ATHY

Athy, the largest town in south Kildare, is situated at an important crossing point on the river Barrow. The placename is derived from Ath I, "the ford of Aei", a warrior killed here in a legendary combat (O.S. Letters, Kildare, ii, 146; Comerford 1891-5a, 57-8).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The importance of Athy as a ford in prehistoric times is indicated by the number of prehistoric objects found during the Barrow drainage. Twenty-two stone axeheads indicate that the site of the future town was well known during the Neolithic, while one bronze axehead, three bronze looped spearheads, a bronze socketed dagger, and two bronze swords testify to its continuing importance during the Bronze Age. There is no evidence, however, to indicate that Athy was important in either the ensuing Iron Age or Early Historic periods.

Athy was not among the earliest centres of Anglo-Norman activity in Kildare and there is no evidence for any significant settlement here prior to the middle of the thirteenth century when the existence of two priories suggests that a sizeable settlement was coming into being. The church of St. Michael was in existence by 1297 (Mills

1905, 182, 202) although there is no indication that it had the status of a parish church at this time. A reference, also in 1297, to Thomas janitor of Athy raises the possibility that Athy was actually enclosed in the late thirteenth century (Mills 1905, 182). The sergeant of the "ward of Athy" is also mentioned in 1297 and implies the existence of a castle or gaol there (Mills 1905, 173). A further indication of the increasing status of Athy is the fact that the justiciar, John Wogan, held court here in 1306 (Mills 1914, 267). It would seem then that an important settlement was developing at Athy from at least the mid-thirteenth century which boasted two priories, a parish church and probably a castle or gaol by the close of the century. Trade and commerce along the Barrow are indicated and there is also the possibility that the settlement may have been enclosed. The impetus to this development presumably came from the St. Michael family who, as lords of the barony of Reban since the conquest, were also the lords of Athy (Otway-Ruthven 1961, 170; Mills 1905, 329), and they probably established the borough here. The earliest positive evidence for the borough's existence is in 1326 when Geoffrey de Hereford, burgess of Athy, is referred to (McNeill 1932, 7), but it may have been established a century before this time. In 1339, after the death of Sir Gerald de St. Michael, lord of Athy, the royal escheator accounted for the profits of the mill, court of extern hundred, weirs and tolbooll of ale, which had belonged to Sir Gerald at Reban and Athy (53 ROKPRI, 39).

In common with the Anglo-Norman colony generally, Athy

began to experience a much greater degree of insecurity and exposure to attacks by the Irish in the later medieval period. The settlement was burned by the Irish in 1308 (Otway-Ruthven 1968, 219), and both the town and priory were burned by the O Mordha of Laois in 1374 (Tresham 1828, 87: no. 60). Being well outside the Pale, Athy became increasingly isolated during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries but it remained an important outpost guarding the route between Dublin and the Anglo-Irish territories of the south-east. It appears that the government was making special provision for the defence of Athy from the early fifteenth century. The bridge of Athy was repaired about 1415 and new fortifications were constructed in 1417 (Otway-Ruthven 1968, 351-3; Cosgrove 1981, 40). In 1422 and 1423 William Scryvener was granted custody of the castle, bridge and town of Athy (Tresham 1828, 225: no. 23; 234: no. 30). In 1431, the lord lieutenant appointed Sir Richard Wellesley to take custody of the town and defend it against the native Irish (Tresham 1828, 251: no.23). On this occasion, the town of Athy was described as the "greatest fortress and Key of the countryside". Little is known of the history of the town in the fifteenth century but by 1515 it belonged to the earl of Kildare. In that year Athy and Kildare were granted charters of incorporation by Henry VIII. This charter gave the inhabitants the right to elect a provost, granted the town a weekly market, and authorised the inhabitants to fortify the town with ditches and walls of stone and lime, granting them customs and other income to pay for its construction and

upkeep (MacNiocaill 1964a, 182-5). Athy was one of the strongholds of Silken Thomas in his revolt of 1534-5 (Brewer and Bullen 1867, 62) and it was forfeited by the earl of Kildare on his subsequent attainder. In 1544 the manor of Athy was leased to Martin Pelles (7 RDKPRI, 45: no. 125).

It is unclear whether Athy suffered damage during Silken Thomas' rebellion but it continued to be exposed to attacks by the Irish. In 1540 the Dominican friary was burned by Donald McCare Kavanagh (White 1943, 172) and it is unlikely that the town escaped damage on this occasion. In 1546 the town and monastery of Athy were burned by the O Mordha of Laois and the O Concobhair of Ui Failge (AFM). The town was again burned by Ruaidhri Og O Mordha, probably in 1577 (Dowling in Butler 1849, 42) but in spite of these reverses, its strategic importance to the government ensured its survival. The castle and bridge were repaired after the 1536 attack (Brewer and Bullen 1867, 96-7, 101; Hamilton 1860, 19) and were garrisoned throughout the sixteenth century (e.g. Hamilton 1867, 266). It is also evident that by the end of the century, at least, the "abbey of Athy", by which the Dominican friary on the east bank is probably intended, was also garrisoned (Atkinson 1895, 361). In 1591 Athy was listed as one of the main towns of county Kildare along with Castledermot, Kildare and Naas (Mahaffy 1912, 597). The military presence continued into the seventeenth century as is shown by the presence of garrisons of 150 men in 1602 (Mahaffy 1912, 524) and 100 men in 1608 (Russell and Prendergast 1874, 33). A new charter of incorporation was



granted by James I in 1613 (Weinbaum 1943, 195; cf. Comerford 1891-5a, 62). The town was heavily garrisoned during the rebellion of 1641-2. In 1642 three separate companies of one hundred men each were stationed there (Gilbert 1895, 135, 139, 140-1; Hogan 1936, 167) while there was another garrison in the castle (Gilbert 1895, 127, 129). In 1648 Athy was held by troops of Owen Roe O'Neill with garrisons in the castle and Dominican friary. These were both bombarded in an unsuccessful siege by Preston which caused serious damage. In 1650 the catholic forces under Dillon blew up the castle and the bridge on the approach of the Cromwellians under Hewson (Murphy 1902, 284).

The strategic importance of Athy continued after the Restoration and there are references to troops being garrisoned here in 1663-4 (Gilbert 1895, 271, 305, 307) and 1686 (Gilbert 1895, 420). The census of 1659 recorded a population of 452 in the borough of Athy (Pender 1939, 403) which is significantly higher than the figures for either Castledermot (240), Kildare (359) or Naas (303) and is an indication of the relative prosperity of Athy at this time. Two serious fires occurred around 1670 when it was recorded that the inhabitants, many of whom are described as "English tradesmen" had suffered much both "by the late rebellion and by two fires which lately destroyed most of their houses" (Mahaffy 1910, 662). It was noted that the inhabitants were rebuilding their town with the encouragement of their landlord, the earl of Kildare and also of Charles II who directed the lord lieutenant to grant the corporation two

annual fairs to aid in "rebuilding their town and renewing trade there". Thus, although there is no precise indication of the extent of the damage caused by the fires it would appear that significant rebuilding took place within the town in and after 1670. In 1682 Thomas Monk (1909-11, 342) described Athy as "every way commodious for Trade, but noe manufacture being driven, poore".

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. STREETS & STREET PATTERN
2. MARKET PLACE
3. DOMESTIC HOUSES
4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS
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## 1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN

Although Athy is divided into two parts by the river Barrow its street pattern is linked forming a linear plan, based on the east-west axis of Leinster Street and Duke Street (Figs. 7-8). On the east side of the river this axis is intersected by Stanhope and Offaly Streets which run north-south, while on the west side of the Barrow the only other major street is Woodstock Street, leading north towards Port Laoise. The date of this street pattern is difficult to establish. It has been suggested that it is of medieval date (Bradley 1985, 448) but it is evident from the layout of the market square that there was considerable replanning of Athy in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

## 2. MARKET PLACE

The present rectangular market place with the Town Hall at its southern end is a piece of eighteenth century town planning. The location of the medieval market place is unclear.

## 3. DOMESTIC HOUSES

A pattern of long narrow plots is present on either side of Leinster Street at its eastern end. This is a survival of the burgage plot pattern but it is unclear whether it is of medieval or seventeenth century date. The pattern is less obvious at the western end of Leinster street but it is

present on the south side of Duke Street. Despite the presence of this plot pattern there is no visible evidence of structures of pre-1700 date.

#### 4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

There is good evidence for water mills on the Barrow at Athy prior to 1700. Sir Gerald de St. Michael held the profits of a mill at Athy or Reban until his death c.1339 (53 ROKPRI, 39) and there are records of water-mills belonging to both the priory of St. Thomas or St. John and the Dominican friary at Tullaghmore and/or Clokebury (Archdall 1876, 249 n. 4). In 1654 the Civil Survey noted two mills in the parish of St. John's Hospital, Athy, on the west bank of the Barrow, and three mills in the town of Athy itself (Simington 1952, 86-7).

No mills survive within the present town but a mill stream is shown on the west bank on earlier editions of the D.S. map, running from St. John's graveyard to the Barrow south of the bridge. Another mill stream is shown on the east side of the Barrow, running southwards from Rath Stewart Bridge to the river south of Cromaboo bridge. The mill on the latter stream was located east of White's Castle, on the site now occupied by the Castle Inn. These mill streams are also shown on Rocque's map of Athy but they are now filled in.

## 5. QUAYS

It is probable that there were quays on the Barrow from at least the late thirteenth century when the passage of boats from New Ross to Athy is first referred to (Mills 1905, 202). A likely position for the quays is south of the bridge in the area of Barrow Quay.

## 6. BRIDGE

The earliest direct reference to a bridge at Athy occurs in 1417 when it was repaired by Sir John Talbot (Comerford 1891-5a, 60; Otway-Ruthven 1968, 351-39 and it is referred to again in 1423 (Tresham 1828, 234: no. 30). It is likely, however, that a bridge was present from the mid-thirteenth century, linking the settlement on either side of the Barrow. The early bridges may have been of timber as is suggested by the account of 1536 which recorded that O Mordha "prostrated the piles [castles] at the bridge's end [and] the bridge all razed" in order to prevent the Lord Deputy from taking control of it (Brewer and Bullen 1867, 96-7). The bridge was subsequently repaired, however (Brewer and Bullen 1867, 101; Hamilton 1860, 19). Similarly in 1599 the earl of Essex came to Athy with a large force and recovered the castle which had been held by James FitzPiers FitzGerald and repaired the bridge "which was broken down in several places" (Atkinson 1899, 38, 53). This would appear to have been a stone bridge, however (Omurethi 1903-5, 55). In 1650 the bridge was again broken before the approaching Cromwellians (McNeill 1943,

327). The present bridge was constructed in 1794.

## 7. CASTLE

In 1417 Sir John Talbot, lord Furnival, constructed a tower to protect the bridge and garrisoned it (Comerford 1891-5a, 60; Otway-Ruthven 1968, 351-3). This may be the 'castle of Athy' which was placed in the custody of William Scryvener in 1422 (Tresham 1828, 225: no. 23). Nothing is known, however, of the form, date or location of this castle. The earliest reference to a castle which can be positively identified occurs in 1515 when the king was recommended to give "the castles of Bridge and Athye ... to an English captain, for a stay betwixt the county of Kildare and O'More" (Brewer and Bullen 1867, 6). The bridge castle is clearly the structure known today as White's castle but it is not clear where the other, "Athy" castle, was located. It may be the castle referred to in 1422. In 1516 the priory of St. Thomas granted a castle situated on the west side of the bridge to Edmund Harrold, for the use of the earl of Kildare (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Kildare: Eliz. no. 1) and this was granted to Gerald, earl of Kildare, in 1568 (11 RDKPRI, 185: no. 1240). It is possible that this is the second castle referred to in 1515 but it is at least equally likely that it was a fortified domestic house, perhaps the "stone house" in the parish of St. John's Hospital, listed in the Civil Survey of 1654 (Simington 1952, 86). The Civil Survey also lists two castles in Athy which were presumably on the east side of the

river (Simington 1952, 87). One of these may be White's Castle but the identity of the second structure remains unclear. The possibility also remains that the castle of Athy referred to in 1422 and 1515 is to be identified with Woodstock castle, a thirteenth century structure, north of the town. This possibility is unlikely, however, because it is usually referred to under the name of Woodstock.

#### WHITE'S CASTLE

A petition of 1417 notes that a new tower had been recently built on the bridge of Athy (Comerford 1891-5a, 60; Omurethi 1903-5, 49; Otway-Ruthven 1968, 351-3) and, as noted already, it is again referred to in 1515 (Brewer and Bullen 1867, 6). Comerford (1891-5a, 60-1) noted a tradition that it was built by Gearoid Mor, earl of Kildare, in 1506. It certainly belonged to the earls at this time and was one of the strongholds of "Silken Thomas" in his rebellion of 1534-5 (Brewer and Bullen 1867, 62). It was repaired in 1536 by the Lord Deputy, Lord Leonard Grey (Hamilton 1860, 19). After the rebellion the castle was seized by the Crown and it was used by royal officials. In 1548, for instance, the Lord Deputy, Sir Edward Bellingham, wrote from the "Bridge of Athy" on an expedition against the O Mordha and O Conchobhair Failge (Hamilton 1860, 85, 93). In 1569 it was described as the "Newcastell on the bridge of Athie" (11 RDKPRI, 203: no. 1356). In 1598 the castle was occupied and garrisoned by James FitzPiers FitzGerald who held it against the Crown

forces under Sir Richard Bingham (Atkinson 1895, 361). In the following year he was compelled to surrender the castle to the earl of Essex, who marched on Athy with a large force (Atkinson 1899, 38). No further direct references to the castle are known although it is probably the castle which was garrisoned by a constable and forty warders in 1641-2 (Gilbert 1885, 127, 129). According to Murphy (1902, 284) it was bombarded by Preston in 1648, and was blown up by Confederate forces on the approach of the Cromwellians.

#### Description (Figs. 9-12)

Rectangular three floored tower house with a base batter. It has basal dimensions of 11.2 by 9.2 m and it is some 12 m high on the west side with a further 3 m of stepped parapets and modern brickwork. The castle lies on the east side of the Barrow, on the north side of Leinster St and controls the bridge giving access to the town from the west. Originally it may have been constructed on an island because the mill stream would have cut it off from the town on the east. The masonry is roughly coursed limestone with dressed quoins. A three floored addition was added on the north in the nineteenth century. The castle is in private hands and access to the interior was refused to the Survey's staff.

The ground floor was originally entered through a pointed door with chamfered jambs and rounded rear-arch in the south wall but this was partly blocked and replaced by a larger pointed door during the nineteenth century alterations. Two



gun-loops are present in the west wall at ground floor level, both of which look onto the bridge. At first floor level there is a round-headed chamfered loop in the south wall, an angle loop on the south-east corner, and two blocked loops in the east wall. The only original external feature of the second floor is a round-headed loop in the south wall. Five modern flat-headed windows have been inserted in the west wall, and two in the east wall. Two plaques are inserted into the south wall, one on either side of the original door.

Plaque 1 (Fig. 11)

On west of original entrance. Limestone. Rectangular. False relief inscription in Roman lettering:

RECAROVS COSSEN/ PREPOSITE WILLE/ DE ATHIE POSVIT/ HANC  
LAPIDEM VI/ GESIMO SEPTIMO/ MENSIS IVNIO/ ANO D 1575 ANO  
QUE/ REGNE REGIENJE ELIZA/ BEIH DESIMO SEPTIMO/ MOLHLEN  
D KELLE

Richard Cossen, provost of the town of Athy placed this stone the twenty seventh of the month of June A.D. 1575, and in the seventeenth year of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Molhen O'Kelly.

A manuscript presented to the Duke of Leinster in 1857 states that this stone was found c.1770-80 in the old mill attached to the castle (NLI: Ms. 16172). Lord Walter Fitzgerald, who seems to have been unaware of this manuscript suggested that it may have come from a rebuilding of the bridge (1907-9c, 600).

Dims: H. 43 W. 48 cm.

#### Plaque 2 (Fig. 12)

On the east side of the entrance. Limestone. Decorated in relief with the arms of the FitzGerald. The heater-shaped shield has the cross saltire surrounded by an inscribed wreath with a chained monkey on the dexter side as a supporter. There are inscribed scrolls and an IHS with an interlaced ribbon on the sinister. The wreath and scrolls have a worn blackletter inscription which is now illegible. Its original location is also unknown (Omurethi 1903-5, 50-1, 60-62; FitzGerald 1921-5, 59)

Dims: H. 50 W. 90 cm

### 8. TOWN DEFENCES

The reference to Thomas janitor ("gatekeeper") of Athy in 1297 provides possible evidence for the enclosure of the town in the late thirteenth century. Otherwise there is nothing to indicate the existence of town defences prior to 1515, the year in which Henry VIII's charter authorised the citizens to enclose Athy with stone walls and ditches (Mac Niocaill 1964a, 182). Furthermore there is no documentary evidence to demonstrate conclusively that this enclosure was carried out subsequent to 1515.

#### Description (Figs. 8, 13)

No structural evidence for the town wall survives in Athy

but it is possible to gauge some of its original course from a nineteenth century manuscript account (NLI: Ms. 16172).

#### The East Bank (Fig. 8)

The walls enclosed a D-shaped area, measuring 290 by 200 m, whose long side was formed by the river Barrow. At its north-west corner, the wall ran from the river Barrow to TUBBER MUILAND GATE in Stanhope Street, then along the south side of Stanhope Place to the mural tower, known as the BLACK CASTLE. It continued eastwards from here to the junction of Stanhope Place with Mount Hawkins, where it turned south along Chapel Lane to ST. MICHAEL'S GATE. From there it continued southwards along Meeting House Lane, then across the modern property boundaries to PRESTON'S GATE, from where it returned westwards to the Barrow. The Dominican friary would have been situated outside the defences, within its own precinct, on the south.

#### Preston's Gate (Fig. 13)

This is the only feature of the town wall for which there is good pictorial evidence. In the late eighteenth century the name was regarded as a corruption of Postern Gate, because it was regarded as a postern gate of the Dominican friary (Beauford 1793, 326). This is almost certainly a misinterpretation, however, because it was normal practice to call gatehouses after the families that owned them or lived in them. It was drawn by George du Noyer c.1840 and a copy of this drawing by William Frazer is reproduced here. This shows

that it was a rectangular gatehouse, of fifteenth/ sixteenth century type, with a segmental arch. It was demolished in 1850 (Comerford 1891-95a, 65). A manuscript account, written in 1857, states that it was "Evident that the centre part was built long previous to the outer and inner jambs. The centre was originally constructed in a superior manner and of a different description of stone to the other portions and the foundations of it were not laid so deep as those of more recent additions" (NLI: Ms. 16172).

#### Black Castle

According to the 1857 manuscript account this was on the site of Standhope House, now the Parochial House. There is no medieval evidence for the name, and it was most likely a mural tower.

The defences of the east bank may have been enlarged in the seventeenth century in order to enclose the long burgage plots on either side of Leinster Street as far as its junction with St. Michael's Terrace. Rocque's plan of Athy shows that the street narrowed at this point suggesting that there may have been a gatehouse here.

#### The West Bank

The exact boundaries of the town on the west bank are unknown. The 1857 manuscript only provides a brief account of the the "precincts" of St. John's. It may be suggested that

the wall ran westwards from the Barrow, at its south-east corner, along the rear of the burgage plots for a distance of about 200 m. Then it turned northwards to cross Duke Street, and continued northwards for another 125 m before returning eastwards past St. John's Hospital to the Barrow.

#### 9. ST MICHAEL'S PARISH CHURCH

The foundation date of this church is uncertain, the earliest references to it occurring in 1297 and 1298 (Mills 1905, 182, 202). These give the dedication to St. Michael, which is obviously derived from the de St. Michael family who were the lords of Athy and who probably founded the church at some date in the thirteenth century. In 1311 John Poukoc and Alice Heyne were charged with entering the church "by a window which he first broke" and stealing goods including silver, textiles, and foodstuffs from various chests deposited by different individuals (Wood, Longman and Griffith 1956, 227). A reference to the rectory of St. Michael in 1569 notes that it had belonged to "the late hospital of St. John", i.e. the priory of St. Thomas (11 RDKPRI, 203: no. 1356). The royal visitation of 1615 and Archbishop Bulkeley's visitation of 1630 both note that the church and chancel were in good repair (Ronan 1941a, 48; 1941b, 93). The earliest register of the parish of Athy notes that subscriptions for repairing the church were collected in 1677 (NLI: Ainsworth Reports on Private Collections, no. 233).

Description (Figs. 14-15)

The ruined church is situated on high ground within its churchyard, east of the town. The remains are those of a plain rectangular building lacking a division into nave or chancel. The masonry consists of uncoursed mixed rubble and it measures 27.85 by 9.8 m.

Only the rubble-covered foundations of the east wall survive but the north-east angle stands to a height of 3.7 m. The inner face of the north wall has collapsed at the east end and the outer corner is rounded as a result of rebuilding. The remains of two windows survive in this wall and there is a door slightly to the west of its centre. The western window is missing its arch and it has been badly damaged and blocked. Only the western splay of the eastern window survives. The parallel-sided door is an insertion, probably of fifteenth century date, which lacks its arch. The west gable, which is now covered in ivy, stands to a height of almost 6 m and is 1.2 m thick. The wall was lit by a flat headed window with internal splay in the centre of the wall; it has a pointed segmental rear arch which has largely collapsed. Above this, in the gable, is a similar window which may have lit a loft but it is concealed by a thick growth of ivy. The south wall stands to a height of 3.7 m above internal ground level at the west end but the eastern half is low and overgrown. There is a rise in ground level both inside and outside at the east due to the collapse of masonry and the insertion of burials. At the west end of the

wall there is a single splayed window. It is blocked and the rear arch has collapsed. The original south door was a round arched one of two orders, 1.97 m in width. The original jambs were removed but the segmental arch is present. The outer arch is 1.6 m high, the inner one is 2.2 m. The doorway was subsequently blocked and a smaller door inserted, probably in the fifteenth century. The east end of the south wall survives only in fragments. J. Carroll (1891-5, 103) mentions an old arch in front of the church near the road but what it formed part of is unclear.

#### Monuments

Cross-slab. 13th cent. (Fig. 16)

Limestone. Only the lower half survives. Tapering slab with pointed end. Concavely chamfered and decorated in false relief with the shaft of a cross terminating in a fleur-de-lys.

Dims: L. 107; W. at surviving top 53 tapering to 42 cm; T. 16 cm.

Cross-slab. 13th cent. (Fig. 17)

Limestone. Only the upper half survives. Tapering slab with chamfered edges. Decorated with an incised fleur-de-lys cross, enclosing a lozenge shape in the cross-head.

Dims: L. 130; W. at head 60 tapering to 52 cm at broken base; T. 14 cm.

Crucifixion plaque. Late 16th/17th cent. (Fig. 18)

Described by Carroll (1891-5, 102) as a cross this small

limestone plaque was originally a grave-marker but it is now in Athy museum. The original surface of the stone forms a 2 cm border around the crucifixion which is in false relief. The figure is nailed to a Latin cross with splayed arms. The head is bent onto the right shoulder, the arms are stretched upwards and the figure is wearing an elaborate perizonium. Dims: H. 28; W. 22.5; T. 5.5 cm.

#### Missing monuments

Carroll (1891-5, 103) mentions the existence of a seventeenth century graveslab to Capt. Robert Pearson and he records a tradition that a font or cross was buried within the church ruins.

#### 10. DOMINICAN FRIARY

The foundation date of this friary is variously given as 1253 or 1257 and the founders as the Boisles, Ouganos (Wogans) or de St. Michaels (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 222). After the battle with Edward Bruce near Ardscull in 1316 many of the nobles who had been killed were buried here (Brewer and Bullen 1871, 133). Otherwise practically nothing is known of its history, however, although it may have been the "monastery of Athy" burned by the Irish in 1374 and again in 1546. In 1540, the Dissolution documents state that it had been burned by Donald McCare Kavanagh (White 1943, 172). In the same year it was leased to Martin Pelles (7 RDKPRI, 45: no. 126). An inquisition dated 6 December 1542 described the



monastery as a church and belfry, a chapter house, dormitory, hall, three chambers and a Kitchen, a cemetery, garden and orchard (Comerford 1891-5, 67). In 1588 the friary was granted by Henry, earl of Kildare and others to Robert Lalor of Maynooth (Ir Rec Comm 1826, Kildare, James I no. 8). In 1598 James FitzPiers FitzGerald and other rebels took control of "the abbey of Athy" which had been guarded for the Crown by a constable and garrison of twenty men, and gave it to Dwny Mac Rory O'More, who is said to have "broken the abbey down" (Atkinson 1895, 361, 375). It could not have been destroyed completely, however, because in the following year it was recorded that the earl of Essex had retaken the abbey (Atkinson 1899, 38). Although it is impossible to be certain, it seems likely that this "abbey of Athy" was the Dominican friary rather than the priory of St. Thomas, because it is clear that the former was frequently referred to as an abbey (see Ir. Rec Comm 1826, Kildare, James I, no. 8; Simington 1952, 86). The friary was garrisoned during the Confederate wars and it was destroyed in 1650 by the Irish Catholics on the approach of the Cromwellian army under Hewson (Comerford 1891-5a, 64-5; Omurethi 1903-5, 57).

The friary was located on the east bank of the river. According to local tradition recorded in the eighteenth century, its precincts extended from the Barrow along the north side of the old protestant parish church, which stood on the south of the Town Hall, to the corner of Offaly Street, and from there to Preston's Gate and the rear of the gardens of the present house called The Abbey (Beauford 1793,

326). De Burgo (1762, 257) states that the Protestant church occupied the site of the friary but he noted that the church was entirely new. The site is now open ground south of the Town Hall.

#### 11. PRIORY OF ST THOMAS AND HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN

##### (FRATRES CRUCIFERI)

The foundation date of this priory is uncertain. According to Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 210) it was established either during the reign of King John or in 1253. The pattern of other foundations by the Fratres Cruciferi, however, would suggest the earlier date (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 210-16). As was common in foundations of this order, the priory was associated with a hospital. It is referred to in a document of c.1270-80 as "the priory of St. Thomas the Martyr with its hospital containing brothers, sisters and sick" (Gilbert 1897, 146). In 1305 the two institutions are referred to as the "house of St. Thomas the Martyr, of Athy, and the hospital of St. John thereof" (23 RDKPRI, 89: no. 536). In later sources the dedications were sometimes confused. The 1305 reference occurs in a grant by Sir John de St. Michael to the priory of timber from his wood of Reban "for their works". This may indicate a specific building project or it may mean no more than ordinary maintenance. In 1374 it was recorded that the "town and priory of Athy" had been burned

by the O Mordha of Laois (Tresham 1828, 87: no. 60). Although it is impossible to be certain it is likely that the priory in question was St. Thomas', situated on the west bank of the Barrow rather than the Dominicans on the east. In 1474-5, the prior of St. Thomas the Martyr was alleged to have "allowed the house and church of the said priory to fall into ruin, and neglected to repair them, so that the ruin of the greater part of the buildings is to be feared" (Twemlow 1955, 395).

The priory was dissolved by 1540 but no extent of its possessions is known (White 1943, 23). Some idea of its extent, however, is known from later inquisitions. A deed of 1603 notes that in 1568 James Foster had been granted the priory of St. John with a church, a hall, a garden, a stable, five cottages and a ruinous tower (Ir Rec Comm 1826, Dublin, Jac 1, no. 1). In 1608, John Binglie and John Kinge were given "the scite and precincte of the late hospital or priorie of St. Johns of Athy - one church, a hall, a stable, an hospital called St. John's hospitall, 5 cottages" and other lands (Erck 1846-52, ii, 456). In 1546 when Alexander de St. Michael was confirmed in possession of the "rectory or church of Saint John or Saint Thomas of Athye" it is clear that the priory church was functioning as a parish church (Morris 1861, 117). By 1654 that portion of Athy west of the Barrow belonged to the "parish of St. John's Hospital" (Simington 1952, 86). The hospital site was leased to Edmund Sutton in 1551 (8 RDKPRI, 124: no. 928), James Foster in 1568-9 (11 RDKPRI, 186: no. 1247), and Anthony Power in 1575 (12 RDKPRI, 153: no. 2631). The hospital was still standing

in 1608 but later in the seventeenth century it was granted to the Eustace family (Erck 1846-52, 456; Mahaffy 1907, 601).

#### Description

The priory was situated on the west side of the Barrow to the north of St. John's Lane. Today, it is occupied by a modern monastery, a private house called St John's House, and a disused graveyard. The north wall of the graveyard preserves a portion of wall, 12 m long, which may be part of the original priory or hospital. The masonry consists of uncoursed limestone and it stands to a height of 1.8 m above ground internally and 3.8 m above the ground level of St John's House, externally. It is 90 cm thick and has the splays of a blocked window, lacking its jambs, which is 1.9 m wide internally. Some dressed limestone and granite stones are set into the west wall of the graveyard. There are no pre-1700 monuments.

#### Carved stones (Fig. 19).

Placed over the garden gate in St John's House, immediately north-east of the graveyard, is a twin-light round-headed limestone window with a diamond shaped opening in the central spandrel. The two chamfered limestone jambs of the gate have glazing bar-holes and grooved recesses. A limestone head, probably of recent date, is set above the window.

H. of jambs: 188; W. 21 cm.

Window: H. 50 W. 125 T. 41 cm

### Missing monument

According to FitzGerald (1892-4b, 191) and Hannon (1891-5, 114) there was a graveslab here with the raised inscription: WILLIAM WATSON NOVEMBER 30TH 1635.

## 12. OTHER FEATURES

### Woodstock Castle (Fig. 20).

Located north-west of the town. Thirteenth century structure with sixteenth and seventeenth century additions. An important castle which was the centre of the St. Michael manor of Woodstock. Now in poor condition.

### Bell. 1682.

Originally from St. Michael's church, now in Town Hall.

### Inscribed:

THI[S] BELL WAS MADE IN THE YEAR 1682 FOR THE CHVRCH :  
OF ATHY/ ROBERT SOMMERTSON AND ANCHOR WILL [S] CHIRH  
RWO'

Hobson 1892-4, 509; FitzGerald 1906-8a.

## 13. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. Stone axehead. From Athy. NMI: 1937:3648. Dept. Education Rep. NMI 1935-6, 16.

2-21. Twenty flat stone axes. From Athy. Dept. Education Rep. NMI 1930-1, 12.

22. Stone axehead. From Athy town. NMI 1937: 2461.

23-4. Bronze axehead and slate flake. From Athy town. NMI 1937: 2428-9.

25. Bronze basal-looped spearhead. Found while dredging gravel in river barrow, c. 200 yards above Belview, Athy, "near site of old ford". NMI S.A. 1928:701. Dept. Education Rep. NMI 1928-9, 11.

26. Bronze basal-looped spearhead. Found in gravel dredged from river Barrow between Athy bridge and Horse bridge, Athy, 1927. NMI S.A. 1928:702. Dept. Education Rep. NMI 1928-9, 11.

27. Bronze looped spearhead. From near Athy. Private possession.

28. Socketed bronze dagger. Found in gravel while rebuilding Horse bridge on river Barrow, Athy, 1927. NMI S.A. 1928:700.

29. Bronze sword. From Athy. NMI W.7. Eogan 1965, 67.

30. Bronze sword. From Athy. NMI P240. Eogan 1965, 29.

31-2. Two iron daggers (late sixteenth/ early seventeenth century). Found below street in sewer-digging, Athy. NMI 1945: 336-7. These may have formed part of a larger collection described in a List of Antiquities found in Kildare, presented to the marquis of Kildare in 1847, as a pipe, piece of armour, sword, two cannon balls, bottle and

skull (having a cut on the right temple) all "found in Athy Street in sinking the main sewer, nearly opposite Shiell's Hotel. There was the foundation of a large wall with a small apartment built into the thickness of the wall. The entire being 7 feet below the present surface of the street" (NLI Ms. 18857). The whereabouts of these objects is unknown.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

### The Problems

Athy is important to archaeological research as an example of an Anglo-Norman market town. Larger towns, such as Drogheda and Dublin, have been the subject of detailed archaeological research but little is known of the smaller, more typical towns. Within Leinster, Athy is unusual as an example of an Anglo-Norman town founded during the middle of the thirteenth century. It is also unusual as an example of a frontier town which survived the Gaelic revival and remained an urban centre throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It witnessed new growth in the sixteenth century, initially as a result of patronage by the earls of Kildare and subsequently from the Dublin government. In summary, the ancestry of the modern town is clearly medieval and the problem for archaeology is to ensure that Athy's archaeological heritage is properly protected from interference by modern developments and recorded in advance

of destruction.

Documentary sources for Athy are few before 1700 and further information on the early growth of the town is most likely to come from archaeological excavation. The topography of the town poses a number of specific problems which require solving.

The replanning of the town in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century makes it difficult to be certain about the medieval street pattern, particularly the relationship of Offaly Street to Market Square. It is evident from the historically documented Preston's Gate that Offaly Street was a medieval street but the Market Square is clearly a piece of post-medieval planning and it is likely that house foundations survive below ground on its western side. The form of housing within the town before 1700 remains unknown. The excavation of houses is important not only for the information which it sheds on the form and typology of the houses but also because it enables comparisons to be drawn with houses known from other parts of Ireland and Britain, permitting a better knowledge of the quality of life in Athy before 1700. Examination of seventeenth century housing should provide information on whether the town received a sizeable new input of population or not and should shed important light on the regions of England or Ireland from which these inhabitants came. It would also be important to determine if it is similar to the housing of the Ulster Plantation or different from it.



The White Castle is an intact medieval building and one of the few tower houses in Ireland on which there is specific historical information. It is to be identified with the "bridge castle" mentioned in medieval documents but the whereabouts of the second castle, the "castle of Athy" remains elusive. It may have been on the western side of the bridge but in the present state of knowledge it is impossible to be certain. The discovery of this castle would shed important new light on the development of medieval Athy. The area in the vicinity of the White Castle is also important. It has been indicated above that the castle was probably located on an island in the river Barrow. The rediscovery of this island would provide information on whether the castle had an outer defence, such as a bawn, or not. Excavation in this area is likely to reveal not only information regarding the arrangement of buildings within the fort but also evidence on alterations or new defences.

The course of the town defences is very speculative and the outline suggested above needs to be tested by excavation in order to determine whether it is correct or not. There is a strong possibility that mural towers such as the Black Castle were present. Excavation should also recover information on whether or not the defences were strengthened by the addition of earthen ramparts in the seventeenth century. Excavation is likely to reveal traces of these because even where the wall, or rampart, has been removed it is likely that a ditch would survive intact.

Athy is unusual as an Anglo-Norman town in having its parish church located outside the wall and excavation in the vicinity of St. Michael's church is important to determine whether the parish church had separate defences or not. The Dominican friary and St. Thomas' priory (St. John's hospital) were located within their own precincts and it is important to remember that these were large building complexes, having not only a church and cloister, but ranges of domestic buildings as well. Excavation in these areas is significant not only for the architectural information it will yield on how the form of the buildings changed through time but also because the excavation of a medieval cemetery, such as at St. Helen's, York, can provide otherwise unobtainable information about health, diet, mortality rates and disease among the inhabitants of medieval Athy.

The presence of a distinct burgage plot pattern in Leinster Street suggests an expansion of the town in this area during the seventeenth century and the possibility of an extra-mural suburb in this area should be borne in mind. In a similar way it is possible that there may have been extra-mural development in William Street and the lower part of Woodstock Street. Woodstock castle, on the northern edge of the town, is an important building whose immediate environment should not be disturbed.

#### Archaeological Potential

Archaeology does not consist solely of excavation nor

does it stop at ground level. The archaeological evidence for Athy's past comprises all the physical remains of man's activities on the site of the town, from its thirteenth century beginnings until the present day. The surviving street pattern, property boundaries and standing buildings constitute the uppermost levels of the archaeological stratigraphy, and all are relevant to the study of the town's past. Documentary evidence also plays a role in reconstructing the history of early Athy, but for the wide range of human activity omitted from the written accounts and for the early periods when documentation is slight, archaeology is our only source of information. The evidence of archaeology and topography, of architecture and of documents, is complementary; each gains from the existence of the others and the unrecorded destruction of one form of evidence not only removes part of a town's archive but also diminishes the usefulness of those which are preserved.

The survey of its archaeology indicates that the town is a fine example of a medieval town. The only standing buildings of pre-1700 date are White Castle, St. Michael's church, a wall of St. John's hospital and Woodstock castle. With these exceptions the destruction of buildings above ground has been total. Archaeological layers have been destroyed by the construction of cellars and substantial houses on the street frontages, but it is likely that deposits survive intact behind the frontages. The open spaces around the Court House and Market Square are important because they probably seal medieval remains below ground

level. There is, then, the strong likelihood of recovering house foundations, refuse pits, industrial areas, and workshops of medieval and seventeenth century date within the town.

#### ARCHAEOLOGY, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

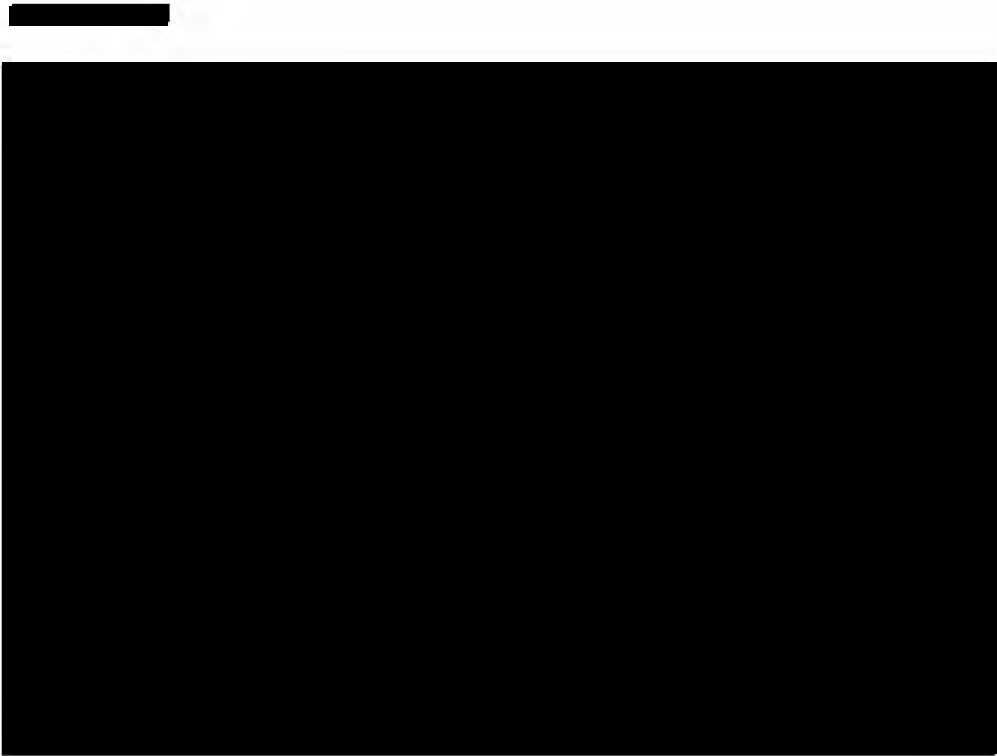
It is evident from the foregoing that archaeology is an important means of learning about Athy's past and of understanding the character and detailed form of the town today. This is more than just an academic pursuit because without an appreciation of the factors which have shaped Athy's present character, steps taken to conserve that character will not be wholly effective, or worse, features basic to its unique identity may be unwittingly destroyed.

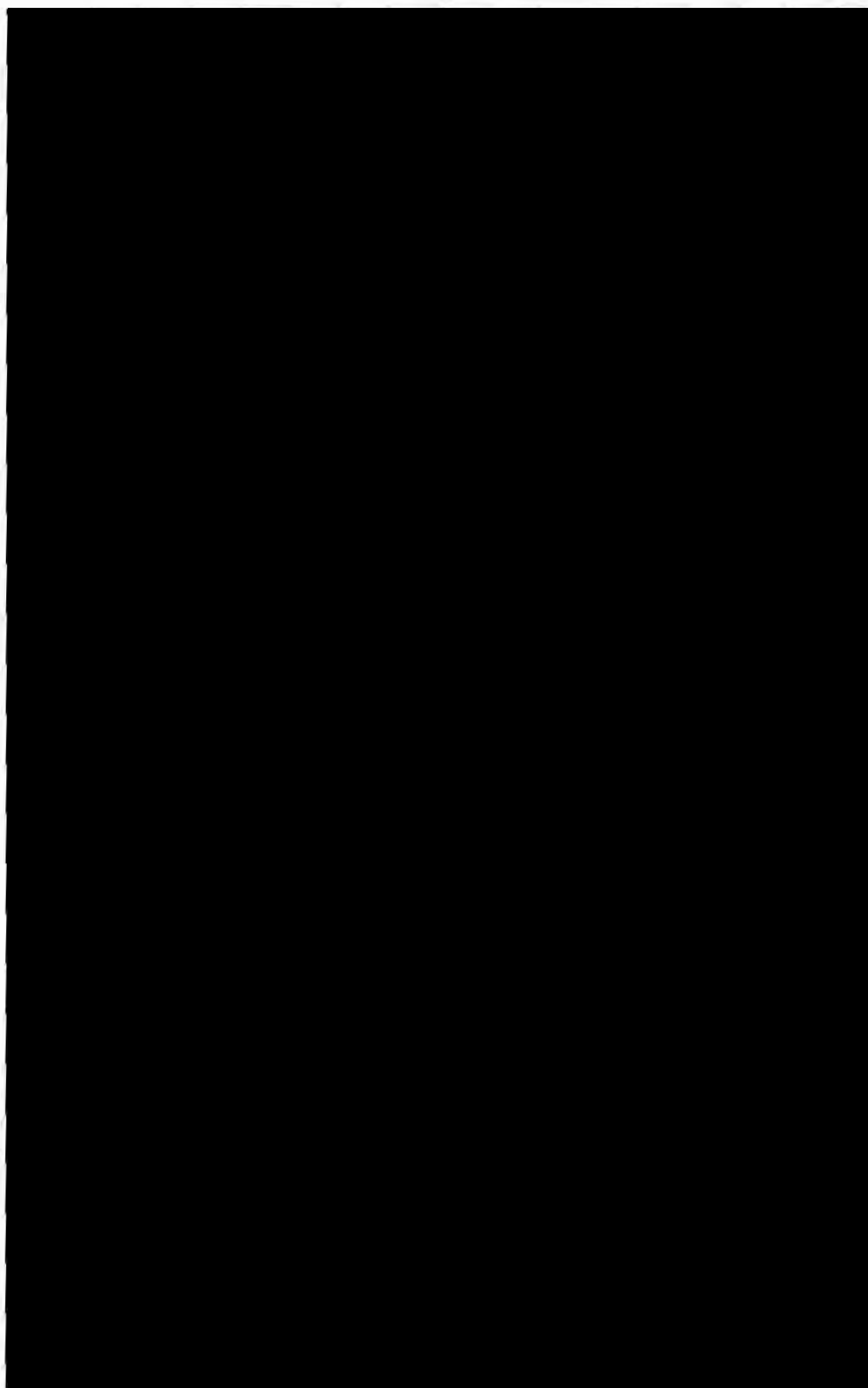
The protection of buried archaeological evidence presents serious problems for not only is there the pressure of redevelopment and the high value of urban properties with which to contend, but the sites themselves are often difficult to define or evaluate; their full archaeological potential may only become apparent when an excavation is undertaken in advance of development or by observations made while development is in progress. It is crucial, therefore, that a concerted effort should be made to safeguard its archaeological heritage and that adequate provision is made for investigation in advance of any redevelopment. This is best achieved by making the realisation of Athy's archaeological potential one of the objectives of its

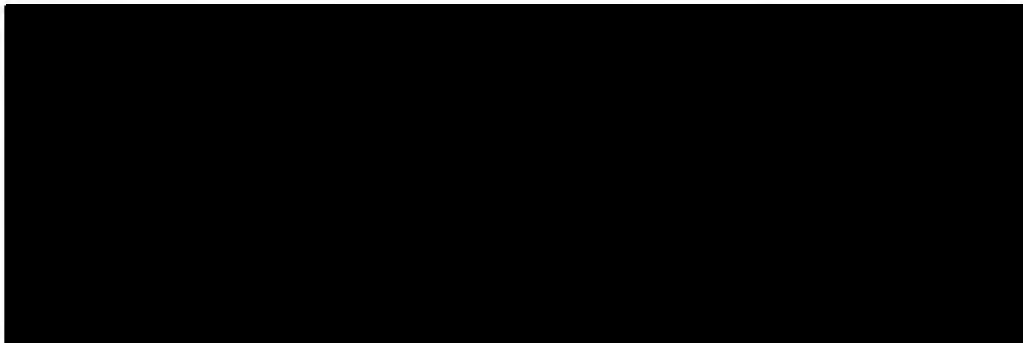
development plan. The objective may then be achieved by judicious use of planning constraints and by conditions attached to planning consents.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 21) delimits the area of archaeological potential within modern Athy. This comprises the suggested walled area of the medieval town, the area east of this as far as St. Michael's, the medieval parish church, and an area in William Street and the lower half of Woodstock Street where there may have been a suburb. Outside the town an area around Woodstock castle is included.











## BALLYMORE EUSTACE

Ballymore Eustace is a small town situated on the right (north) bank of the river Liffey in the east of county Kildare on the border with county Wicklow. It is located some 12 km south-east of Naas on the road from Naas to Baltinglass. The name Ballymore, i.e. "the large settlement", is found in late twelfth century documents. The epithet Eustace first occurs in Irish in 1546 and in English sources from 1666 (de hOir 1974-7, 98). It is thought to derive from the fact that the Eustace family held the office of constable of the castle for most of the Middle Ages.

Throughout the medieval period Ballymore was a manor belonging to the archbishops of Dublin. The site benefited from its situation on the main south road from Dublin to Athy, Carlow and Kilkenny. It was only during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that this road was diverted through Kilcullen and then Ballymore lost much of its importance. It formed part of the archbishop's estates shortly after the Anglo-Norman invasion because references occur to the archbishop's castle of Ballymore in a grant of 1181-90, and to his manor of Ballymore in a grant of 1191 (McNeill 1950, 18, 19). Between 1189 and 1199 the archbishop was granted a weekly market at Ballymore by John, as count of Mortain (McNeill 1950, 26), while in 1234 Henry III granted the archbishop the right to hold a yearly fair there (McNeill 1950, 66). These grants indicate that a large settlement was

developing at Ballymore. A document of c.1256-66 indicates that the site had become a borough with the burgesses holding their burgages according to the laws of Breteuil, paying 12d yearly and each holding ten acres in burgage (McNeill 1950, 120). An extent of the manor of Ballymore, drawn up in 1326, states that there were 160 burgages in the borough, as well as two water mills and a common Kiln (McNeill 1950, 190). There were also a further sixteen cottages that paid no rent and four cottages then lying waste as well as a plot of land called "Taillourebougage" (McNeill 1950, 189). A further indication of Ballymore's size and status is provided by the fact that a parliament was held there in 1389 (Berry 1907, 491). Despite its frontier situation on the borders of the Ui Tuathail and Ui Bhriain of Wicklow, the borough continued to function throughout the fifteenth century. In 1450 the grant of a weekly market and annual fair at Ballymore was confirmed by the King to the archbishop (Berry 1910, 255). One of the complaints made against Robert FitzEustace, constable of Ballymore castle, in 1467-8 was that he was distraining the freeholders and burgesses of the town and manor (Berry 1914, 585). Ballymore was plundered during the Geraldine revolt of 1546 (AFM) while in 1572 it was reported that all Ballymore, except for one Le Strange's house and castle had been burned by the Irish (FitzGerald 1899-1902c, 350). The effect of these attacks on the town is not clear but in 1608 James I revived the rights of fairs and markets there (Erck 1846-52, ii, 488). In 1659 the population was given as 132 (Pender 1939, 378).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN
2. MARKET PLACE
3. INDUSTRIAL AREAS
4. CASTLE
5. ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH
6. MISCELLANEOUS
7. LIST OF STRAY FINDS.

### 1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN

The town is built on the sides of a valley which slopes down to the north bank of the river Liffey (Fig. 22). Garrison Hill is on the south and a long gravel ridge lies on the north. The layout of the modern town, based on Main Street and Market Square is no older than the seventeenth century. The whereabouts of the medieval borough is uncertain but it is likely that it was sited in the vicinity of St. John's church or close to the Liffey bridge. Church Street, near the bridge, has a well defined burgage plot pattern but, without excavation, it is difficult to know whether it is older than the early nineteenth century or not. One feature, however, suggests that Church Road may be the site of the old borough, namely the strange alignment between Main Street and Church Road. In terms of plan analysis Main Street and Church Road form two units and it is evident that one of them must be older than the other. Main Street is clearly the result of

planning and an argument can be made that it would have been located closer to the bridge, if the Church Road area was not already built up. It will require excavation, however, to satisfactorily determine the location of the medieval borough.

## 2. MARKET PLACE

The market place of the seventeenth century town was Market Square, at the head of Main Street. The whereabouts of the market place of the medieval borough is unknown.

## 3. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

With its location on the river Liffey the site was suitable for milling and, although medieval references are lacking, the early nineteenth century woolen mills may occupy an older site. The reference to the common kiln in 1326 suggests that pottery was manufactured locally and the two finds of furnace waste listed below, discovered in the field between Hillgrove and the Garda Síochána station, may have been derived from this kiln.

## 4. THE CASTLE

The archbishop's castle at Ballymore is referred to as early as 1181-90 and it was probably erected shortly after the Anglo-Norman arrival (McNeill 1950, 18). In 1203 King

John instructed the justiciar to restore the castle of Ballymore to the archbishop (Sweetman 1875-86, i, no. 180). In 1274-5 the justiciar, Geoffrey de Geneville, accounted for monies spent on the fortification of Ballymore castle (36 ROKPRI, 41) but it is not known what this involved. The description of the castle in the extent of the manor prepared in 1326 describes it as being in a delapidated state. Within the castle were "a hall now thrown down, a chamber for the archbishop, a chapel, a small chamber for clerks, a kitchen roofed with shingles, a stable and a grange, thatched", which were greatly in need of repair; there had also been a granary and a chamber for the constable but these had been burnt down; three acres of meadow was also stated to be within the castle (McNeill 1950, 189). The delapidation was not irretrievable, however, and monies were spent on maintaining the castle, probably because of its strategic importance. In 1355, for instance, Godfrey FitzEustace and Richard de Penkeston were assigned by the king to ensure that the garrison of Ballymore was up to full strength (Tresham 1828, 62: no. 112). In 1356, Maurice FitzGerald, earl of Kildare, was censured for not keeping the garrison up to strength and was ordered to ensure that five mounted officers, twelve well-armed hobelars, and forty fully equipped archers were stationed at Ballymore (Tresham 1828, 60: no. 41; FitzGerald 1899-1902c, 345). In the early fourteenth century the castle was being used as a prison (Mills 1914, 495; FitzGerald 1899-1902, 344-5). In 1373 the archbishop appointed Thomas FitzEustace as constable of the castle initiating the

association of the Eustace family with Ballymore (FitzGerald 1899-1902c, 345). In 1453-4, parliament made an order for the repair of Ballymore castle (Berry 1910, 299). Among the complaints made against Robert FitzEustace, constable of the castle, in 1463 were that he had appointed an Irishman, Laurence O'Reegan, as sub-constable and had lodged his sheep in the vaults of the castle (Berry 1914, 585). Little is known of the later history of the castle but it is known that in 1669 it was leased to William Williams, a Dublin brewer, on condition that he kept it in repair (Leslie 1934-5, 39). The castle had fallen into considerable decay by 1773, however, when Gabriel Beranger's drawing shows little more than one wall, with the returns of two others, of a square keep-like structure (Fig. 23).

The precise location of the castle is uncertain. Orpen (1907) suggested that it may have stood on Close Hill while Ronan (1941a, 36, n.108) records the tradition that it stood on Garrison Hill.

Close Hill is situated on rising ground north of Barrack St and is an outlying rise of a large gravel ridge immediately to the north. It is the highest point in the village and commands extensive views, especially to the west. On top of the hill is a conical mound with pointed top (Fig. 24). It is 20 m high, and the upper 3-4 m appear to be the result of artificial heightening. The north side of the mound has been quarried for gravel. The summit is uneven, with a diameter of 9 m, and a sloping platform on the west which is

6-7 m wide and 1.5 m below the top of the mound. Large stones with mortar traces and masonry blocks are present in the enclosing field fence, and are clearly derived from a substantial structure.

Garrison Hill is situated on a bend of the Liffey and protected by a very steep scarp on the south-east and south-west. The hill has a saucer-shaped top, 50 by 22 m with a crescent shaped platform some 4 m below on the north-west. There is a shallow ditch and external bank of uncertain date surrounding the top of the hill on the south and south-east but this may be of modern date. There are no traces of structures or earthworks on the hill.

##### 5. ST JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH

The first reference to a church at Ballymore occurs in 1192 although the presence of two high crosses in the churchyard almost certainly indicates the existence of a pre-Norman church site. The church was a prebend of St. Patrick's cathedral in Dublin, from before 1227 when it was valued at 20 marks (FitzGerald 1899-1902c, 344, 348; Berry 1898, 174). In a document of 1529-34 it is referred to as the "church of Blessed Mary of Ballymore" (McNeill 1950, 297), while FitzGerald (1899-1902) points out that the annual fair granted by the archbishop in 1234 commenced on the eve of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, indicating that that was the dedication of the church. The church was described as in good repair in the Royal visitation of 1615 (Ronan 1941a, 36)

but it was apparently in poor repair by the time of archbishop Bulkeley's visitation of 1630 (Ronan 1941b, 77).

The present church is a nineteenth century construction but there are fragments of an older roughly coursed limestone building on the east and south. One fragment, south of the chancel's east wall, is four courses high and measures 2 by 1.05 m in width. A second section, on the east, is part of the original east wall and has a window splay. The wall is 3 m high, 1.8 m in length and 1.05 m wide. The footings of this section can be seen in the ground for some 5 m to the south. The churchyard is overgrown.

#### Monuments

Ringed cross 1. Pre-1200 (Fig. 26).

Granite. On north side of the church. Tapering shaft leaning outwards from a deeply buried rectangular granite base. The upper shaft and the east side of the south arm are damaged. The west face has a large central boss surrounded by a low rounded moulding. The ring on both faces is banded by a double half-roll moulding. There is a boss at the top of the E face of the shaft. The cross was re-erected in the late 17th century. Incised inscription on the west arm, ring and shaft in Roman capitals: N/ IHS/ ERECTED BY/ R/ ND/ THE 9/ 16/ 89/ BY/ AM WM.

Dims: H. 340 W. across arms 140

Shaft: H. 215 W. 49-42 T. 35-33

Base: W. 103 T. 87 cm.



Ringed cross 2. Pre-1200 (Fig. 27).

South-east of the church. Granite. Unpierced ringed cross. Carved from a single block of stone. The base is a tall rectangular piece of stone not much wider than the shaft. It has a low moulding around its circumference close to the ground. The shaft tapers from top to bottom and its edges are rounded. The shaft is undecorated except for half-diamond shapes on the lower end of each face. The top of the shaft has a small portion of the ring and the lower sections of recessed spandrels.

Dims: Base: H.82 (min) W. 56-46 T.40-38

Shaft: H.115 (min) W.35 T.27-24 cm

Latin cross. Date uncertain

Situated north of the church. Granite. Roughly shaped.

Dims: H. 67 W. 40 across arms. T.15 cm.

Cross-slab. Prob. pre-1200 (Fig. 28).

Tapering granite slab. Incised cross with expanded arms. Set upright in the ground west of the church.

Dims: H. 103 (min) W. 67-47 T.19 cm.

Font. 12th cent. (Fig. 25)

In church porch. Granite. Large circular font consisting of a basin, shaft and base carved from one stone. There is no trace of a cover. The sides of the basin slope inwards and the side-drainage hole is wider in the basin and narrows to a step on the circular shaft before opening above the base.

Dims: Overall H. 108

Basin: Ext. diam.92 Int Diam. 61 T. 24

Base : H. 53 Diam. 74 cm

Knightly effigy. 16th cent. (Fig. 29)

Within the church, where it was moved from Old Kilcullen.

Limestone. Hunt 1974, 153.

Holed stone.

Granite. Rectangular. At east end of graveyard.

Dims: H. 22; W. 68 by 44; Diam. of hole 14; T. 10 cm.

#### 6. MISCELLANEOUS

Font. 12th cent.

Large circular font of coarse granite with central drainage hole. Placed on the ground at the north-west corner of the modern R.C. church. The basin is straight sided and one side has been repaired with cement. Said to have come from Coughlanstown (pers com. Fr. L. O'Donoghue).

Dims: H. 50 Diam. ext. 75 Diam. int. 55 Depth 27 cm.

#### 7. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1-21. Twenty-one pottery sherds of thirteenth/ fourteenth century date. Surface finds in the field between the Garda Siochana Station and Hillgrove House. The soil had been disturbed preparatory to constructing a housing development.

22-3. Two fragments of furnace waste. Found as above.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Ballymore Eustace is important to archaeological research as an example of a medieval borough that was transformed into a town in the seventeenth century. The medieval documentary references indicate that it remained an urban entity until the close of the Middle Ages a point which is particularly interesting because so little of medieval character survives above ground. Indeed it is difficult to reconstruct the medieval street pattern or calculate the extent of the medieval borough with any accuracy.

The site was an important manor of the archbishops of Dublin throughout the Middle Ages but the site of the castle which formed the centre of that manor is unknown. Two likely locations have been considered above: Close Hill and Garrison Hill but it will require excavation on these sites to determine which one is the actual site. The pre-Norman remains in St. John's church indicate that the church site was in existence prior to the coming of the Normans and excavation in the vicinity of the church would be important because of the light it would shed on the transition from pre-Norman to Anglo-Norman settlement. Stray finds picked up in the vicinity of the church site indicate that there are archaeological deposits of thirteenth and fourteenth century date here. It is difficult to know the date at which the first bridge was established and it is possible that the remains of early bridges may survive near the site of the present bridge.

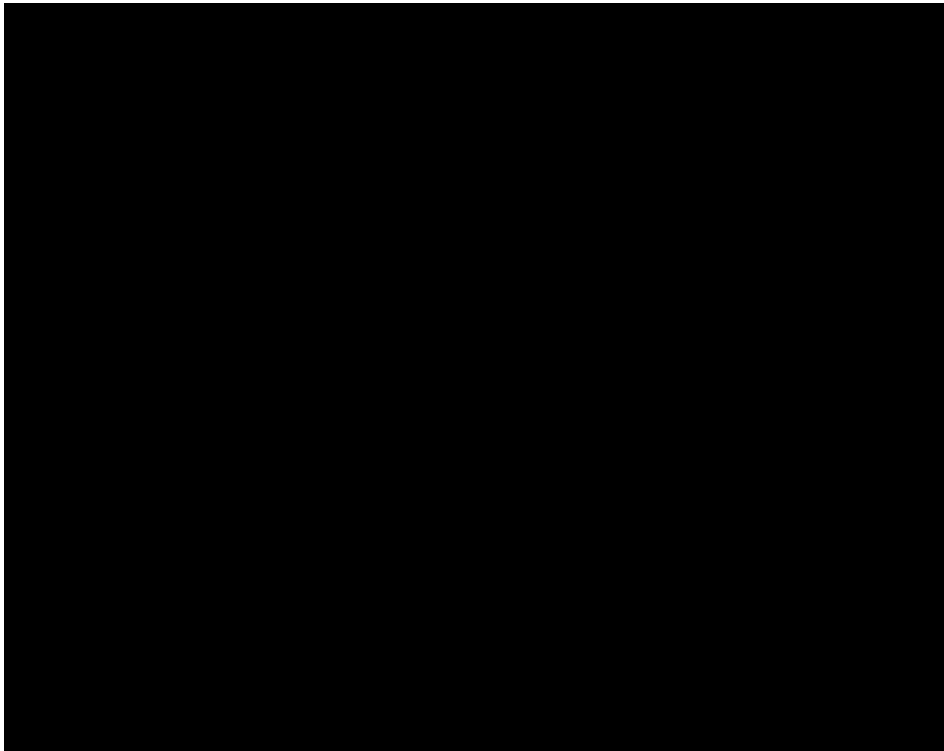
Archaeological deposits have been disturbed in the construction of the new housing estate, west of St. John's church, and they have probably been removed along the street frontages within the town. Behind the frontages, however, and in the fields between St. John's church and Close Hill archaeological deposits are likely to survive. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of this settlement, and to recover information on the nature of its houses, streets, and defences, if any.

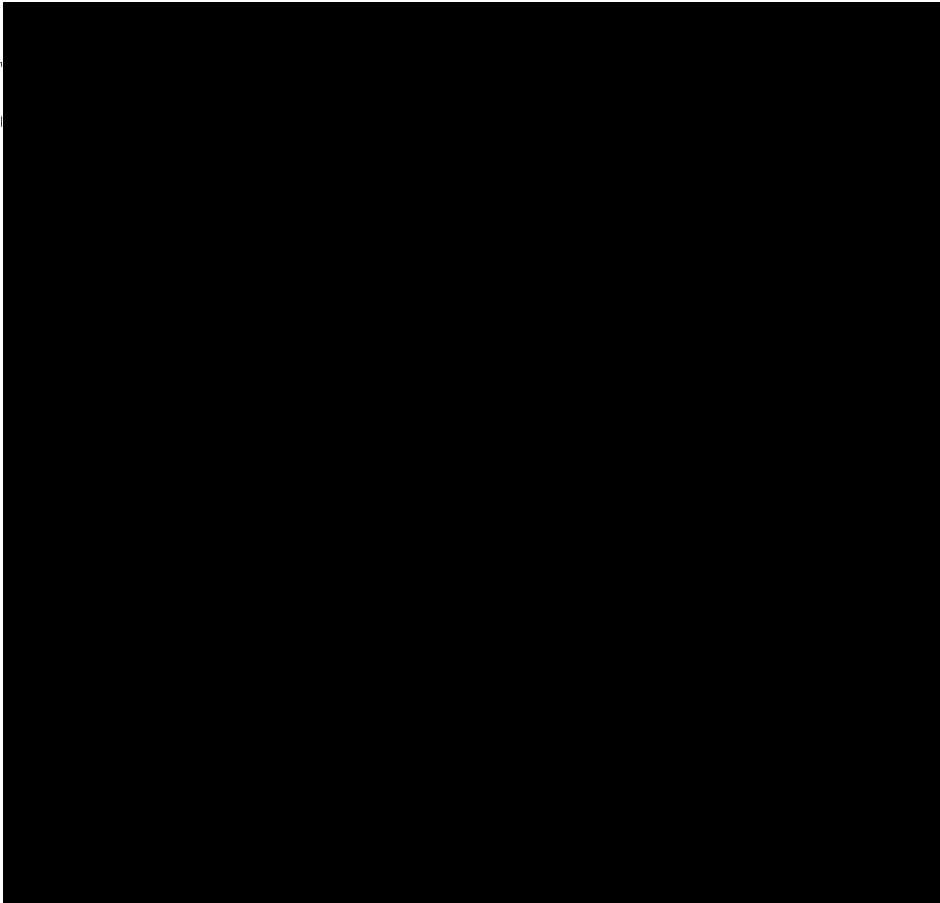
In summary, the archaeological and historical data indicates that settlement at Ballymore began during the Early Christian period, was considerably expanded during the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, declined in the late fifteenth and sixteenth, and was revived with the refoundation of the borough in the seventeenth century. Documentary records of the site are few, however, and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough is under pressure from housing development. A number of new houses have been built in this area and it is important that any future development should be monitored otherwise archaeological information is liable to be lost needlessly.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 30) delimits the area of archaeological potential within

Ballymore Eustace. This includes a large area because so little is known of the borough's original extent. The area between St. John's church and Close Hill is important, as outlined above, because finds of archaeological material of thirteenth and fourteenth century date have been made there. The area of Main Street and the Market Square probably represents the expansion of the seventeenth century town, while the area of Church Road and the bridge is a possible site for the medieval borough, as outlined above. The present lack of information on the precise extent of the borough means that it is particularly important that that all works be monitored within the shaded area.





## CASTLEDERMOT

Castledermot is the southernmost town of County Kildare, on the main road between Carlow and Kilcullen. The town is located on relatively lowlying ground near the western foothills of the Wicklow mountains. A small stream, the Lerr, passes close to the town on the east side. The Irish name, Diseart Diarmada "Diarmid's hermitage" recalls the town's origin as an Early Christian church site. After the coming of the Normans the name was changed in Latin and English sources to Tristeldermot, by substituting the Old French Tristre ("a hunting station") for diseart (Dinnseanchas 4 (1970-1), 130-1; Dodgson 1972-3). The modern form, Castledermot, is first recorded in 1507 (FitzGerald 1896-8b, 129) and is derived from a castle built there in the late fifteenth century (Dinnseanchas 4 (1970-1), 131; Bryan 1933, 84).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An Early Bronze Age flat axe and a Later Bronze Age sword are the only archaeological objects which indicate that the site of the future town was known to prehistoric man and its beginnings as an urban site commence with the foundation of a church there in 812 (AI). The founder was Diarmait (d.824), the grandson of Aedh Roin, King of the Corco Baiscinn. Despite the appellation disert, which suggests a remote hermitage, the monastery was clearly an important one. In 842

the death is recorded of two bishops at Diseart Diarmada, on the same night (AU). In 908 Cormac mac Cuileannain, the King-bishop of Cashel, was buried in the cemetery of Diseart Diarmada "where he had studied for a long time" (O'Donovan 1860, 205, 215). This account also notices that Diseart Diarmada was attached to the monastic community of Bangor, co. Down (O'Donovan 1860, 204-5, n. f, g). Another measure of the importance of the monastery is the record that it was plundered by the Norse in 842 (Chron Scot: AU sub 841; A. Clon. sub 838) and 867 (AFM; O'Donovan 1860, 185 sub 869). In 1040 it was plundered by Diarmait mac Mael na mBo (AFM; A. Tig.). The burning of Diseart Diarmada with its oratory (derthaigh) is recorded in 1106 (AU). The mention of derthaigh suggests a wooden structure but there are remains at Castledermot today of a round tower, built between the ninth and twelfth centuries, and of the Romanesque west doorway of a twelfth century church.

The Anglo-Normans were probably attracted to Castledermot by its monastery. In the sub-infeudation of Leinster it was granted, as part of Kilkea, to Walter de Ridelsford (Orpen 1911-20, i, 386; Otway-Ruthven 1961, 170-1). Giraldus Cambrensis states that a castle was built for Walter de Ridelsford at 'Tristerdermot', c.1181 (Scott and Martin 1978, 195) but as Orpen (1907, 248; 1911-20, i, 386) suggested this probably refers to the motte of Kilkea. Walter de Ridelsford is also credited with the foundation of the Fratres Cruciferi priory during the reign of John (1199-1216) but it is more likely that the founder was the younger Walter de Ridelsford,



who seems to have succeeded his father c.1200 (Brooks 1951-2, 117, 131). The younger Walter (d. 1238/9) was probably responsible for the early development of the town (Brooks 1951-2, 137) but it is likely that the borough was founded by his father who was granted the right to hold a weekly market at 'Listildermot' [sic] before 1199 by Prince John (Tresham 1828, 4: no. 53).

The earliest evidence for the existence of a borough at Castledermot occurs in a charter of Walter de Ridelsford, confirming the returns of a burgage in his vill of 'Trisseldermot' to St. Thomas' abbey, Dublin (Gilbert 1889, 171). Brooks (1951-2, 133) points out that this charter was granted subsequent to 1225 and before 1233. In 1226 a yearly fair was granted to de Ridelsford at Tristeldere-mot (Sweetman 1875-86, i, no. 1394). On his death c.1238-9 de Ridelsford's estates in Kilkea and Castledermot were divided between his daughter Emeline (wife of Hugh de Lacy, and after 1242, of Stephen de Longespee) and his grand-daughter Christiana de Marisco (Brooks 1951-2, 137). In 1248, both heiresses and their husbands received royal grants of yearly fairs at Tristeldermot (Sweetman 1875-86, i, nos. 2948, 2971). In 1280-1 Christiana surrendered her Irish lands to the King and an account of the rents due to the crown from these lands in 1284 included £4 12s. 4d. 'from the burgages of Tristeldermot' (Sweetman 1875-86, ii, 561: no. 2340). This represents the yearly rent of 92 burgages and, since Christiana held half of Tristeldermot, the total number of burgages can be estimated as about 180. A further indication

of the size and importance of the town at the close of the thirteenth century is the bestowal of a murage grant in 1295 which was to run for seven years (Sweetman 1875-85, iv, no. 253).

In 1305-6 Sir John Wogan, the justiciar, obtained grants of both moieties of Tristildermot from the King (Sweetman 1875-86, v, nos. 390-1, 411). The half-yearly returns for the borough in 1311 amounted to 86s. 6d. indicating a total of 173 burgages. The town suffered a serious set-back in 1316 when Edward Bruce burned the Franciscan friary and perhaps the town (Gilbert 1884, ii, 299-300; Brewer and Bullen 1871, 138-9; Butler 1849, 19). The town clearly recovered from the attack, however, and some indication of its importance in the later Middle Ages can be obtained from the number of parliaments and councils which met in the town. A council had been held as early as 1264 (Berry 1907, 587; McNeill 1950, 114) and further parliaments and councils met there in 1377, 1378, 1379, 1380, 1388, 1389, 1390, 1391, 1392, 1394, 1404 and 1499 (Richardson and Sayles 1947; Moody, Martin and Byrne 1982). This evidence suggests that the final quarter of the fourteenth century was a period of particular prestige and prosperity. The town was favoured by its situation on the main route from Dublin to the south-east and there is a suggestion that a mint was established in 1377 (Comerford 1891-5b, 367). In 1393 the Commons of Tristeldermot paid a tribute of 84 marks to Mac Murchada to leave the town in peace (Comerford 1891-5b, 367-8) and this marks the beginning of the period when Castledermot became a frontier town. In

1405 it was burned by Art Mac Murchada (A. Conn) and in 1427 it was sacked by Art's son Geralt (Devitt 1915-17, 477-8). A contemporary letter noted that Geralt Mac Murchada burnt all of the town except for forty or fifty houses and captured Sir Thomas Wogan, the lord of the town (Chart 1935, 110). The damage was sufficiently extensive to prompt the Dublin parliament of 1428 to grant a special subsidy to aid the repair of the town (Chart 1935, 85). It is difficult to gauge the full effect of these attacks but it is interesting to note that no parliaments met at Castledermot between 1404 and 1499. In 1443-4 a complaint was lodged against the Treasurer of Ireland, Christopher Barnevale, that because of his negligence "the towne of Tristeldermot, a good walled towne ... one of the best Kaies of Leinster ... was destruyng by the Kinges enemys not late ago ... the said towne was utterly destruyd by the said enemys and never recovered seth(ens), to final destruccion to all the parties theraboute" (Griffith 1940-1, 396). Ellis (1985, 65-6) suggests that the town was destroyed by the Kavanaghs and he regards the construction of the castle after 1485 by the earl of Kildare as reflecting the reconquest of the region.

It is clear that Castledermot was in the hands of the earl of Kildare from the late fifteenth century. In 1485 the Irish parliament gave Gearoid Mor a grant of labour towards the building of a castle (Bryan 1933, 84), and it is from this feature that the present name of the town is derived. A letter of the earl dated 1507, "from our castle of Castledermot", provides a terminus ante quem for its

construction (Fitzgerald 1896-8b, 129). After the attainder of the earl of Kildare in 1535, Castledermot was held for a time by the earls of Ormond (Curtis 1933-43, iv, 192) but it was returned to the FitzGeralds when the earldom was restored in 1554. In 1591 Castledermot was still sufficiently important to be listed after Kildare, Naas and Athy, as one of the four main towns of Co. Kildare (Mahaffy 1912, 397). The town saw considerable action in the wars of the 1640s. Preston's army was quartered there in 1646 (Lowe 1983, 293, 338-9) and in 1647 it was listed as one of the headquarters of the catholic Confederate army (Mahaffy 1903, 606, 758). In 1650 the Cromwellians, under Hawson, marched on the town but the garrison had "burnt down a great part of the town, pulled down the walls, and betaken themselves to a strong tower" (Murphy 1902, 288). Castledermot continued to serve as a garrison town and troops were quartered there in 1667-8 and 1686 (Gilbert 1899, 191, 195; Gilbert 1895, 439). The census of 1659 returned a population of 240 for the town (Pender 1939, 404) and in 1674 a weekly market and two annual fairs were established. Monk (1909-11, 343), writing in 1682 described it as "now a small markett Towne formerly capable to receive Parliaments hither summonzd in", while to Gedeon Bonnivert it was "a poor beggarly town" in 1690 (Murray 1912-13, 340).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN
2. MARKET PLACE
3. DOMESTIC HOUSES
4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS
5. CASTLE
6. TOWN DEFENCES
7. ST. JAMES' PARISH CHURCH
8. FRANCISCAN FRIARY
9. PRIORY AND HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
(FRATRES CRUCIFERI)
10. HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN
11. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

### 1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN

The medieval town occupied a pear shaped area with its long axis aligned north-south (Figs. 31-2). The street pattern was Y-linear. Main Street, on the north side of the town, forked at the Market Square. Carlowgate, the western arm, led towards Carlow, while Abbey Street (known as 'Tulla' Street in 1758), the southern arm, led to Tullow. Small lanes, such as Keenan's Lane and Church Lane, were located off these streets. Barrack Street was constructed between 1837 and 1847 (Horner 1975-6, 486).

## 2. MARKET PLACE

There can be little doubt but that the medieval market place was located in Market Square, a triangular market place formed by the intersection of Main Street and Carlowgate.

## 3. DOMESTIC HOUSES

Documentary sources indicate that the number of burgages in medieval Castledermot varied from about 182 in 1284, 172 in 1311, to 160 in 1418 (Sweetman 1875-86, ii, no. 2340; Tresham 1828, 223: no. 1c). Each burgage would have had a house and outbuildings but it is difficult to reconstruct the burgage plot pattern now. Rocque's map of the town, however, shows that burgage plots survived in the town into the eighteenth century.

In a deed of c.1280 Geoffrey de Lynne granted a stone house in the area known as "le Buleput" in Tristledermot to the Hospital of St. John the Baptist, Dublin (Brooks 1936, 256). This "buleput" had been given to Geoffrey by Walter de Ridelsford shortly before (Brooks 1936, 255). The tholsel ("le Tolselde") is referred to in 1311 when it was being used by a smith or lorimer (White 1932, 13). The Civil Survey (1654) records the presence of one stone house, owned by Christopher Arsould and a 'castle' on the 'Moore of Castledermot' (Simington 1952, 106).

Petrie recorded that "about fifteen years ago [c.1820], I saw an old house in the Town which was popularly called the

Parliament House. From its style of architecture I would suppose it as old as [the parliament of] 1499. I believe it has been taken down some years" (O.S. Letters, Co. Kildare, ii, 61). Comerford (1891-5b, 369) noted that this "parliament house" was on the site of the Leinster Arms Hotel, which was located at the junction of Market Square and Barrack Street. No evidence survives above ground today for these structures.

#### 4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

The only industrial activity referred to in the Middle Ages is milling, which is noticed in connection with the Franciscan friary and the Hospital of St. John the Baptist. The location of these mills is unknown.

#### 5. CASTLE

Giraldus Cambrensis recorded the construction of a castle for Walter de Ridelsford at Tristledermot c.1181 (Scott and Martin 1978, 195). There is no other evidence to support the existence of an early Anglo-Norman castle, however, and Orpen (1907, 248; 1911-20, i, 386) is almost certainly correct in suggesting that this castle was actually built at Kilkea.

The name "Castledermot" is derived from a castle built there by the earl of Kildare after 1485. In 1535, after the revolt of Silken Thomas and the attainder of the earl of Kildare, the castle passed into the hands of the crown and this explains the reference in 1548 to Edward O'Loyne as

constable of the castle of Tristledermot (Morris 1861, 174). In 1629 William Talbot of Malahide held the castle and manor of Castledermot, presumably on behalf of the earl of Kildare (Ir Rec Comm 1826, Co. Kildare, Car. I: 25). It is unclear whether the "strong tower" referred to in Hewson's attack on Castledermot in 1650 was this castle or not (Murphy 1902, 288).

#### 6. TOWN DEFENCES

Castledermot received a murage grant for seven years in 1295 (Sweetman 1875-86, iv, no. 253) and it is likely that the town was enclosed at this time. The walls were evidently in existence by 1427 when Archbishop Swayne referred to Castledermot as a walled town (Chart 1935, 110). Murphy's (1902, 288) account of Hewson's attack on Castledermot in 1650 states that the Irish garrison there had pulled down the walls before the arrival of the Cromwellians.

#### Description

Although the O.S. 6" map indicates that substantial sections of the town wall remain, nothing now survives except for two short sections. The course of the wall can be reconstructed, however, and it enclosed a pear-shaped area 550 by 375 m, and had a circumference of 1460 m. The wall was bounded on the east side by the river Lerr and on the west by a stream, both of which formed an area of swampy ground around the wall.



Commencing on the north at the DUBLIN GATE the wall ran eastwards for 15 m, then it turned south and south-east to skirt the back of the properties fronting Main Street. It crossed Keenan's Lane (which seems to have been a blind lane) and continued south-east to St. James' churchyard which it enclosed. From there it turned south-west for a distance of about 130 m before turning westwards to the TULLOW GATE. In the field, south-east of the St. James' church there are traces of a ditch with internal stone facing, probably the last remnants of the wall.

The wall continued westwards from Tullow Gate for a distance of 50 m before turning north-west. A section of the wall survives here between the Convent grounds and the ruined Franciscan friary (Fig. 34). The masonry consists of uncoursed granite rubble. It is 19.5 m long, 2.5 m high, and the visible width is 83 cm. The north side is faced with modern dressed granite blocks adding a further 45cm to the width. From here the wall ran north-west to CARLOW GATE, where the second section of wall survives (Fig. 33). This is 11m long, and rises in height from ground level to 3 m at its northern extremity where it protrudes out into Carlowgate. It is 2.1 m wide at the base with a batter, 30 cm wide, on its west face which rises to 1.3 m above present ground level. Two bar holes, 20cm square and 3 m long are present in the north face of the wall. These would have held the bars which closed the gate. The wall segment is in poor repair and ivy covered (Fig. 33). From Carlow Gate the wall ran north-eastwards to a point 60 m west of Dublin Gate where it

turned east to join the gate. Between Barrack Road and Dublin Gate there are traces of a ditch and large stones on its east side may be the last remnants of the wall.

#### 7. ST. JAMES' PARISH CHURCH

The church of Disserdiarmada with its appurtenances was among the churches confirmed to the bishop of Glendalough by Alexander III in 1179 (Sheehy 1962, 30; McNeill 1950, 5). This was, no doubt, the church of the pre-Norman monastery which had continued to function after the Anglo-Norman conquest. In 1207 it was granted to the nunnery of Graney by Walter de Ridelsford (Sweetman 1875-86, i, no. 355) but by the close of the thirteenth century it is listed among the possessions of Christ Church cathedral, Dublin (20 ROKPRI, 63: no. 150). The Dissolution documents, however, include it in the extent of Graney (White 1943, 124). After 1540 the church was granted to the Lord Deputy, Sir Anthony St. Leger and he was permitted to alienate it in 1547 (7 ROKPRI, 61: no. 304; Morrin 1861, 465). In 1630 Archbishop Bulkeley's visitation noted that the nave was ruinous but the chancel was in repair (Ronan 1941b, 95). MacKenna (1982, 7) dated the present building to between 1650-83 and he suggests that it was rededicated to St. James by the Anglo-Normans.

#### Description

The present structure consists of a nave and chancel

plastered internally and pebble dashed externally. The chancel is modern, the nave is possibly of seventeenth century date but it includes an arcade of thirteenth century date. The oldest part of the building is the Romanesque door, which formed part of a Romanesque church, to the west of the present building. The round tower is probably of tenth/eleventh century date and it is attached to the nave by a vaulted passage built in the fifteenth century.

#### The Romanesque Church

Only the west door survives some 10 m west of the present building although Grose's view of 1791 shows that the south wall of the church extended as far as this door. Presumably the Romanesque building survived until that time. The door is constructed from yellow granite and has two orders of triangular voussoirs decorated with a triple row of low mouldings giving the impression of chevron ornament. The jambs have low rounded mouldings. The inner order is 2.46 m high and 1.6 m wide. The outer order is 2.7 m high and 2.1 m wide. The estimated external dimensions of the original church are 11.2 by 8 m.

#### The Round Tower

The tower, which is 20 m high, is built of granite boulders with limestone pinnings. The external diameter is 4.74 m and the internal diameter is 2.5 m. It is five floored with medieval crenelations above two string courses. It is entered at ground level through a flat lintelled door built of large squared blocks of granite. The door is battered and

its present height is 2.25 m. The door seems to have been some 75 cm above present ground level but the removal of the door threshold and some stones underneath have increased its height. A damaged stone vault was inserted about mid-way through the first storey, and the top was capped by a medieval stone vault. The modern floors rest on joists set into the walls and do not respect the old floor levels. The first floor has a small window deeply splayed with flat rear arch opposite the door. The splays are partially broken down. Between the second and third floor is a flat-headed window on the south side. The fourth floor has a similar window on the south-east, and there are four large round-headed windows under the cap, facing the cardinal points. These windows and the crenelations above probably date to the seventeenth century (Barrow 1979, 114-6). The tower is connected to the church by a narrow corridor 3 m long. Its walls are rubble built and have been plastered over. They support a pointed vault with wattle centering which is of fifteenth century style.

#### The Thirteenth Century Church

During the thirteenth century the old Romanesque church was expanded eastwards when a new nave with a south aisle was built. All that survives of this is the plastered arcade of three pointed arches which forms the south wall of the nave. The splayed window at its east end has been altered and may be entirely modern. Two of the arches are now filled in with partition walling 95 cm thick; the third houses the organ. No trace of the aisle survives.

#### The Seventeenth Century (?) Church

The church is said to have been rebuilt in the seventeenth century and it was possibly at this time that the nave arcade was blocked and the north wall constructed. The new north and the restored south walls were lit by three round-headed windows with internal splay. The chancel arch is also round headed and may date from this time. The chancel and the west wall of the nave were added in the nineteenth century

#### Architectural Fragments

The centre part of a limestone cusped window-head is used as a grave-marker on the west side of the south cross. Part of a window jamb is present beside the hogback. At least eleven granite mouldings were found during the May 1986 rebuilding of the graveyard wall. Four were part of a round arch for a window or door. One is the lower stone of a multi-moulded jamb; it has one chamfered corner with a stop while the other corner has a rounded moulding (Dims: H.46 W.29 by 24). These were placed at the south side of the chancel.

#### Monuments

North cross. 10th cent. (Figs. 38-40)

Granite. Ringed cross on two-stepped pyramidal base. The upper part of the base is damaged.

#### Shaft

West face (Fig. 38): The lower two panels have three figures each; Daniel in the Lions den. Crosshead: Adam and Eve. Panel

above: fall of Simon Magus. Dexter panel: David playing the harp. Sinister panel: Sacrifice of Isaac. The ring is decorated with Key pattern and running scroll.

South face (Fig. 39): Knot pattern on shaft; Key pattern on arm. The upper shaft is undecorated.

East face (Fig. 40): Two bearded figures in lower panel; SS. Paul and Anthony in the desert. Crucifixion in cross-head with three figures in each of the surrounding panels representing the twelve apostles. The ring is decorated with a Key pattern and a running scroll.

North face: Running scroll on shaft and figure on arm. Upper shaft undecorated.

Base

West and East faces (Figs. 38, 40): Spiral pattern on the lower tier and a Key pattern in the upper panel.

South face (Fig. 39): The lower panel has a man in a fringed shawl with loaves and fishes. The upper panel has a running spiral.

North face: The lower panel has a large seated figure with a bird-head grasping his knees. Upper panel damaged.

Dims: Base: H.83 W. 78 by 00

Shaft: H.217 W. 42 by 28

South cross. 10th cent.

Granite. Ringed cross on pyramidal base. West face (Fig. 41): Daniel in the Lion's den; figure between two beasts (?temptation of Christ); Adam and Eve; Paul and Anthony in the desert; broken panel of three figures. Crosshead:

crucifixion. Panels above: three figures, arrest of Christ. Dexter panel: David seated playing the harp; Sinister panel: sacrifice of Isaac. The ring is decorated with a spiral design on the upper sinister and lower dexter segment and low mouldings on the others.

South face (Fig. 42): six panels of two figures each. The arm terminal has one figure and there is a spiral panel on the upper shaft.

East face (Fig. 43): six panels of spirals, frets and knots.

North face (Fig. 44): a figure with arms raised; a seated figure with child on knee; a large standing figure and a smaller figure; a figure with sword and shield; two figures wrestling. The arm has one figure and the upper shaft has a spiral panel.

#### Base

West face: Two men herding animals among which there is a goose, a deer, a boar, a rabbit, and a cow.

South face: Panel with a figure pointing to the five loaves and two fishes above a row of eight figures.

East face: Undecorated.

North face: One panel in upper right corner with two figures wrestling.

Dims: Base: H. 69 W. 99 by 92

Shaft: H. 268 W. 38 by 23 cm

West Cross (Fig. 45).

Two tiered undecorated granite base with mortice. Set on a modern plinth west of the Romanesque doorway.

Dims: H. 88; W. at base 75 by 53

W. at top 37 by 30 cm

Mortice D. 27 W. 19 by 17 cm

Cross. Date uncertain.

Granite. Small roughly shaped Latin cross. Beside the north-east corner of the south cross' plinth.

Dims: H. 66 W. 34 T. 17 cm.

Hogback. ?10th cent. (Fig. 46)

Situated between the south cross and the church. Granite. Decorated in false relief with six and a half adjacent lozenges on the south face. The north face has a Latin cross with lozenge shaped intersection, within a frame, and an incised cross with V-shaped terminals and a heart shaped upper arm (Lang 1971).

Dims: L. 178 W. 48 T. 39 cm

Incised cross-slab. Pre-1200. (Fig. 47)

Limestone. Close to the south-east corner of the south cross. Decorated with a roughly incised triple-line Latin cross.

Dims: H. 66 W. 34 T. 10 cm.

Incised cross-slab. Pre-1200.

Granite. Set west of the south cross. Incised Latin cross with expanded arms.

Dims: H. 68 W. 38 T. 18 cm.

Cross-slab. Pre-1200 (Fig. 48)

Tapering granite slab decorated off-centre with a cross in relief. On west side of south cross. The cross-head is



diamond shaped with extensions for the arms and upper shaft.  
The edges of the slab are rounded.

Dims: L. 169 W. 41-28 T. 20 cm.  
Cross-slab. Pre-1200.

Tapering granite slab with incised single line Latin cross.  
North-west of the church. Traditionally identified as the  
tomb of Cormac Mac Cuileanain (MacKenna 1982, 6: O.S. Letters  
ii, 71).

Dims: L. 162 W. 59-33 T. 28 cm.  
Grave slab. 713th cent.  
Undecorated tapering slab of granite. West of the south  
cross.

Dims: L. 175 W. 66-30 T. 18 cm.

Holed cross-slab. Pre-1200 (Fig.49).

Granite. Hour-glass perforation. Set upright in a modern  
base, south of the church. The hole is outlined on the east  
by an incised ringed cross with four trapezoidal panels. The  
upper shaft of the cross continues over the top of the slab  
and runs down the W side as a raised band.

Dims: H. 77 W. 36 T. 17 Diam. of hole 9 cm.

Comerford 1891-5b, 376-7

Holed stone (Fig. 50).

Undecorated circular granite stone with large hole set deeply  
in the ground close to the S cross. Possibly the remains of a  
mill-stone.

Dims. H. 53 Diam. 71 Diam. of hole 16 cm.

Norman-French cross-slab. 13th/14th cents (Fig. 51).

Tapering limestone slab with chamfered edges. On the ground east of the south cross. The top and bottom of the slab are missing but the incised shaft and inscription on one side remain. The letters are in Lombardic. IE SE VC.. [A]LME EIT M[ERCI]'.  
Source: *Journal*.

Dims: L. 94 W. 52-43 T. 7 (min)

Cross-slab. 13/14th cent.

Tapering fragment found in the east wall of the graveyard. Now placed inside the west end of the church. Lower end of a limestone slab, chamfered on both sides with an incised narrow shafted cross on steps. There are three discs on the shaft.  
Source: *Journal*.

Dims: L. 49 W. 34-29 T. 7 cm.

Cross-slab. 13th-14th cents.

Tapering limestone slab, partly buried on the west side of the south cross. Chamfered edges. Decorated with an incised cross shaft on steps with three discs on the stem. The letters P and I (a later addition) are incised in Roman capitals on either side of the stem above the steps.  
Source: *Journal*.

Dims: L. 86 W. 40-28 cm.

Cross-slab. 13th-14th cents.

Upper part of a tapering limestone slab with moulded edges. Decorated with an incised eight armed fleur-de-lys cross. West side of the south cross.  
Source: *Journal*.

Dims: L. 88 W. 66-53 T. 16 cm.

Cross-slab. 13th-14th cents.

Small fragment of a limestone slab found in the rebuilding of the graveyard wall. The surface is very worn but the edges are chamfered and traces of the stem of a cross on steps in relief can be seen. Now placed on the ground at the south side of the chancel.

Dims: L. 74 W. 32 (max) T. 10 cm.

Brass matrix. 14th cent.

Inside the west end of the church. Probably the lower right corner of a slab which had a marginal separate lettered inscription and other inlaid decoration. It is very damaged and only a few letters can be read 'Y C O L'.

Dims: L. 57 W. 23-30 T. 7

Grave-slab. 17th cent.

Tapering granite slab. Only the upper part survives on a modern table tomb on the S side of the church. Incised inscription in Roman capitals: HERE LIETH/ THE BODY OF/ O.. O...

Dims: L. 84 W. 53-39 T. 15 cm

Piscina. Date uncertain.

Mounted on a modern pedestal at the west end of the church. Roughly shaped rectangular granite vessel with small sloping sided basin and no drainage hole.

Dims: H. 28 W. 54 by 47 Diam. of basin 22 cm.

Missing monuments

John FitzGerald Cross. 1620.



Comerford 1891-95b, 377

Robert Jennings slab. 1679

Supposed to be against the N wall of the graveyard, having been removed from the church in the 19th century.

Jrl. Assoc. Preservation Memorials Dead Ireland 1, 187;

Comerford 1891-95b, 377

#### 8. FRANCISCAN FRIARY

This friary, first referred to in 1247, was probably founded by Walter de Ridelsford the younger before his death in 1238/9. It was burned by Bruce in 1316 and it seems to have been considerably rebuilt subsequently (Gilbert 1884, ii, 299-300). The 1540 extent noted a church, cloister, dormitory, tower, two halls, a kitchen, a garden, an orchard, a dormitory and a curtilage walled with stone within the precinct and a water-mill nearby (White 1943, 170).

#### Description (Figs. 53-55)

Only the church survives from the original monastic complex. It consists of a nave and chancel with an aisle and transept on the north side. The cloister was located on the south. The masonry consists of roughly coursed granite rubble with granite quoins. The nave and chancel are of thirteenth century date, and the aisle and transept were added in the fourteenth century, and a domestic tower was added on the south side of the chancel in the fifteenth century.

The CHANCEL is entered through a modern door in the rebuilt east wall and only the returns and jambs of the east window remain. Internally the jamb mouldings are rounded engaged shafts rising from a moulded base through triple mouldings on the shaft to the clustered impost. The base of the window was outlined by a string course. The window was inserted in the fourteenth century when the transept was added. Externally the wall is supported by angle buttresses. The east end is closed by a modern wall, 2.5 m high. The north wall is lit by three lancets with chamfered jambs and pointed rear-arches. The easternmost window is a twin-light with switchline tracery, inserted in the fourteenth century at a slightly higher level than the lancets. Its external jambs and part of the central mullion remains. The rear arch is of concrete and the wall has been rebuilt below the modern sill. West of the lancets was a large, probably triple-light window missing its arch and jambs. The south wall stands to a height of 8 m at its eastern end. It is lit by two windows, one at the east the other at the west end, both of which are widely splayed with chamfered jambs. Both lack their arches and the eastern example is missing its internal jambs. The south wall has three doors, a blocked round arched door, 3-4 m above internal ground level which probably led to the night stair; a pointed door with chamfered jambs, now blocked, probably led to the vestry; and a modern pointed opening leading to the tower.

The NAVE is undifferentiated from the chancel (Fig. 55). Its north wall consists of an arcade of three pointed arches

opening into the north aisle and transept; the westernmost arch is missing. The piers and responds are chamfered and rest on rectangular chamfered bases; narrow string courses are present at the imposts. East of the arcade, a pointed door with flat rear arch links the transept with the nave. The west wall is lit by two tall narrow lancets, which probably had rounded rear-arches but these have been rebuilt and are unclear. The northern window, however, has three rounded inner mouldings on the scontinions. A rectangular door with flat rear-arch, now blocked up, is located off-centre. The south wall was partly rebuilt after a section collapsed in 1912 and is largely featureless except for some moulded jambs which were incorporated in the rebuilding, and a pointed chamfered door, now blocked, which led to the cloister.

The west and north walls of the north AISLE are mostly rebuilt. The west wall stands to a height of 6 m but the north wall is only 1.6 m high. There was a pointed window in the west wall but only part of a pointed arch remains, and it has no jambs.

The north TRANSEPT had three side-chapels, and two side aisles separated from each other by an arcade of two arches. Each of the side-chapels is lit by a triple light window of switchline tracery (Fig.54). The northern example lacks its mullions but the rounded and chamfered jambs remain. The northern chapel is the largest and has a recess in its north wall for a wooden altar. There is a cusped pointed opening



between the middle and southern chapels, and the south chapel has a cusped pointed wall niche in its south wall with a holy water stoup. The chapels are separated from the transept by three pointed arches, whose piers have rounded and splayed mouldings but lack the free standing shafts of the outer order. The northern arch has a cusped and pointed niche projecting from the spandrel, designed to hold a statue. The transept was divided into two north-south aisles by an arcade of two arches, evidenced now by the base of a free-standing octagonal pier. The eastern aisle had a fine four-light window of switchline tracery in the north wall but only the lower part of the mullions survive. Grose (1791), however, depicts it as having four lights with a multi-foiled circle above. The jambs are splayed with rounded mouldings and small capitals and there are two relieving arches under the window which have partly collapsed. The western aisle is very damaged but it had a window in the north wall whose inner jamb alone survives. The west wall is modern.

The RESIDENTIAL TOWER is located on the south side of the chancel. It is rectangular with a D-shaped projecting stair turret on the south side, and has three floors. There is a base-batter on the south and west walls. The tower was originally entered from the vestry, on the east, which survives only as wall fragments protruding from the south wall of the chancel. The present entrance from the chancel is of modern date. The ground floor has a single-light rectangular flat arched window in the south and west walls, that in the west wall having both an inward and outward

splay. There is a fireplace in the south-east corner beside the opening for the stairwell. Corbels, to hold the timbers of the first floor are present in the west wall. The first floor was a loft lit by a narrow flat arched window, with inward and outward splay, in the south wall. A blocked rectangular window is visible externally in the west wall but it is concealed by plaster internally. Above the loft is a pointed barrell vault with wickerwork centering. The spiral stair is lit by narrow flat arched slits in the east and west walls. The second floor has a rectangular flat lintelled window with segmental rear arch, curved splays and window seat in the south wall. The window jambs are chamfered and have glazing bar holes. The west wall has a cusped ogee single-light window with curved internal splays, segmental rear arch and window seats. The jambs are chamfered externally with glazing bar-holes; the right-hand jamb is a limestone replacement. The north wall is featureless but the east wall has a wall cupboard and a small narrow flat-lintelled window with flat rear arch. The corbels which supported the wooden beams of the third floor are present in the east and west walls. The third floor has a single-light rectangular window, splayed internally, with new limestone jambs in the south wall. The west wall has a cusped ogee single-light window with segmental rear arch. The east wall has a rectangular single-light with chamfered jambs, segmental rear arch and window seat. The east, west and south walls survive for a further 80 cm above the windows and the north gable is almost intact. It is to be expected that the



building was finished off with a parapet and battlements.

#### Architectural Fragments

A large collection of window mouldings and cut stone has been assembled in the ground floor of the tower.

Font/ piscina. 13th-14th cents.

Granite. Badly damaged. Set on the transept pier base.

Shallow circular basin. Comerford (1891-5b, 374) states that this came from St. James' parish church.

Dims: H. 26 Diam. 70 by 74 Diam. of basin 35 Depth 20 cm

#### Monuments

Among the stones assembled in the tower are the following four fragmentary cross slabs.

Cross-slab. 13th-14th cents.

Tapering limestone slab. Chamfered. Decorated with an incised stem of a cross on steps. The slab is in three pieces and the head of the cross is missing.

Dims: L. 137 W. 53-47 T. 11 cm

Cross-slab. 13th-14th cents.

Limestone. In two fragments. Decorated with an incised fleur-de-lys cross head. The surface of the stone is in bad condition.

Dims: L. 88 W. 43 T. 19 cm.

Cross-slab. 13th-14th cents.

Limestone. Small fragment with an incised narrow stemmed cross which may have had a lozenge shaped head.

Dims: L. 47 W. 29 T. 12 cm.

Cross-slab. Date uncertain.

Limestone. Small fragment with faint traces of incised leafs, possibly part of a cross head.

Dims: L. 34 W. 32 T. 11 cm.

Cross-slab. Date uncertain.

Granite. Fragment built into the nave's south wall. Decorated with two incised lines of a shaft.

Dims: L. 36 W. 23 cm.

James Tallon and Joan Skelton. 1505 (Fig. 56)

Limestone. Table tomb in the transept's centre chapel. Decorated in low false relief with two cadavers on either side of a ringed eight-armed fleur-de-lys cross. The female cadaver is covered in a shroud tied above the head and below the feet. The male is shown naked. Poorly incised inscription in Roman capitals on the margin and cross shaft:

EH/ JAMES TALLON/ IOANE SKELTON WHO DIED 2 [1 of ..05]

Dims: L. 201 W. 79 T. 18 cm.

Roe 1969, 13-14.

Other burials.

The collapse of the south wall in 1912 revealed four skeletons "in a line on, and along, the foundations of a wall, considerably above the level of the original pavement.

Each grave was separated from the other by a little cross-wall. The skeletons, which were embedded in clay, all lay facing the east; there were no traces of coffins". One lay within a tomb with moulded jambs (JKAS 7 (1912-14), 126-7).

9. PRIORY AND HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
(FRATRES CRUCIFERI)

The origins of this house are obscure, the earliest reference to it being in 1284 (Sweetman 1875-86, ii, no. 2340). In the ecclesiastical taxation of 1302-6 it was valued at £19. By 1536 the value had declined to £10 and it was stated that the house "serveth to no purpose" (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 211). In 1539 the prior held a church and belfry, dormitory, tower, two halls, three chambers, some land and a water-mill (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 211). The Dissolution documents describe the church as roofless and note that the belfry was used as a castle for the defence of the townspeople, while a hall and chamber were "very ruinous and uninhabited" (White 1943, 168). In 1628 the site was granted to William Archbold (Morris 1863, 354-5) and the "stone house" held by Christopher Arsould in 1654 may have been on the site of the priory (Simington 1952, 106).

Description (Figs. 57-8)

The hospital was located immediately outside the town wall, to the north. All that remains today is a square tower



on a narrow plinth. This measures 4.64 by 4.57 m and stands to a height of 12 m with walls 1.1 m thick. The masonry consists of roughly coursed mixed stone, mainly of granite with smaller sandstone and limestone pinnings. The quoins and jambs are of granite. Recently repointed. It has three floors with a barrell-vault placed over the first floor.

The ground floor is entered on the north through a segmental door with pointed rear-arch. The jambs and voussoirs are dressed. The other walls are each lit by a narrow flat lintelled window with wide internal splay. The first floor was reached internally by ladder and it has similar windows in the south and west walls where traces of plank centering survive in the pointed rear-arches. The east window of the first floor has a pointed cusped granite arch. The barrell vault above this floor has two openings. Below the vault there is a line of beam-holes which may indicate the former presence of a loft. Access to the second floor was from the exterior and it was reached through a narrow round arched door in the north wall. The east and west walls each have a narrow flat lintelled window similar to those below.

Little is known of the form and layout of medieval hospitals in Ireland and it is difficult to know the function of this tower. An underground vaulted chamber was discovered 'some few perches' north-west of tower in the late nineteenth century (Comerford 1891-5b, 372). The present owner, Mrs. Dalton, has informed us that bones frequently turn up in her garden and in the garden to the south of the tower.

Possible grave-slab. Date uncertain.

Limestone. Small fragment with traces of a design in very low relief and an incised line, perhaps a letter. Found in Mrs Dalton's garden.

Dims: L. 25 W. 15 T. 5 cm.

#### 10. HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN

Lee (1964-70, 140) suggested that there was a hospital attached to the Hospital of St. John the Baptist on the basis of a reference in 1540 to lands which the priory held in "Maudelyns" (White 1943, 169).

#### 11. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. Bronze flanged axe of Derryniggin type. Found near Castledermot. NMI E186:19.
2. Bronze sword. From Castledermot. NMI 1945:304. JKAS 3 (1899-1902), 265-7; Eogan 1965, 35.
3. Zoomorphic penannular brooch. From Castledermot. NMI 1945:311. Kilbride Jones 1980, 119: no. 86.
4. Silver ring. From Castledermot. NMI 1945:322. Probably that mentioned in Cat. Neligan Coll. (1853), lot 100.
5. Crucible. Found in Castledermot Commons four feet under the present surface. Whereabouts uncertain. NLI Ms. 18,857.
6. Iron key. From Castledermot. NMI 1945:325. NLI Ms. 18,857.

7. Silver penny of Edward I. From Castledermot. Whereabouts unknown. NLI Ms. 18,857.

8-12. Five floor tiles. ?From Castledermot. NMI RSAI:264.

13. Bellarmine jug containing a hoard of 226 coins ranging in date from Edward VI to Charles I. Found at Abbeylands, Castledermot. NMI 1912: 16-17. JRSOI 42 (1912), 70.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

##### The Problems

Castledermot, like Athy, is important to archaeological research as an example of an Anglo-Norman market town. Larger towns, such as Drogheda and Dublin, have been the subject of detailed archaeological research but little is known of the smaller, more typical towns. It is of particular archaeological interest on two fronts. Firstly as an example of a pre-Norman ecclesiastical site which was converted into an Anglo-Norman town. Secondly because it appears to have been virtually refounded in the years after 1485, a time which saw little urban growth elsewhere in Ireland.

Documentary sources for Castledermot are few before 1700 and further information on the early growth of the town is most likely to come from archaeological excavation. The topography of the town poses a number of specific problems which require solving.



The extent of the pre-Norman settlement is unknown. The position of the church, in an angle of the town wall, is unusual and it may be that Early Historic enclosure stretched further to the east than the line of the later town wall.

The form of housing within the town before 1700 remains unknown. The excavation of houses is important not only for the information which it sheds on the form and typology of the houses but also because it enables comparisons to be drawn with houses known from other parts of Ireland and Britain, permitting a better knowledge of the quality of life in Athy before 1700. Examination of seventeenth century housing should provide information on whether the town received a sizeable new input of population or not and should shed important light on the regions of England or Ireland from which these inhabitants came. It would also be important to determine if it is similar to the housing of the Ulster Plantation or different from it.

The site of the castle built by Gearoid Mor is known but it is likely that much of it was removed during the construction of the bank on the site. It is possible, however, that some parts of the castle may survive below ground on the site immediately south of Barrack Road.

The course of the town defences is very speculative and the outline suggested above needs to be tested by excavation in order to determine whether it is correct or not. There is a strong possibility that mural towers other were present but none of these survive. Excavation should also recover

information on whether or not the defences were strengthened by the addition of earthen ramparts in the seventeenth century. Excavation is likely to reveal traces of these because even where the wall, or rampart, has been removed it is likely that a ditch would survive intact.

The Franciscan friary and the hospital of St. John the Baptist were located outside the wall, probably within their own precincts. It is important to remember that these were large building complexes, having not only a church and cloister, but ranges of domestic buildings as well. Excavation in these areas is significant not only for the architectural information it will yield on how the form of the buildings changed through time but also because the excavation of a medieval cemetery, such as at St. Helen's, York, can provide otherwise unobtainable information about health, diet, mortality rates and disease among the inhabitants of medieval Castledermot.

#### Archaeological Potential

Archaeology does not consist solely of excavation nor does it stop at ground level. The archaeological evidence for Castledermot's past comprises all the physical remains of man's activities on the site of the town, from its Early Historic beginnings until the present day. The surviving street pattern, property boundaries and standing buildings constitute the uppermost levels of the archaeological stratigraphy, and all are relevant to the study of the town's



past. Documentary evidence also plays a role in reconstructing the history of early Castledermot, but for the wide range of human activity omitted from the written accounts and for the early periods when documentation is slight, archaeology is our only source of information. The evidence of archaeology and topography, of architecture and of documents, is complementary; each gains from the existence of the others and the unrecorded destruction of one form of evidence not only removes part of a town's archive but also diminishes the usefulness of those which are preserved.

The survey of its archaeology indicates that Castledermot is a fine example of a medieval town. The standing remains of pre-1700 date are the Franciscan friary and the tower of St. John's hospital; parts of St. James' church are of pre-1700 date and there is a fine collection of monuments in its churchyard. With these exceptions the destruction of buildings above ground has been total. Archaeological layers have been destroyed by the construction of cellars and substantial houses on the street frontages, but it is likely that deposits survive intact behind the frontages. There is, then, the strong likelihood of recovering house foundations, refuse pits, industrial areas, and workshops of medieval and seventeenth century date within the town.

#### ARCHAEOLOGY, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

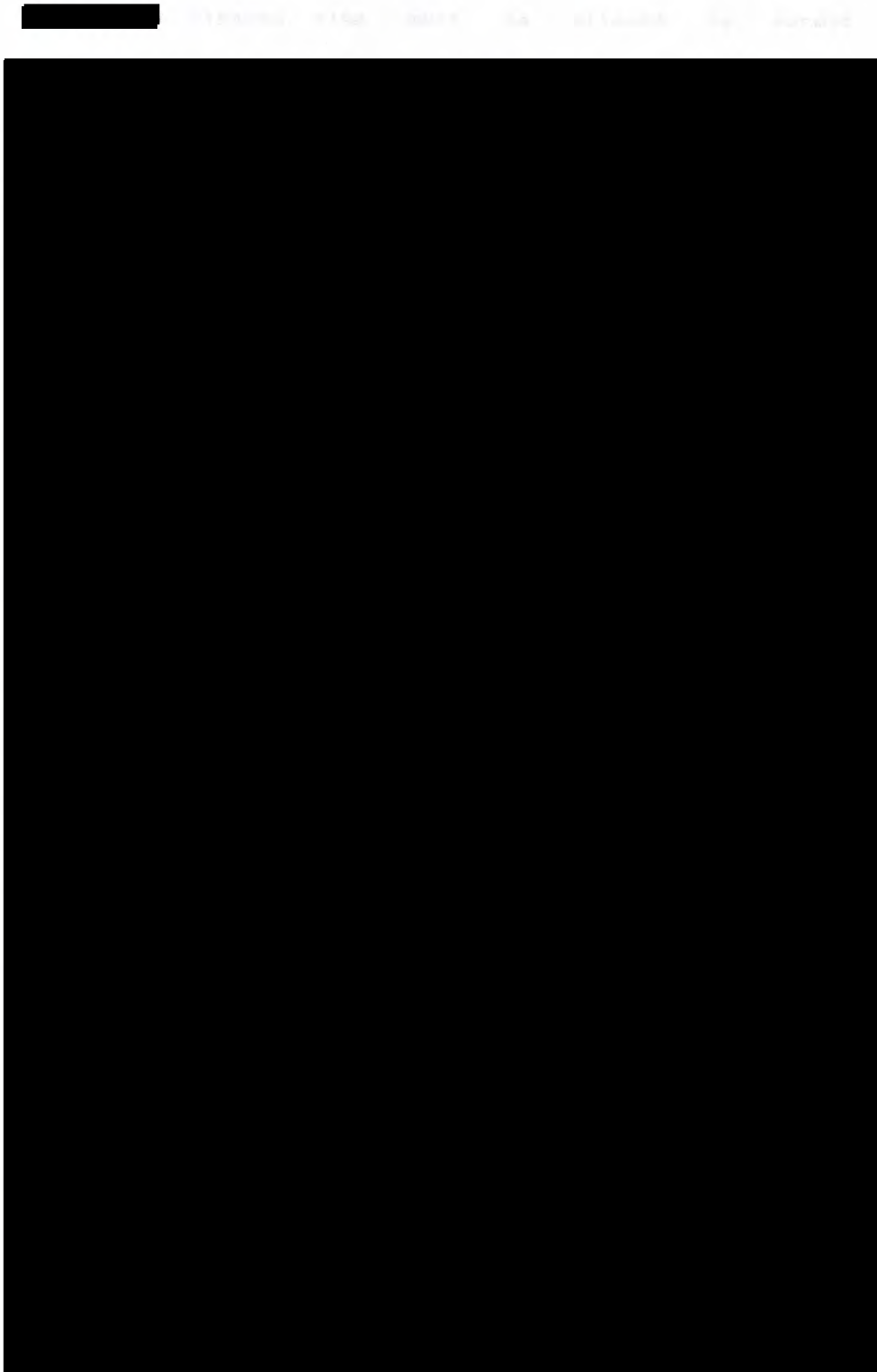
It is evident from the foregoing that archaeology is an important means of learning about Castledermot's past and of

understanding the character and detailed form of the town today. This is more than just an academic pursuit because without an appreciation of the factors which have shaped Castledermot's present character, steps taken to conserve that character will not be wholly effective, or worse, features basic to its unique identity may be unwittingly destroyed.

The protection of buried archaeological evidence presents serious problems for not only is there the pressure of redevelopment and the high value of urban properties with which to contend, but the sites themselves are often difficult to define or evaluate; their full archaeological potential may only become apparent when an excavation is undertaken in advance of development or by observations made while development is in progress. It is crucial, therefore, that a concerted effort should be made to safeguard its archaeological heritage and that adequate provision is made for investigation in advance of any redevelopment.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 59) delimits the area of archaeological potential within modern Castledermot. This comprises the suggested walled area of the medieval town, together with an extension on the north to accommodate the site of St. John's hospital, and another on the south to include the Franciscan friary.



[illegible]

[REDACTED]







## CELBRIDGE

Celbridge is a village on the river Liffey in north-east Kildare. The placename is derived from Cill Droichead, "the church of the bridge", which is first recorded in the early thirteenth century. The village was known as Kildroght until the eighteenth century. The old name indicates the existence of a pre-Norman church site but practically nothing is known of this foundation. Ronan (1941a, 46: n. 141) and FitzGerald (1896-8d, 324) have pointed out that the site was associated with Mochua.

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Celbridge formed part of the "cantred of Offelan nearest Dublin" granted by Strongbow to Adam de Hereford before 1176 (Orpen 1911-20, i, 378-9). Adam granted Celbridge ('Kildroch') to his brother John, who was in turn succeeded by his son Thomas (Gilbert 1889, 102-4). Some of the charters of Thomas de Hereford provide information on Celbridge in the early thirteenth century, particularly on the church and mill (Gilbert 1889, 157-9). The earliest evidence for the existence of a borough at Celbridge occurs in 1401 (23 RDKPRI, 131: no. 808) but it was clearly a sizeable settlement by 1314 when Henry le Waleys was charged with breaking "the doors of houses in the town of Kildroght" and taking geese, hens, bread and beer (Wood, Langman and

Griffith 1956, 318).

On the death of Thomas de Hereford, before 1224 (Brooks 1950, 183, n. 12), Celbridge passed to Milo de Rochford, husband of Thomas' daughter Elianora (Gilbert 1889, 103-4; Otway-Ruthven 1961, 167-8). The Rochfords held Celbridge until the mid-fourteenth century and the last recorded is William de Rochford, who had died by 1333. An extent of his lands in Kyldrogh was ordered in that year (54 ROKPRI, 36) but it was still awaited in 1349-50 (Sayles 1979, 201). The succession to Celbridge is obscure until 1387-9 when John Rout and Richard Arblaster, chaplains, were given royal licence to enfeof Maurice FitzThomas, earl of Kildare, with the manor of Kildroght (Tresham 1828, 135: no. 161; 143: no. 7). The Kildares seem to have boosted the status of Celbridge and shortly after they acquired it the first references occur to the borough and castle of Kildroght.

The manor was forfeited after the rebellion of 'Silken Thomas', however, and in 1536 it was granted to John Alen, master of the rolls (7 ROKPRI, 37: no. 57). It was evidently restored to the Kildares in 1554 because three years later the earl requested the Lord Deputy to confirm the manor of Castletown (i.e. the town of the castle of Celbridge) to Gerald Sutton (Morrin 1861, 500). Castletown and Celbridge were forfeited by David Sutton because of his part in the Baltinglass rebellion of 1580 (Ir Rec Comm 1826: Kildare Eliz: 7). In 1587 the manor of Castletown-Kildroght was granted to John Dongan and it belonged to the Dongans for



most of the seventeenth century (FitzGerald 1896-8e, 369). Celbridge was granted a weekly market and two yearly fairs in 1674 and this seems to have boosted the development of the modern village (Aalen et al. 1970, 43). The Civil Survey (1654) recorded 'one stone house ... intended for a malt house', a bridge over the Liffey and three mills in Celbridge (Simmington 1952, 21) while the 1659 census gave the population of Kildrought as 63 and Castletown as 34.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN
2. INDUSTRIAL AREAS
3. THE BRIDGE
4. CASTLE
5. ST. MOCHUA'S PARISH CHURCH

##### 1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN

The present street pattern is linear consisting of Main Street with its clear east-west axis. The burgage plot pattern survived clearly in nineteenth century maps but it has become severely eroded in recent years on the west side as the result of the construction of a church, school and a housing estate. It is difficult to determine the date of the plot pattern. Its regularity and the formal alignment onto the entrance gates of Castletown suggests that it may be of

eighteenth century date.

## 2. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Milling has always been important here because of the town's proximity to the river Liffey. The earliest reference to milling occurs in the grant of Thomas de Hereford, dating 1213-24, in which he granted the tithes of his mill in the vill of 'Kildroch' to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin (Gilbert 1889, 159). The mill probably functioned throughout the medieval period. The manor mill of Celbridge, forfeited by David Sutton in 1580 was leased to John Cusacke in 1583 (13 RDKPRI, 211: no. 4180) and granted along with the manor to Edward FitzGerald in 1588 (16 RDKPRI, 74: no. 5208), and thereafter to John Dongan. Inquisitions taken in 1611 and 1627 (Ir Rec Comm 1826, Kildare: Jac I: 7; Car I: 15) note that Walter Dongan held two water mills. One of these, with its mill-pool, mill-race and an enclosure known as the "mill parke", was located near the castle at Castletown. The other was a waste toft on the site of a watermill in Kildrought. In 1654 the Civil Survey noted that Lady Dongan held a corn mill and a cloth mill, valued at £20 p.a. in Kildrought, while there was also another mill out of repair there (Simington 1952, 21).

A number of large early nineteenth century mills are currently being renovated on the west bank of the Liffey and these are likely to be on the site of the medieval mills.

### 3. THE BRIDGE

The placename Cill droichead indicates that a bridge was present here from pre-Norman times. Nothing is known of the form of the earliest bridge or its medieval and seventeenth century successors.

### 4. THE CASTLE

The castle of Celbridge is first referred to in 1403 (Tresham 1828, 167: no. 23) and in view of the absence of earlier references it is likely that the castle was constructed after the earl of Kildare gained possession of Celbridge in 1387-9. The castle lay some distance to the north of Celbridge in the townland of Castletown.

In 1583 a grant of the castle and lands of 'Castleton of Kildrought' to Henry Warren described it as having a precinct of three acres and "a hall built after the Irish or country manner, covered with straw" (13 RDKPRI, 211: no. 4181). The Civil Survey of 1654 stated that there were two castles at Castletown, valued at £300 in 1640, but were now ruined (Simington 1952, 22). There is no trace of a medieval castle at either Castletown or Celbridge.

### 5. ST MOCHUA'S PARISH CHURCH

It is likely that the medieval parish church was the successor of a pre-Norman church site. It is first directly

referred to in the charters of Thomas de Hereford, granting the church of Kildroch to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin (Gilbert 1889, 157-9). One third of the church's income was reserved for the support of the vicar, an arrangement which continued into the sixteenth century (Gilbert 1889, 286-7, 295; White 1941, 215). The vicarage was valued at 43s. in the ecclesiastical taxation of 1302-6 (Sweetman 1875-86, v, p. 240). The royal visitation of 1615 noted that the church and chancel of Kildrought were in good repair (Ronan 1941a, 46). The building was visited by Austin Cooper c.1780 who drew it as it then stood (Price 1942, pl. 1).

#### Description (Figs. 60-1)

The church is situated within a rectangular enclosure on the west of the village. The enclosure was originally circular and evidence for this remains in the circular sweep which Church Rd. makes around the graveyard on the north while there are traces of a low wide bank in the field west of the graveyard wall. The remains consist of the east wall of the church and the lower floors of the west tower, which was later adapted as a mausoleum but is now ruined. The Connolly Mausoleum was built on to the north side of the church during the eighteenth century but this is not accessible. The masonry consists of rubble limestone roughly coursed with no dressed quoins.

The east gable stands to a height of 7 m and short returns of the north and south walls. Short wall segments run

out from these returns; these may be the remains of buttresses. The east wall was lit by a three-light round-headed window with transomed switchline tracery. Much of the tracery is missing but the jambs and mullion of the southern light are present. On top of the gable is a small rectangular brick structure, possibly a bell-cote. Only the west end of the north wall survives, where it is incorporated into the Connolly mausoleum. The south wall is represented by a slight rise in ground level; Cooper's drawing shows a vestry at the east end of the south wall.

At the west end of the nave is a rectangular TOWER with a projecting rectangular stair-turret on the south-west angle. The east wall was removed to first floor level and a new crossing wall was built 4 m to the east. The ground floor is entered from the outside through a round-arched door in the north wall. Its limestone jambs are modern but the entrance is probably original. Cooper's drawing shows a lean-to structure in this position. There is a blocked flat-arched window in the west wall, and the stair turret is entered through a rectangular doorway in the south wall. The first floor is a loft, lit on the west by a round-headed splayed window with limestone jambs of recent date; the loft was entered from the stairs through a rectangular doorway, now partly blocked. Above the loft is a vault, which was possibly pointed but is now heavily plastered. The second floor survives to a height of 3 m above first floor level at the east end but elsewhere its height has been reduced to 50 cm. There is a splayed rectangular window in the east wall which

originally opened into the nave, and a wall cupboard. Cooper's drawing shows two openings in the east wall. The stair turret rises above second floor level where it is topped by modern crenellations. It is lit by small rectangular windows in the east, west and south walls. Cooper's drawing shows an additional floor on the tower with a parapets above, which supported a narrow belfry. The stair turret was also battlemented. According to Cooper the entrance to the tower was through a flat-arched door in the west wall.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Celbridge is an interesting example of an Anglo-Norman borough. It was founded beside an older Early Christian site, and traces of its enclosure still survive in the curving line of Church Road. For archaeology, it affords an important opportunity of investigating the transformation from pre-Norman church site to Anglo-Norman borough.

The extent of the medieval borough is unclear, however, because its plan has been obliterated by the later replanning of the town in the eighteenth century. The original borough was almost certainly located in the vicinity of St. Mochua's church and in the area of the bridge, from which the settlement derived its name. Traces of the original bridge may well survive in the waterlogged Liffey muds and it would be important to investigate this area, if the opportunity

arose, in order to recover the structural history of the first bridge and its successors. The original site of the castle remains unknown but it and the mills were probably substantial stone buildings which will have left foundations under ground. Apart from the church there are no features of pre-1700 date surviving above ground but it is to be expected, that in common with other towns, archaeological deposits consisting of house foundations, pits, and debris scatters survive below ground.

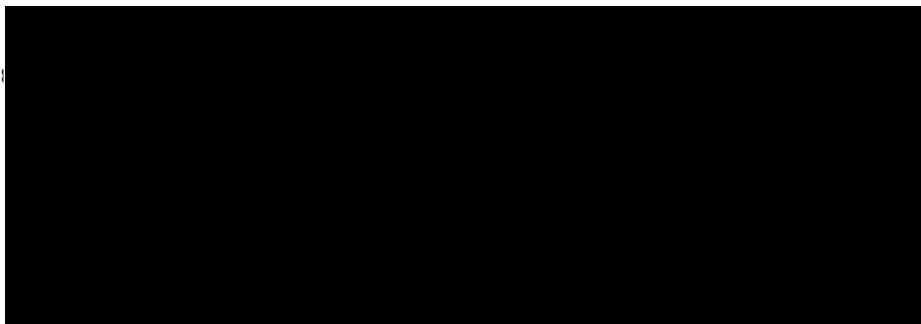
The proximity of Celbridge to Dublin has brought considerable housing development within the town and this has implications for the archaeology of Celbridge, particularly on the outskirts of the town. The enclosure around St. Mochua's church, which is probably the oldest feature in Celbridge, has been encroached on by the school to the south and is in danger of further interference by both the school and private housing on the west. It is important that archaeological investigation should take place here in advance of any development. Elsewhere in the town, archaeological deposits have been disturbed by the construction of the street frontage and it is likely that archaeological material survives, by and large, only behind the street frontage. Nonetheless the potential remains to discover the extent of the medieval borough and to uncover information on the nature of its houses, streets, and other structures.

In summary, the archaeological data indicates that

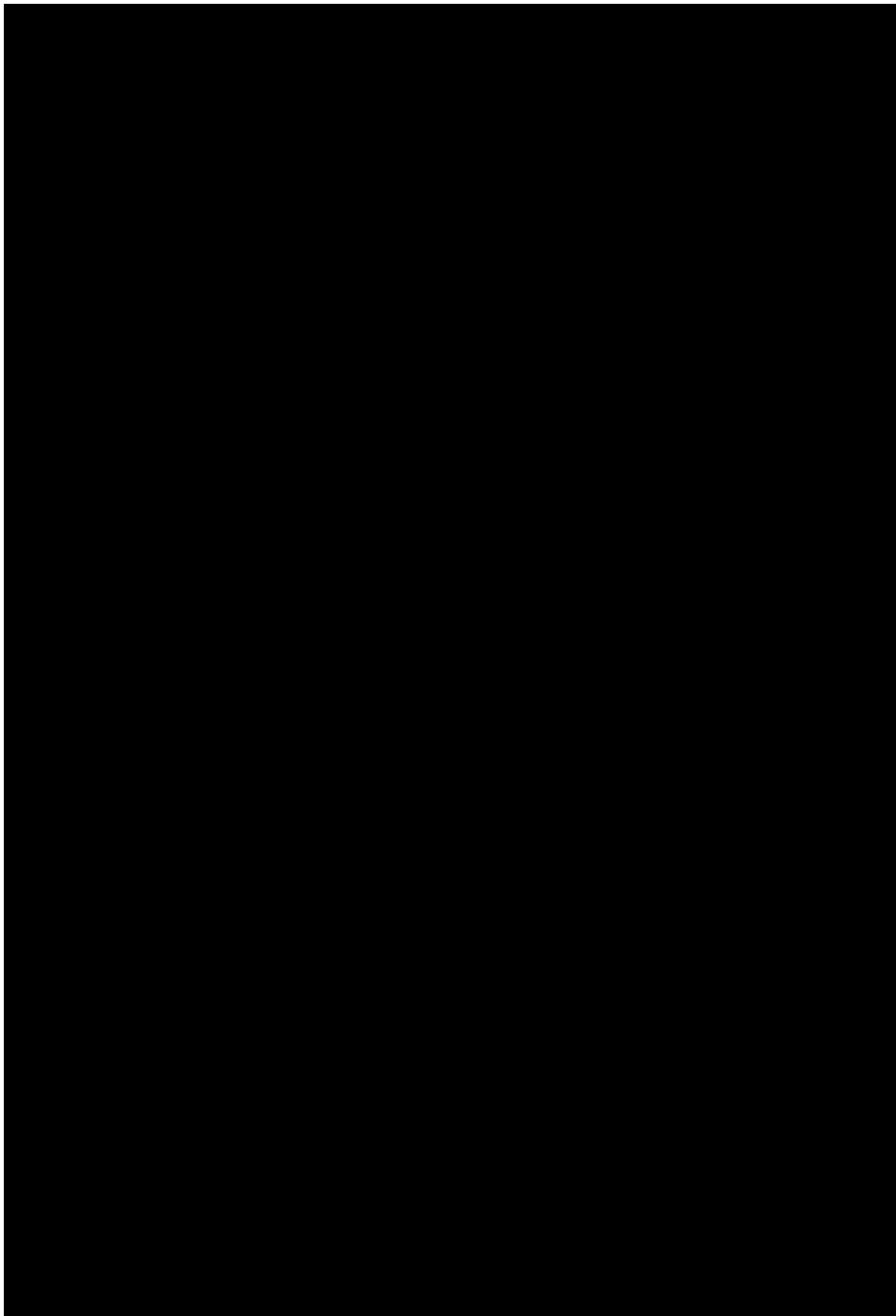
settlement commenced at Celbridge before the coming of the Normans, that it expanded considerably during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and that it was replanned as a borough in the seventeenth or eighteenth century. Accordingly it has a long history as a built-up area. Documentary records of the site are few, however, and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. It is important, then, that any future development should be monitored, otherwise archaeological information is liable to be lost needlessly.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 62) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Celbridge. This is based on the extent of the seventeenth/eighteenth century replanning, together with an area around the old church and the bridge. The present lack of information on the precise extent of the borough makes it all the more important that all works within the shaded area should be monitored.







## CLANE

The village is located on the west bank of the river Liffey in north-east Kildare on the road between Kilcock and Naas. The name is an anglicisation of Cluain, 'field', rendered variously as Cluain Damh, "field of the ox", or Cluain Ath, "field of the ford". The ford was probably the site's principal attraction as a settlement site and it has some early mythological associations (Comerford 1885, ii, 98-9).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Two pit burials containing decorated Neolithic pottery, found in an escarpment near the village (Ryan 1979-80), and a bronze dirk found in a bog nearby indicate that the vicinity of Clane was frequented by man in the prehistoric period. The earliest permanent settlement on the site, however, was an Early Christian church site. Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 31) identify Clane as the monastery of Cluain Damh, founded by Ailbhe and of which Sinchell (d.549) was the first abbot. In 702 a battle was fought at Cluain Ath between Ceallach Cuallan and Fogartach Ua Cearnaigh (AFM; AU sub 703). In 782 the death of Banbhan, abbot of Cloenath, is recorded (AFM sub 777). Little is known of the history of the monastic site. It was plundered in 1035 (AFM) and in 1162 it was the venue for a synod convened by Gelasius, the archbishop of Armagh (AFM).

This would suggest that Clane was a significant settlement by the twelfth century.

After the coming of the Normans, the barony of Otymy (modern barony of Clane), in which Clane is situated, was granted to Adam de Hereford, who in turn granted it to his brother, Richard (Orpen 1911-20, i, 379). Later the barony passed to the de Stauntons (Otway-Ruthven 1961, 168). Killanin and Duignan (1967, 161) are probably correct in attributing the motte at Clane to one of the de Herefords but no record of its construction or early history survives. A Franciscan friary was established c.1258 suggesting that there was a sizeable settlement at Clane by that time. References to the court, provost and community of Clane in 1298 demonstrate that the community was exercising borough functions and that a borough had been established by the end of the thirteenth century (Mills 1905, 199-200). The town was burned in 1310 (Wood, Langman and Griffith 1956, 147). In 1392 the provost, bailiffs and commonalty of Clane were granted tolls to rebuild the bridge (Tresham 1828, 147: no. 223). Further information on the history of the settlement is lacking but casual references in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries indicate that it maintained its status as a borough (Tresham 1828, 267: no. 43; Morrin 1862, 100). In 1659 the census of Ireland recorded a population of 58 for Clane with a further 43 in 'Newtown of Slane [sic]' (Pender 1939, 398).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN
2. MARKET PLACE
3. DOMESTIC HOUSING
4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS
5. THE BRIDGE
6. CASTLE
7. ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH CHURCH
8. FRANCISCAN FRIARY
9. HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN
10. OTHER FEATURES
11. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

### 1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN

The present street pattern of Clane is linear (Fig. 63). It is based on a main north-south street, which forks at the southern end, turning south-east to the bridge and Naas, and south-west towards Newbridge. It is difficult to know the date of this street pattern. Medieval references indicate that the bridge formed part of the town, and since the street running north-west from it passes the motte, Franciscan friary, and the medieval parish church, it is quite possible that it follows the medieval street line. The street lacks any clear burgage plot pattern, however, and this is a strong indication that the borough was deserted before the close of the Middle Ages. The only clear evidence for a burgage plot

Pattern is in the broader part of the main street, north of St. Michael's church, where its regularity indicates a late seventeenth or eighteenth century date. A reference to the Newtown of Clane in 1582 may indicate that the borough was re-established in the sixteenth century (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Kildare, Eliz.: 6).

The aerial photograph (Fig. 63) shows the cropmark of a road running southwards from the south-west corner of the friary towards the bridge; this may represent the original street in this area. The photograph also shows a linear feature, superficially resembling a roadway, east of St. Michael's church. This occurs in marsh land, however, and probably represents a drain. The O.S. first edition 6" maps of 1837 show the possible remains of a burgage plot pattern on the south-west street leading towards Newbridge.

## 2. MARKET PLACE

It is difficult to gauge the shape of the original market place when the form of the original street pattern is unknown but the sub-triangular space in front of St. Michael's church is a likely location.

## 3. DOMESTIC HOUSES

The Civil Survey of 1654 noted four castles, one of which belonged to the earl of Kildare; two had halls attached to them and the fourth belonged to Sir John Dongan of Castletown

(Simington 1952, 149). No trace of these buildings exists.

#### 4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

There is evidence for only one mill at Clane during the Middle Ages, that belonging to the lord of Clane. It is first referred to in 1300 (38 RDKPRI, 82) but it was probably there from the foundation of the manor. This, or its successor, is the watermill referred to in 1453 (Tresham 1928, 267: no. 43). In 1636, however, John Fitzgerald held two watermills in Clane (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Kildare, Car. I: 60) and in 1654 they belonged to William Sarsfield of Lucan and Nicholas Wogan of RathcoffeY, when both were in ruins (Simington 1952, 149).

The O.S. first edition 6" map shows a mill south of the village, on the south-west side of the bridge. A large modern house occupies the site at present.

#### 5. THE BRIDGE

In 1392 the commonalty of Clane received a grant of pontage to construct a stone bridge. This may be the one described by Sherlock (1903-5, 38) as a bridge of six arches. He also noted that the arches had been built on wattle centering. The present Alexandra Bridge is modern.

#### 6. THE CASTLE

The motte of Clane was probably erected in the late twelfth century by the de Herefords. In 1541, the survey of the forfeited lands of the earl of Kildare refers to the 'castle or fortress called Blackcastel in the town of Clane' (Nicholls 1968, 30). This may be the castle held by Nicholas Eustace in 1582 (ibid., Eliz.: 3) which later passed to Walter Dongan in 1611 (ibid., Jac. I: 7). Lewis (1837, i, 327) noted the presence of a castle which "added greatly to the importance of the town, but has long been in ruins". It is not now clear to what he was referring.

#### Description

A steep sided round mound situated at the southern end of the village. The mound has a conical shape and tapers from its base, measuring 47 by 41 m, to a flat summit, 14 by 13 m. There is a slight depression in the centre of the summit and the mound is 8 m high. The long axis of the mound is aligned east-west and its basal measurement has been shortened as a result of bulldozer interference in 1970. This revealed that it was built of layers of stone and earth (JKAS 15 (1971-6), 100). Cooke-Trench (1899-1902b, 109) recounts a story that the top of the motte sank about 1830 and that excavation, at the time, revealed some skeletons. There is no trace of a bailey

#### 7. ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH CHURCH

During the Middle Ages the church was held by the Knights

Hospitallers and it is first referred to in 1212 in Innocent III's confirmation of their churches in Ireland (McNeill 1932, 140). The church is described as a parish church in 1307 (Mills 1914, 513). In 1615 the chancel was in ruins (Sherlock 1903-5, 38)

#### Description (Figs. 64-5)

The church is situated within a sub-circular churchyard in the centre of the present village. It is built on the highest ground in the town and overlooks low-lying swampy ground to the east. The remains consist of a west tower, probably of seventeenth century date, onto which an apsidal church was built in the late eighteenth century. The masonry of the tower consists of roughly coursed limestone. The church was in ruins until 1985 when it was re-roofed, floored and new windows inserted as an AnCO project. It now functions as a Community hall.

The rectangular TOWER has four floors with battlements above. In the recent renovations it was refloored at different levels to the original flooring and the internal walls have been plastered. The ground floor is entered through a pointed door, of recent date, in the south wall but the original round arched door is visible, partly blocked, in the west wall. The tower is linked to the nave by a pointed arch but the actual access is through a round arched door. The first floor has an inserted rectangular five-light window with rectangular hood moulding in the west wall and a small



rectangular opening in the east wall which opens into the church. The second floor has a narrow splayed window in the south wall and another in the west end of the north wall. The third floor (the belfry stage) has a large pointed window in the west wall and a smaller but similar window in the south and east walls. These windows have arches of brick and have pointed external hood mouldings above. All of the windows and the battlements date to c.1800.

The roof line of the old nave is visible in the east wall of the tower and has been ignored in the recent renovation. The north wall of the nave leans out from the vertical and has a blocked-up pointed door with chamfered sandstone jambs. This is marked internally by a break in the wall while externally only the western jamb can be seen. The remainder of the door has been concealed by the enlargement of the vestry.

#### Monuments

William Wogan. 1616 (Fig. 66).

Limestone table tomb built against a free-standing stone wall outside the east end of the church. Three tablets are set into the wall above the tomb. Two of these belong with the tomb but the third, dated 1716, does not. It is a large rectangular plaque with an achievement of arms for Wogan and O'Neill carved by Patrick Murray. The upper rectangular plaque has an undecorated heater shaped shield in low relief and the date 1618 in the lower spandrels. Dims: H. 47.5 W.

42 cm. The lower rectangular plaque (max. dims. 84 by 48 cm) has an inscription in false relief Roman capitals:

HEAR LIETH INTOVMED/ THE BODY OF WILLIAM WOG/ AN OF  
RATHCOFFIE ESQVIR/ WHO DECEASED THE LAST/ OF DECEMBER IN  
ANNO DO/ MINI 1616 BEINGE OF THE/ ADGE OF XXVII YEARS

The plain tomb mensa rests on a decorated side and end panel. The south end panel is a modern insert. The covering slab has a reverse-ogee moulding below the rim. The west end panel has the upper half of a crucifixion in false relief. The side panel has six segmentally arched panels with figures in false relief. The pilasters between the panels are decorated with a simple two-line flat ribbon interlace in relief. Above each panel there are a set of initials separated by lozenges: NW, IW, WW, EW, MW, IW. The figures are partially carved and were intended to represent three men on the dexter and three women on the sinister side but only the far sinister figure was completed.

Dims: Slab: L. 195 W. 101 T.20 cm

Side Panel: L. 177 H. 68 cm

End panel: W. 91 H. 63 cm

Cooke-Trench 1899-1902a, 99-100; FitzGerald 1904-6a, 90-91.

Font. 12th/ 13th cent. (Fig. 70)

Plain granite font, found in the wall of the church tower, now set on a red marble base in the church of St Michael and All Angels, Millicent. The font has been cut down and the sides rounded, but it was probably based on a cubic capital.

Before the font was cut down there was evidence for it having a cover and the present drum-shaped base is modelled on the original (Cooke-Trench 1894, 19). The base is said to have been preserved but it cannot be located now.

Dims: H. 36 W 68.5 by 68.5 cm

Basin: D. 16 W. 49 by 49 cm

Sherlock 1891-5, 28.

### S. FRANCISCAN FRIARY

The foundation of this friary is recorded by AFM in 1258 and Gerald FitzMaurice, lord of Offaly was the most likely founder (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 245). Little is known of its history during the Middle Ages but the suggestion has been made that the friary was substantially rebuilt after 1433 (Conlan 1978, 82). The Dissolution documents note that the "church, chancel and part of the dormitory were destroyed by order of Lord Leonard Grey, late King's deputy, for the purpose of repairing the King's castle of Maynouthe" (White 1943, 164). The friary was leased to David Sutton in 1541 (7 RDKPRI, 49: no. 174) but it was subsequently granted to Robert Eustace and others for the use of Thomas Luttrell in 1542 (7 RDKPRI, 63: no. 313).

### Description (Fig. 67)

The ivy covered walls of the nave, chancel and part of the south aisle survive in a rectangular graveyard south-east

of the village. The masonry consists of roughly coursed limestone and there are no dressed quoins. Plaster remains on parts of the internal and external walls. The nave and chancel are of thirteenth century date and the aisle was added in the fifteenth century.

The east gable of the CHANCEL stands to an external height of 4 m but is only 2 m high internally as a result of build-up to accomodate a Marian grotto. The wall was reduced in width by knocking out the interior facing of the wall and refacing it. The east window probably consisted of a series of lancets but only the granite outer and inner mouldings of the side lancets survive. The imposts of the rear arch mouldings and one capital can be seen through the ivy 6 m above ground level. They are similar in style to those at Castledermot friary. The north wall stands to a height of 7 m. It has one lancet window, similar to those in the south wall, but lacking its arch. There is a round arched recess near the east end of the wall, and immediately west of it is a larger recess, possibly round-arched but lacking cut stone, which may have been designed for a tomb. There is a small hole through the wall in the centre of the recess. Immediately west of this is a pointed recess, now rubble filled, which was probably the door to the cloister. West of the lancet window is another round-headed recess lacking cut stone. The south wall stands to a height of 7 m and has four pointed lancets together with the eastern splay of a fifth. Under the first window from the east is a pointed recess, probably a sedilla, but lacking cut stone. West of this is a

shallow pointed niche with multi-moulded rounded jambs and plaster-work on the back and sides, perhaps a tomb recess (Fig. 68). There is small wall cupboard at ground level between the two recesses.

Only the north wall of the NAVE survives and it is featureless except for one round arched recess, 50 cm above ground level. The west wall is completely missing and it is not clear whether it was in line with the west wall of the south aisle or whether it extended west of this line to where the edge of a raised platform is present.

Nothing survives to show the nature of the arcade connecting the nave with the south AISLE. It measures 16.5m by 6.5m internally and consists of the south wall and the return of the east wall. The west wall is represented only by foundations. A window splay survives in the east wall fragment but no jambs are present. The south wall stands to a height of 7 m and has two windows, similar in style to those in the south wall of the nave, with the east splay of a third. No cut stone remains but some plastering survives on the window splays and on the interior walls.

#### Architectural fragments

Two stones with rounded mouldings, probably from the east window, lie in the east end of the church.

Dims: 1: H.37 W.38 T.28 cm

2: H.26 W.28 T.20 cm

#### Monument

Knightly effigy. Late 13th cent.

Limestone torso lying on the ground against the north wall of the chancel. The upper chest and legs are missing. The figure is traditionally identified with Gerald FitzMaurice FitzGerald who founded the abbey and died 1287 (Archdall 1786; Hunt 1974, 155-6).

#### 9. HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN

The chapel of St. Mary Magdalene iuxta Clane is recorded in a list of parish churches and chapels in the diocese of Kildare drawn up by Dr. Roche MacGeoghegan, bishop of Kildare from 1629 to 1644 (Comerford 1885, i, 261). In 1700 the maudlin "by Clane castle" is referred to together with "Maudlintown, near Clane" (Upton 1918-21, 335). The site of the hospital is now unknown.

#### 10. OTHER FEATURES

##### Templebride

In 1604 the King held a free chapel called 'Temple-bride' at or near Clane (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Kildare, Jac. I: 1). Nothing further is known of it.

##### Bullaun

A large stone with one depression is set on the west edge of the Butterstream, a short distance to the north of the

Franciscan Friary. Diam of basin 32, depth 35 cm  
(Cooke-Trench 1899-1902b, 109-11)

Cross-base. 17th cent.

Situated on the west side of the Millicent (Newbridge) road at the end of the village. Undecorated limestone base with very rough chamfering on the upper edges. There is an uncentered rectangular mortice.

Dims: H. 30 (Min) W. 84 by 65 cm.

Mortice: D. 12 W. 24 by 20 cm.

Cooke-Trench, 1899-1902b, 109-11.

Font. 19th cent.

Stone urn mounted on a pedestal outside the R.C. church has a seventeenth century date incised on it.

Possible megalith.

Sherlock (1891-5, 27) suggested that a feature known as "St. Brigid's chair and thimble" was a cromleac. It was situated "a little way above the head of the millrace at Clane, where there is now a disused quarry". It was broken up in the mid-nineteenth century.

Wells.

There are six wells in Clane but none is in use or in good condition. Sundays Well on the west side of the motte still has a stone surround (Jackson 1979-80, 147-8: nos. 11-16).

Late Neolithic Burials.

Three pit burials were found immediately north of the village beside the Kilcock road (O.S. 6" Sheet 14. 19.3cm from N.;

24.35cm from W) when the site was being bulldozed in advance of constructing modern houses. The graves occurred on top of a small escarpment overlooking a glacial overflow channel. The remains were those of two children and two adults. Sherds of decorated Neolithic pottery and a fragment of polished lignite were found (Ryan 1979-80).

#### 1. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

. Bronze dirk. Found in a bog at Clane. ?Private possession. Harbison 1969b, 18: no. 127; Burgess and Gerloff 1981, 29: no. 157.

. Iron axehead of bearded form. From vicinity of Clane. NMI 1975: 248.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Clane is a good example of a shrunken medieval borough. The documentary sources indicate that it was a pre-Norman church site of importance and the borough was established during the thirteenth century. The range of known structures which includes a bridge, castle, parish church, Franciscan friary and hospital, suggest that it was a populated centre of some size in the thirteenth century. Despite this the settlement declined during the Later Middle Ages such that the original street plan of the medieval borough and its extent is now uncertain. The geographical spread of the known



monuments suggests that medieval Clane was located closer to the bridge than its modern successor but only excavation will determine whether this is the case or not.

An opportunity was lost during the recent renovation of the church to examine the building scientifically and investigate its archaeology but it has now been secured for future generations. The Franciscan friary, in its own churchyard, is not threatened by any development, but the fabric is in poor condition and parts of it are in danger of collapse. The area immediately west of the friary has been excavated to a depth of six metres by the ESB, however, and this action has destroyed all archaeological deposits in that area. The motte has been interfered with in recent years and it is important to ensure that this distinctive feature of Clane's past should be preserved, like its old parish church, for future generations. The restructuring of houses and shops and the building of a housing estate at the south-east end of the village in recent years has made the old plot pattern less obvious on the ground. Nonetheless, it is likely that archaeological layers survive below ground over much of the south side of the town, particularly the area between St. Michael's church and the bridge. The area in the vicinity of the bridge is particularly important because of the likelihood that waterlogged archaeological deposits survive, and these would shed considerable light, for instance, on the first bridge and its successors.


In common with other medieval sites it is to be expected

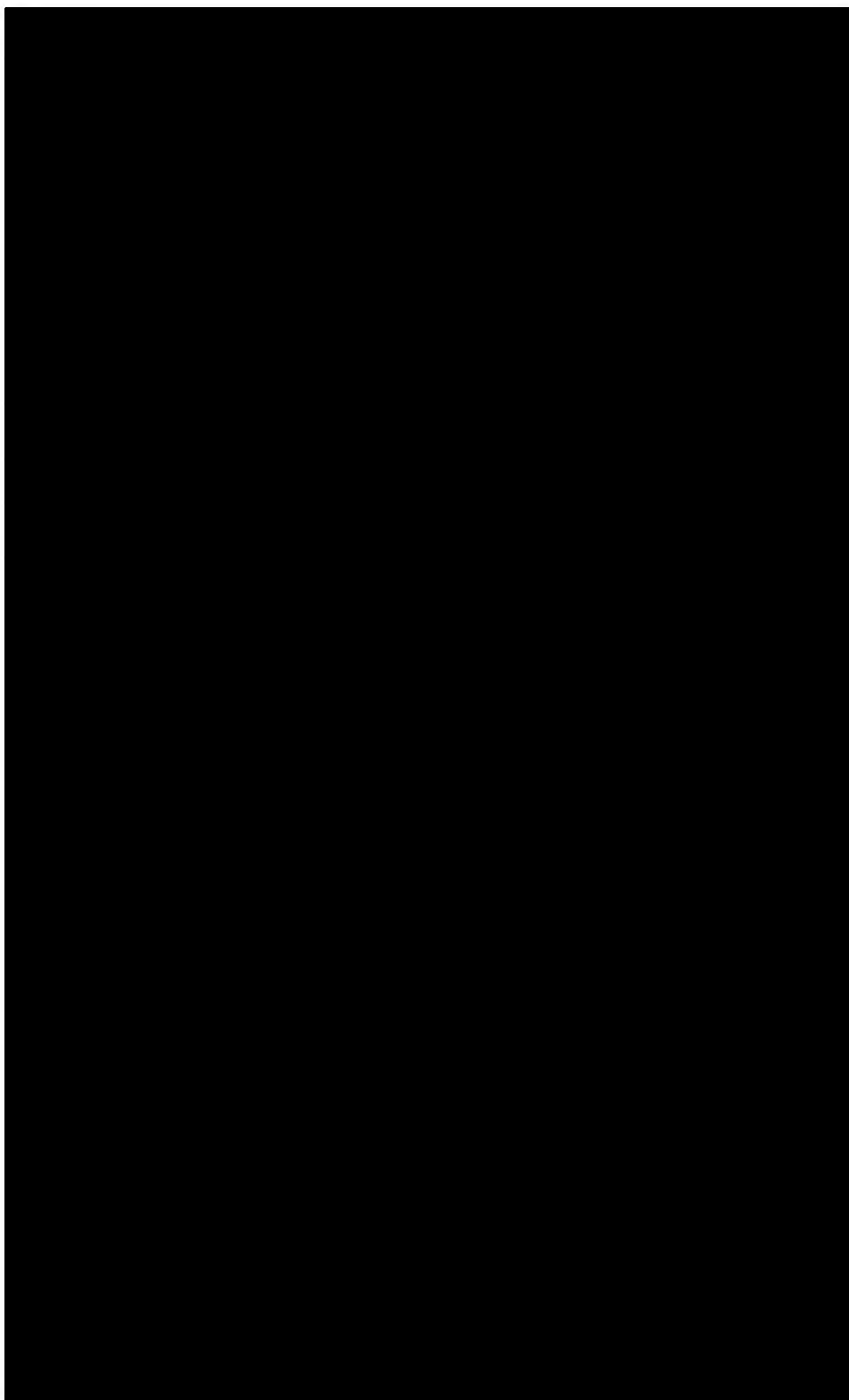
that archaeological remains survive below ground, particularly in the form of house foundations, pits and debris scatters. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of the medieval settlement, and the nature of its houses, streets, and defences, if any.

In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough, which began as a settlement during the Early Christian period, was occupied throughout the Middle Ages. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough will come under pressure from housing development in the near future because of its proximity to Dublin. It is important, then, that any future development should be monitored otherwise archaeological information is liable to be lost needlessly.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 71) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Clane. This is based essentially on the area formed by the known monuments, and because there is a lack of information at present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.







## CLONCURRY

Cloncurry is a small village on the main Dublin-Galway road, about 3 Klm east of Enfield, on the northern border of county Kildare. It is situated in fertile land in the lowlying plains of Kildare. The name is a corruption of Cluain Conaire, "Conaire's meadow", sometimes referred to as Cluain Conaire Tomain in early literature.

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Cloncurry was the site of an early church foundation traditionally associated with St. Ninian. A number of early references to Cloncurry indicate that it was an important meeting point. In 586 the battle of Magh Ochtair was won by Bran Dubh mac Eochaidh over the Ui Neill "at the hill over Cluain Conaire, to the south". In 837 a great royal meeting was held at Cluain Conaire between Niall Caille and Feidhlimidh mac Crimthann. This meeting was probably held at the monastic site and it is interesting to note that the its abbots make their first appearance in the annals shortly after this event. In 869 the death of Colga, abbot and anchorite of Cluain Conaire is recorded. Only one plundering of the monastery is entered in the annals, when in 1171 it was raided by the Anglo-Normans (AFM), a clear indication that the monastery remained a functioning centre into the late twelfth century.



Cloncurry formed part of the cantred of Ui Faelain nearest Dublin granted to Adam de Hereford before 1176 (Orpen 1911-20, i, 378-9). This grant was renewed by William Marshall before 1202 and again c.1207 (Curtis 1932-43, i, 13-14, 19). The borough of Cloncurry was probably established in the early thirteenth century but the first references to it occur in 1304 (White 1932, 28, 31). According to Lewis (1837, i, 353) the village of Cloncurry was burnt by the Irish in 1405. Little is known of the subsequent history of the settlement apart from the names of those to whom it was granted by the Butlers who came into possession of the manor in 1297 (Curtis 1932-43, i, 136). A population of 89 was recorded in 1659 (Pender 1939, 406).

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

##### 1. SITE OF BOROUGH

MARKET PLACE

DOMESTIC HOUSES

INDUSTRIAL AREAS

##### 2. THE CASTLE

##### 3. SS. MARY & MARTIN'S (alias ST. NINIAN'S) PARISH CHURCH

##### 4. CARMELITE FRIARY

##### 1. SITE OF BOROUGH

The exact site of the borough is unknown but there are two likely locations. The first lies in the vicinity of the

church and motte, and a large rectangular cropmark is visible in the field immediately west of the motte although there are no traces on the ground (Fig. 72). The second location is in the third field south of the crossroads, on the east side of the road, in which a cross base survives. A map of 1752 shows a settlement concentration in this area aligned along a roadway running from the north-west corner of the field towards the curving bulge on the field's eastern boundary (NLI Map 21. f. 50[4]). From there it continued in an easterly direction along the townland boundary between Cloncurry and BallynaKill and Kilbrook and BallynaKill. The roadway survives on the ground as a low depression. In the first (western) field a second roadway is visible running from the south-west corner of the field and it joins the first road towards the middle of the field. Both roadways average 7-8 m in width and are up to 1.5 m lower than the ground on either side. The southern end of the western field closest is marked 'The Green' on the 1752 map.

#### MARKET PLACE

The market of Cloncurry is specifically referred to in 1298 when eighty heifers were stolen from there (Mills 1905, 198). The most likely location for the market place is in the area of 'The Green' discussed above. A cross-base, possibly part of the market cross, survives nearby. It is a square base with mortice and chamfered upper edges. The sides are rough and unfinished and it possibly stood on a platform of



stones. One chamfer is has the Roman capitals 'AMEN' in false relief. Dims: Base: H. 38; W. 59 by 59; Mortice: D. 18 W. 20 by 24 cm.

#### DOMESTIC HOUSES

Despite the presence of the roadway the only evidence for flanking buildings occurs in the second field to the east where two tofts on the south side of the roadway have small rectangular enclosures within them. Ridge and furrow cultivation ridges are present throughout this field.

#### INDUSTRIAL AREAS

The existence of a watermill is referred to in 1298 but its site is now unknown (Curtis 1932-43, i, 119-20).

#### 2. CASTLE

The motte formed the nucleus of the original manor of Cloncurry granted to Adam de Hereford before 1176. It passed from him in 1216 to his son Stephen, and before 1252 to Stephen's grand nephew, Ralph Pippard (Brooks 1950, 205, 207). In 1290 Ralph granted the manor to his son John (Curtis 1932-43, i, 119-20). Seven years later John Pippard granted Cloncurry to his wife's brother, Sir Theobald Butler (Curtis 1932-43, i, 137) and it remained in Butler hands until the seventeenth century although it was granted out by them to



sub-tenants on many occasions.

It is clear from medieval documents that the motte formed part of a larger manorial building complex which has left no other surface traces. An extent of the manor, drawn up 1304, provides a graphic description of the the appearance, agricultural practices and land tenure of the manor (O'Loan 1961). The buildings of the manor are described as:

"a courtyard, the walls of which are broken, and in which there is a hall with a [thatched] roof of straw and one division of which is in ruins, and also a small dilapidated dwelling and a moat on which is situated a one roomed building with a wooden roof; which is not valued as no one is interested to rent it. But there is also a garden which is valued at eight shillings per annum. There is also a farmyard with broken walls in which there are two small eight-post barns and one grain kiln badly roofed and one small house in which is laid a threshing board but which is not a barn nor a grain store. There is also beside the gate (of the yard) a cow byre and the value of the haggard with the said houses at the place is two shillings per annum. There is also a columbarium, the value of which is three shillings per annum..." (O'Loan 1961, 14-15).

The motte itself is referred to in this document as 'mota' and is described as having a one-roomed, wooden-roofed building on top of it. This is the earliest reference to the motte but it is likely that, on analogy with other sites, it

was built in the later twelfth century.

The functions of the motte would appear to have been replaced in the early fifteenth century by a stone castle, although this may have been sited on top of the motte. In 1414 James, earl of Ormond, appointed Thomas Harbrig constable of his castle of Cloncurry with a garrison of twelve archers (Curtis 1932-43, iii, 7). In 1420 the earl made an agreement with John Roche by which the latter would rebuild the walls and parapets of the castle of Cloncurry within seven years (Curtis 1932-43, iii, 29-30). In 1467 the castle was in the custody of John, earl of Worcester, deputy lieutenant of Ireland and was clearly regarded as important in the defence of the English pale (Berry 1914, 627). The Civil Survey of 1654 refers to a castle at Cloncurry which was then valued at £40 (Simington 1952, 199).

#### Description (Fig. 73)

The motte is built near the highest point of the ridge from which it commands extensive views in all directions except towards the north where the vision is interrupted by a slightly higher ridge. The highest point of the ridge is occupied by the west end of the graveyard of St. Mary and Martin, a clear indication that the church and graveyard were in use before the motte was constructed. The motte consists of a round flat-topped conical mound. It has a basal diameter of 37 m narrowing to 12.5 by 12 m on the summit. It has a maximum height of 12 m. The summit was enclosed by a low



bank, 1 m wide and 50 cm high, of which only traces now survive. The motte was surrounded by a ditch, 6.5 m wide on average, at ground level with an outer bank. The ditch is deepest on the east side where it reaches a depth of 3 m but elsewhere it is no more than 1.5 m. The outer bank averages 7 m in width and is present on the south-west, north and north-east. Elsewhere the natural slope of the ridge provided sufficient protection.

### 3. SS. MARY & MARTIN'S (alias ST. NINIAN'S) PARISH CHURCH

Adam de Hereford granted the church of Cloncurry to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin, before 1201 (Gilbert 1889, 268). In a later grant of 1206-14, the dedication of the church is given as SS. Mary and Martin. In 1491, however, the parish church of St. Ninian at Cloncurry is referred indicating that this may have been the older dedication (Haren 1978, 399). The church belonged to St. Thomas' throughout the Middle Ages but it was leased to William Newman at the Dissolution when it was noted that the chancel was in need of repair (White 1943, 37).

#### Description (Figs. 73-5)

The remains consist of a nave and chancel church set within a rectangular graveyard on top of a low ridge immediately north of the Dublin-Galway road. The masonry consists of roughly coursed limestone. The quoins are missing but the jambs are of limestone and sandstone.

The chancel was rebuilt as a mausoleum in the eighteenth century. It is slightly narrower than the nave in width. The east end is occupied with vaults of the Aylmer family and the east gable stands to a height of 7 m. The original window, of uncertain form, was blocked up and a small rectangular window with flat brick rear arch inserted. The north wall is featureless except for an inserted rectangular chamfered window of grey limestone with bar-holes at the west end of the wall. The rear arch of this window is missing. The west wall has a centrally placed parallel-sided pointed doorway with flat rear arch. The south wall is featureless except for an inserted cusped ogee-headed window at the west end of the wall. It is of pink sandstone and has concave chamfers.

The junction between the NAVE and chancel is missing. There is an external batter on the south and west walls. The south wall rises from ground level at its east end to a height of 5 m at its west end. A rectangular door with flattened arch is centrally placed in this wall. The west gable stands to a height of 10 m and was lit by two narrow pointed windows set slightly off-centre. Both have narrow splays and round rear-arches. The west wall is covered in ivy and it conceals a belfry above. The north wall has collapsed and is represented by an overgrown bank although parts survive to a height of 1.5 m. A gap in the centre of the wall, almost opposite the south door, may indicate a door.

Architectural fragments



A fragment of dressed stone is set into the internal wall of the east window and there are two more at the west end of the graveyard. A limestone jamb is set into the top of the wall which encloses the farmyard south of the graveyard.

#### 4. CARMELITE PRIORY

This friary was founded in 1347 by John Roche (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 288), but little is known of its history apart from the remark by Lewis (1837, i, 353) that it was burned in 1405. In 1539 the prior was seized of a church and belfry, a chapter-house, a dormitory, a hall, two chambers, a kitchen, an orchard and two cottages (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 288). The site of the priory was granted to William Dickson in 1544 (7 ROKPRI 71: 395), to Richard Slayne in 1566 and later to Andrew Forster, who died in 1602, at which date the church, dormitory and hall of the priory were still standing (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 288; O'Loan 1961, 31; Ir Rec Comm 1826, Kildare, Jac I: 21). No trace of the friary now survives but there is a local tradition that it was located in the field which has the cross-base (see Market place above).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Cloncurry is a classic example of a deserted medieval borough and one that is frequently referred to in the literature because of the remarkable manorial extent of 1304. The documentary sources indicate that it was a pre-Norman church site of importance and the borough was established during the thirteenth century. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries seem to have been a period of prosperity for the settlement but it declined during the later Middle Ages, so much so that the exact location of the borough is uncertain. The balance of evidence, however, favours the siting in the third field south of the cross-roads, and the fields immediately to the east. Here there are remains of a hollow way, perhaps the main street, and a cross-base, perhaps all that is left of the market cross.

The precise extent of the borough remains unknown, however, as does its physical relationship to the motte and parish church. The site of the Carmelite friary is also unknown. It is particularly important to determine the nature and extent of this manor and borough because, in contrast with most other sites, it has the advantage of a good documentary extent and the potential for blending historical and archaeological information is accordingly very high.

There is no evidence for disturbance apart from that caused by normal agricultural practices and it is likely that archaeological deposits are preserved below ground level.

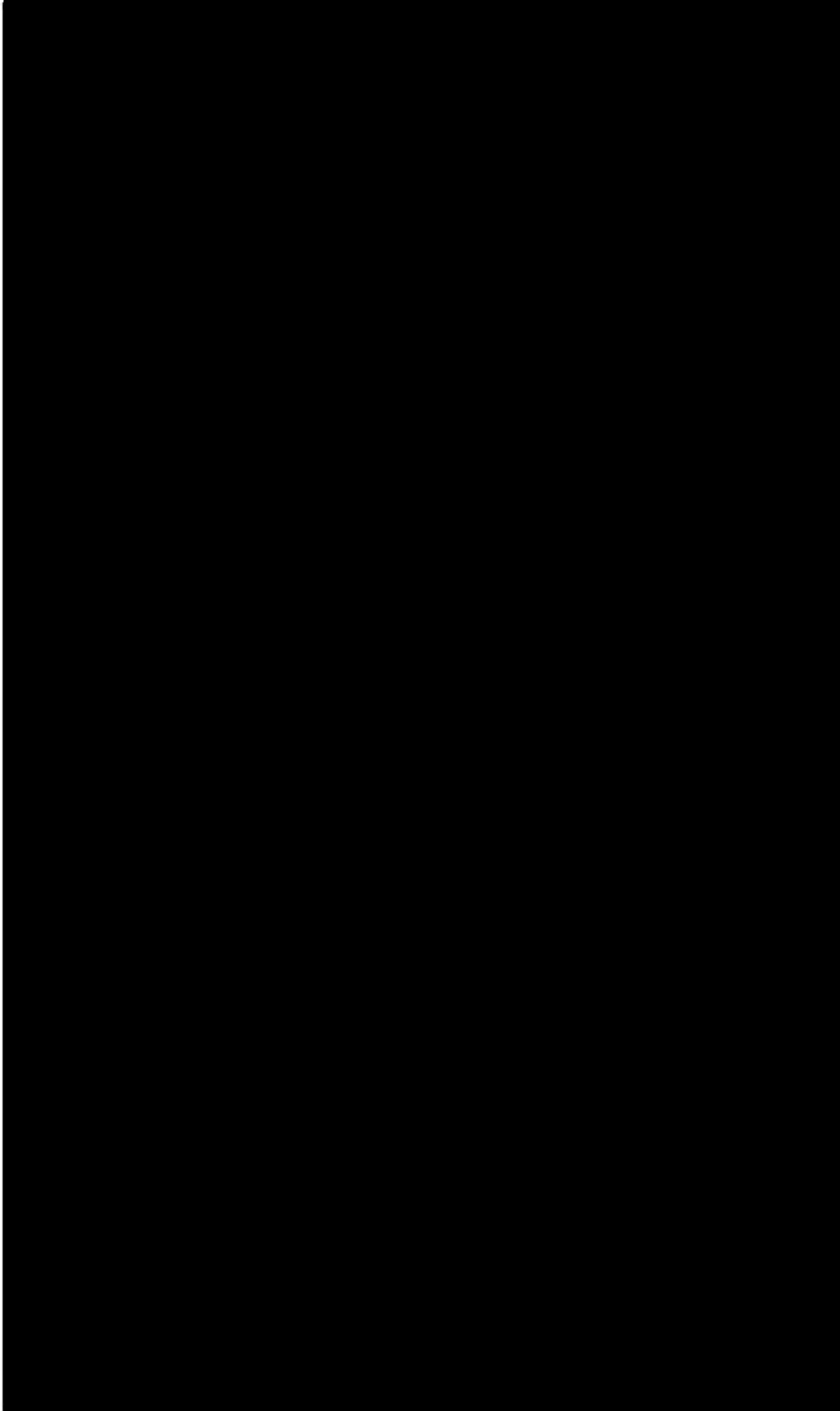


Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of the medieval settlement, and the nature of its houses, streets, and defences, if any.

In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough, which began as a settlement during the Early Christian period, was an important settlement in the Middle Ages. In the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough is not threatened by any immediate development but it is important that its status as an archaeological site of high importance should be recognised. That development be discouraged within the archaeological area lest damage should be unnecessarily caused by the construction of houses or farm buildings.

That in those instances where it is not possible to apply the Area of Archaeological Potential be required, as part of the request for planning permission, to have a report prepared on the archaeological implications of any proposed development, such reports which may include any delimits the area of archaeological potential within Cloncurry. This is based essentially on the area formed by the known monuments, and because there is a lack of information at present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 76) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Cloncurry. This is based essentially on the area formed by the known monuments, and because there is a lack of information at present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.







## DUNMANOGE

Dunmanoge is now a townland in the extreme south of County Kildare situated in the lowlying basin of the river Barrow, which is located about 1.5 klm to the west. The placename Dunmanoge is of relatively recent origin, first recorded in 1560-1 (11 RDKPRI, 67: 325), and is a corruption of the original name Maoín Moshenoc, "Mohenoge's property". Maoín placenames are associated with church sites and the references to the death of Suibne, abbot of Mughna who died in 962 (AFM) and Maelphoil, the bishop of Mughna who died in 992 (AFM) have been identified as referring to Dunmanoge by O'Donovan. The site is clearly referred to in 1040, however, when it is listed among a number of churches plundered by Diarmait mac Mael na mBo (AFM).

The early church is what probably attracted the first Anglo-Normans to Dunmanoge. It formed part of the territory of Ardree granted to Thomas le Fleming before 1186 (Orpen 1192, 1.3113) and a borough was established here by him or his successor Milo de Staunton before 1199 (Gilbert 1884, i, 123; Gilbert 1889, 161-2; McNeill 1950, 27). Although the borough was established at an early date little is known of its subsequent history. Otway-Ruthven (1961, 169) has suggested that Milo de Staunton moved the manorial centre from Ardree to Dunmanoge but it is difficult to be certain. An account of the manor of "Mounmohenek", made in 1301, mentions the rents of free tenants, a mill, the prise of ale

and dues from the hundred court, and although it makes no specific mention of the borough the general impression is one of economic stability (38 RDKPRI, 82). The borough declined in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, probably as a result of Irish attacks. In 1468 the prebendaries of St. Patrick's cathedral, Dublin, considered Dunmanoge unsafe to visit because it was situated in the marches among the Irish (Berry 1898, 174). By the seventeenth century there was no longer a significant settlement at Dunmanoge. The Civil Survey of 1654 records nothing other than the identity of the proprietor, Sir Maurice Eustace (Simington 1952, 110) while the Census of 1659 returned a population of eleven (Pender 1939, 405).

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. SITE OF BOROUGH
2. THE CASTLE
3. ST. MOHENOG'S PARISH CHURCH
4. OTHER FEATURES
5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION
6. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

##### 1. SITE OF BOROUGH

No earthworks survive to indicate the exact extent of the borough but it was almost certainly located in the vicinity of the old parish church. The land surrounding the church has



been extensively tilled and fieldwalking north-east of the churchyard has revealed sherds of thirteenth/ fourteenth century and post-medieval pottery. Archaeological excavation in advance of the Cork-Dublin Natural Gas Pipeline uncovered a complex of thirteenth and fourteenth century features to the north of the churchyard, immediately north of the road in Blackcastle townland. The features included a rectangular structure, probably a house, which had maximum exposed dimensions of 6.7 by 5.5 m (Sleeman 1984).

The early documents relating to the borough, probably dating to the late twelfth century, also preserve some information about the burgage plots. The burgage granted to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin, was specified as containing ten acres (Gilbert 1889, 161-2; McNeill 1950, 27, 36) while the burgage granted to St. Mary's Abbey was located to the east of the church, between the burgages of David de Kildenan and Kenni, the cobbler (Gilbert 1884, i, 123). In the settlement reached between Henry de Stanton and the bishop of Glendalough in 1199 (McNeill 1950, 27) it was agreed that on Henry's death the bishop would get a messuage, a house and Henry's court.

## 2. THE CASTLE

Dunmanoge was the centre of an important manor established by Thomas le Fleming before 1186. It passed from him to the Staunton family before the end of the twelfth century, and in 1301, on the death of Adam de Staunton, it

Passed to John de Suttoun, the husband of Adam's eldest daughter, Johanna (38 RDKPRI, 81).

No trace of a castle now survives although the neighbouring townland is called Blackcastle. The old castle was presumably sited near the present Blackcastle House.

### 3. ST. MOHENOG'S PARISH CHURCH

The old church of Mughna Moshenoc was almost certainly functioning in the late twelfth century when it was taken over by the Anglo-Normans. A deed of Thomas le Fleming, its first Anglo-Norman lord, granting the church of Mune to Robert of Shrewsbury, chaplain, dates to the initial years of the conquest (Gilbert 1889, 167). Mughna was listed as one of the churches confirmed to the bishop of Glendalough by Alexander III in 1179 (McNeill 1950, 5), and before 1199 Milo de Staunton granted the church of Muna to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin (Gilbert 1889, 161-2). This grant appears to have caused problems because in 1199 St. Thomas' Abbey and the bishop of Glendalough reached an agreement whereby each would hold half of the church (McNeill 1950, 27, 36). After the union of the dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough, Mounmohenoge became part of the diocese of Dublin and is listed as 'Muene' in Innocent III's confirmation to the archbishop of Dublin in 1216 (Sheehy 1962, 177; McNeill 1950, 38-9). By 1227 it was a prebend of St. Patrick's cathedral and in that year it was valued at ten marks in the taxation of the cathedral's prebends (McNeill 1950, 47). Mounmohenoge remained a prebend

of St. Patrick's into the seventeenth century. In 1604, for instance, when William Pilsworth was made bishop of Kildare he was also made prebendary of 'Mona Hannock' (Russell and Prendergast 1872, 187; Ronan 1941a, 9: n. 22). The nave and chancel were described as ruinous in 1630 when archbishop Bulkeley made his visitation (Ronan 1941b, 94). O'Donovan, in his Ordnance Survey Letters (Kildare, ii, 8) described it as "in a very rude style of architecture ... decidedly not an erection of the primitive ages, as may be seen from one small Gothic arch".

#### Description (Figs. 77-8)

The church lies within a sub-circular churchyard, approximately 60 m across, which is situated on good farmland and affords extensive views on all sides. The delimiting stone wall is built on top of an older enclosing bank and ditch. The ditch is 3.3 m wide and has a depth of 1.5 m below the external bank which is 3.2 m wide. The wall cuts across the bank and ditch particularly on the north-east and north-west. The rectangular church is overgrown with ivy. It measures 18 by 7.2 m internally and is built of a mixture of rubble limestone and granite with rubble core and pinnings. There are no dressed quoins.

The east wall has collapsed except for the north-east angle which stands to a height of 5 m. Only the east and west ends of the north wall survive and the western segment, at 3 m, is the taller of these. Traces of an external batter are



present at the east end of the north wall. The west wall is gabled and stands to an external height of 8m. The south wall is missing except for a 3 m stretch at the west end. The wall juts out slightly beyond the west face in the manner of an anta. A free-standing buttress stands to a height of 4 m at the south-east angle.

#### Monuments

Grave-slab 1 (Fig. 79). Date uncertain.

Round-topped granite block with a Latin cross in relief on one face. The arms of the cross slope downwards.

Dims: Exposed H. 62 W. 37 T. 28 cm.

Grave-slab 2 (Fig. 80). Date uncertain.

South of the church. Round-topped grave-marker with a Latin cross in false relief. The arms of the cross are expanded and the design is enclosed within a wide border.

Dims: H. 78 W. 50 T. 30 cm.

Richard Treves. 1640.

This slab inscribed: RICHARD TREVES/ DVNY OGANE/ 1640 is now missing (JKAS 3 (1899-1902), 249).

#### 4. OTHER FEATURES

Mill.

There is no trace of the mill mentioned in medieval documents but it was possibly near Newtown Bridge.

## 5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

An archaeological excavation was undertaken in Blackcastle townland, in the field immediately across the road from the churchyard, to the north (Sleeman 1984). Three feature complexes were revealed. The first of these was an area of gravel paving which may have functioned as a yard. The second was the remains of a rectangular structure with maximum exposed dimensions of 6.7 by 5.5 m. The third was a series of pits and drains associated with the other two complexes. The finds consisted of some two hundred sherds of thirteenth and fourteenth century pottery, all of which was of local manufacture together with a limited range of iron objects including nails and a key. The finds are consistent with Anglo-Norman domestic habitation and suggest that the structure was part of the medieval borough.

## 6. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1-36. Thirty-six sherds of 13th/ 14th cent. pottery. Found in field-walking north-east of churchyard.

37-55. Twenty-nine sherds of post-medieval pottery. Found as above.

56-60. Five large pieces of slag. Found as above.

61. Fragment of a clay pipe

62. Part of a badly fired brick

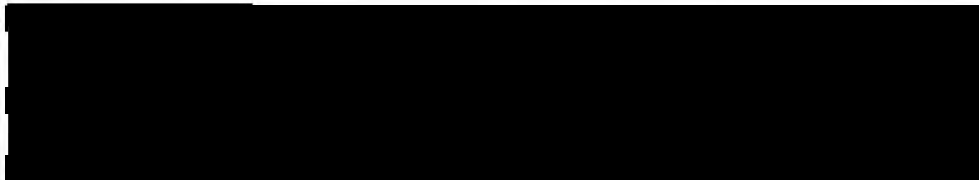


## ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Dunmanoge is a good example of a deserted medieval borough. The documentary sources indicate that it was a church site before the coming of the Normans, and that this church continued in use throughout the Middle Ages as a parish church. The written sources also indicate that there was a mill in the borough, and probably a castle, but no surface remains survive of either. The archaeological excavation has provided direct evidence of the presence of archaeological deposits on the site and future excavation should be directed towards determining the extent of the settlement and the nature of occupation within it.

### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 81) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Dunmanoge. This simply outlines the most likely area of settlement which was probably based on the church site. In view of the present lack of information on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.





## HARRISTOWN

Harristown is a townland situated about three miles east of Kilcullen beside the river Liffey. It is noteworthy in archaeological literature because two of the prehistoric series of granite 'long stones' in Co. Kildare are located in Brannockstown nearby (Killanin and Duignan 1962, 317). Its history as a borough does not begin until 1681 when it was incorporated by charter of Charles II. The placename is variously spelt in early documents: Haroldstown, Harrystown, Henrystown and Harristown, but its ultimate derivation is obscure.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The ecclesiastical taxation of 1302-6 lists the church of "the vill of Harold" in the deanery of Balymor (Sweetman 1875-86, v, 242), almost certainly to be identified with Harristown which is only 4.5 klm from Ballymore Eustace. The Villa Wallenses listed beside it in the taxation is probably the modern townland of Brannockstown, situated immediately south of Harristown. The church of Haroldstown, described as waste in a taxation of Dublin diocese c.1294 is presumably the same church (20 RDKPRI, 62: no. 150). The church is again referred to in 1543 when Uriel O'Hagan was presented to the vicarage (7 RDKPRI, 66: no. 354). The dower assigned to Anastasia, widow of David Wogan, included land in 'mote de

Henryestoun', a reference which suggests that there may have been an earthwork fortification here (Tickell 1946-63, 313: n.5). In the later fifteenth century Harristown became one of the principal residences of Sir Roland FitzEustace and in 1472-3 he prevailed upon parliament to release Harristown from all subsidies (Morrissey 1939, 55). The land remained FitzEustace property until the late seventeenth century. Maurice Eustace is credited with building a large house south of the old castle in the second quarter of the seventeenth century but this was destroyed by the Cromwellians under Hewson (Tickell 1946-63, 310, 316, 319). Eustace was arrested and imprisoned in England but on the Restoration he returned to Harristown. He was succeeded by his nephew, another Maurice, who in 1681 received a charter from Charles II erecting his lands into the manor of Harristown and incorporating the borough and town of Harristown which was to have a sovereign and twelve burgesses. The borough was to contain one hundred acres and return two members to parliament (Tickell 1946-63, 408-10). The prosperity of the borough was shortlived, however, and it did not survive the troubles brought on by the "glorious revolution" of 1688 and the Williamite confiscations.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. SITE OF BOROUGH
2. CASTLE
3. CHURCH
4. OTHER FEATURES

## 1. SITE OF BOROUGH

No positive earthworks survive of the seventeenth century borough but it was most likely located in the vicinity of Harristown castle.

## 2. THE CASTLE (Fig. 82)

The reference to the 'mote de Henryestoun' in 1422 suggests that there may have been a motte here but no trace of it now remains. It is clear that a castle must have been here in the 1470s when it was the residence of Roland FitzEustace. In 1581 the castle was forfeited by James Eustace, viscount Baltinglass and in 1588 it was leased to Brien FitzWilliams (16 RDKPRI, 91: no. 5285). Two early seventeenth century inquisitions shed light on the castle. In 1603 John Eustace was granted "the castle and village of Harreston, and also the site, circuit and precinct of the chief house, containing two castles, a hall, one garden, the orchard, the haggard place, one chapel upon a vault, one churchyard, with certain other buildings ... two messuages, five cottages ... a watermill with the watercourse", all of which had been forfeited by James Eystace, viscount Baltinglass (Ir Rec Comm 1826, Kildare, Jac I:9). In 1620 Sir Henry Harrington held "two castles with divers turrets within the circuit, a great hall, a garden, an orchard, le haggard place, a chapel, a belfry, .... in the vill of Harrieston" (Ir Rec Comm 1826, Kildare, Jac I:36).



#### Description

The castle was prominently sited on a hill affording extensive views in all directions. The surviving remains consist of a wall fragment, 3.6 m long, 1.58 m wide and 6 m high, standing on a raised platform. It was built of roughly coursed limestone rubble and has an external batter. The wall is plastered internally and has a brick repair at the north-west corner. A second fragment of masonry lies on the ground to the north-east and some wall footings probably remain under the overgrown collapse.

4. The castle forms part of a complex of earthworks which probably represent the features mentioned in the early seventeenth century inquisitions. These are most obvious on the south side where there is a large rectangular enclosure, 65 by 60 m which probably represents a formal garden (Fig. 82). This is approached on the south by an abandoned roadway aligned on the castle. The roadway averages 10 m in width and is defined by banks on each side. It is 150 m long and expands at one point to enclose a circular area which may have held an ornamental feature. The roadway is now cut into two sections by the railway.

#### 3. ST. JAMES' CHURCH, COUGHLANSTOWN

No church survives in Harristown today, but Tickell (1946-63, 280) states that the estate church was the chapel of St. James now in Coughlanstown townland. This is a simple

nave and chancel building measuring 15.44 by 5.3 m. There is a twin-light ogee-headed window in the east wall and two single ogee-headed lights in the south wall, suggesting that it is of fifteenth century date. A blocked round-headed door in the south wall may have been added in the seventeenth century. A thirteenth century granite font and a seventeenth century cross-shaft, commemorating the FitzEustace family are present. There is also a deeply buried pyramidal-shaped granite cross which would have accommodated the granite cross shaft at Stonebrook nearby. This may be of pre-Norman date.

#### 4. OTHER FEATURES

St James' well.

Located south-west of the church (Jackson 1979-80, 154-5).

Mill.

The mill referred to in the documentary sources was probably located near Rochestown House in Mullaghboy Td.

Standing stones. Brannockstown.

Two. Both are of granite.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Harristown occupies an almost unique position in Irish archaeology as an example of a seventeenth century deserted borough. It is unlikely that it ever developed into a

populated centre but it is possible that the earthworks around the site of the castle retain some traces of the proposed borough. The castle itself is an important site, probably a tower house of fifteenth century date in origin but its size and form remain unknown as does the extent of the seventeenth century alterations.

The earthworks are in a good state of preservation in the vicinity of the castle and it is important that these should be preserved because they are among the very few earthworks that survive around seventeenth century castles. It is impossible to know, without excavation, whether borough features, such as house foundations, pits and drains survive. Documentary records of the site are few, however, and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough is not under direct threat from commercial development but it is possible that it may be threatened by agricultural development in the future.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 83) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Harristown. This is based on the area occupied by the seventeenth century castle and its outworks together with an area around this where the borough of Harristown may have been sited. Rochestown House, the probable site of Harristown mill has also been shown.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

# KILDARE

The town of Kildare is situated on top of a low ridge rising some ten to fifteen metres above the surrounding flat countryside at the western end of the Curragh. The ridge is aligned along a north-west to south-east axis and it decreases in height from west to east. The cathedral is located on the western end of the ridge and it is separated from the castle, which lies on the eastern crest, by a slight depression. For most of its history the town has been overshadowed by Naas but it was sufficiently important in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries to give its name to the county. Today it is a small town through which the main road and rail routes pass from Dublin to Cork and Limerick. The name is derived from Cill Dara, "the church of the oak", a tree which stood beside the early monastery according to the seventh century writer Cogitosus.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Kildare is chiefly associated with St. Brigid who is said to have founded a monastery there in the early sixth century but stray finds indicate that the site was frequented by man during prehistoric times. A socketed bronze axehead of Later Bronze Age date was found in the town, while two bronze spearheads and a palstave come from nearby. The origins of Kildare as a continuously occupied settlement, however,

clearly lie in its foundation as a church site, probably during the fifth century. Brigid, the patron of Kildare, is a shadowy semi-legendary figure, and is probably a christianized version of a Celtic goddess, as suggested by Macalister and Kenney (1929, 357-8). The monastery was originally founded for women but it later became a dual monastery with both monks and nuns (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 320). The first bishop of Kildare was Conleth, who died in 520 (AU), but the monastery was ruled by abbesses whose succession can be traced from the eighth century until the coming of the Normans (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 320). Abbots and bishops are recorded from the seventh to the twelfth centuries and Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 320) have suggested that the abbots from before 885 until 968 were secular princes with ecclesiastical titles. The importance of Kildare was recognised at the synod of Rathbreasail in 1111 when it became one of the five episcopal sees of Leinster (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 83).

The well known description of the church of Kildare in Cogitosus' life of Brigid, written c. 680, indicates that it had a large church with many windows, and decorated formal doors for the monks and nuns (Vita, cap. viii; cf. Radford 1977). The altar was flanked by the richly ornamented shrines of Brigid and Conleth, and was cut off from the rest of the church by a screen. The monks were separated from the nuns by a screen running down the centre of the church. The altar screen was covered with paintings and hangings. The shrines of Brigid and Conleth were carried off by Viking raiders who

burned the church in 835 (?AFM). The church was rebuilt in 868 (?AFM) by Flanna, or Land, the wife of the high King Aedh Findliath. An eleventh century annalistic fragment records that in the course of building this church Land "had many carpenters in the wood, chopping down and shaping trees" (Radner 1978, 133), an indication that the rebuilt church, like the dertaigh recorded in 762 (AU-761), was of wood. The monastery was burned on a number of occasions between 710 and 1089 (Cowell 1896-8, 247-8; Buchanan 1972, 9-10). A record of one such burning, in 1050, notes that both the stone church (damhliag) and wooden church (durthech) were destroyed (AI). In 1132 the Ui Cennselaig under Diarmait Mac Murchada captured and burned the abbess' house and much of the church (AU). In the late twelfth century Giraldus Cambrensis noted that there was a richly decorated gospel book at Kildare and that a perpetual fire was kept burning there (O'Meara 1982, 81-5). Taken together, the historical evidence suggests a large and wealthy ecclesiastical foundation at Kildare in the Early Historic period. Indeed some of the references to Kildare indicate something more than a purely ecclesiastical site. An eleventh century annalistic fragment records the death of Cerball, King of Leinster, in 909 as the result of an accident outside the house of a combmaker (ciormhaire) in the street of the flag-stones (sraite in cheime chloici). The Annals of Clonmacnoise record that in 1012 "all the Town of Kildare was burnt by a thunderbolt but one house". These references raise the possibility of a secular and possibly proto-urban settlement associated with the church.

### Medieval Kildare

During the twelfth century Kildare was the most important settlement in the county and the invading Anglo-Normans were quickly attracted to it. It was used by Strongbow as a base on many occasions during the early 1170s (Orpen 1892, 11. 2696, 2771, 2795). It became the principal manor of Strongbow's lordship in north Leinster (Orpen 1911-20, i, 374, 381), the borough was established before 1176 (Cal Pembroke Estate Office 1891, 11) and a castle was in existence there before 1185. The town prospered during the thirteenth century although precise details of its growth are scarce. The clearest evidence of its wealth is provided by the records of church building. A new cathedral, traditionally attributed to Ralph of Bristol (bishop of Kildare 1223-32), was built, the Franciscan friary was founded c.1254-60, the Carmelite friary was established c.1290, and the church of St. Mary Magdalene, with its associated hospital, was in existence by 1307. The evidence for industry in the town is scarce but milling was clearly important. Although no charter to the town survives from the thirteenth century the existence of such a charter is implied by the claim made in 1297 by the burgesses of the right to try offences "by charter of the lords of the liberty" (Mills 1905, 174).

The 1290s were a turbulent period in Kildare's history because of the outbreak of a number of feuds between the great Anglo-Norman magnates, notably John FitzThomas, lord of Offaly, and William de Vesey, lord of Kildare. There were

also attacks by the native Irish, such as Calbach O Conchobhair Failge, who captured the castle of Kildare c.1295. The surviving records indicate that these disturbances centred around the castle but there can be little doubt that the town was also affected. The surrender of the castle to the King in 1297 by William de Vescy, lord of Kildare, seems to have had the effect of curbing these disturbances, however. The holding of parliament at the town in 1309-10 is an indication of the town's continuing prosperity and status (Gilbert 1884, ii, 339; Butler 1849, 18). In 1316, shortly after the invasion of Edward Bruce, the most powerful local magnate, John FitzThomas, was created earl of Kildare and the town and castle were granted to him. The association of the FitzGerald family with the town continued until this century although their principal seat during the Middle Ages was Maynooth castle. An indication of the size of the borough at this period may be deduced from the accounts of royal escheators during gaps in the succession of the earls. In 1328, for instance, Walter Wogan accounted for £4 14s 10.25d burgage rent for Kildare, representing two-thirds of the burgage rent during a nine month period. At the standard rent of 1s per burgage this indicates that Kildare had about 200 burgages and a population possibly in the region of 1000. Little is known of Kildare in the later Middle Ages except that it was exposed to attacks from the native Irish.



In 1515 Kildare received a new charter of incorporation from Henry VIII which as well as laying down regulations for the functioning of the corporation, granted the town a weekly market and licenced the burgesses to enclose the town with stone walls and a fosse, and granted them pavage and murage to pay for the building and repair of the walls. The town was still in a frontier situation and it was occasionally attacked by the native Irish. In 1540 both the Franciscan and Carmelite monasteries were burnt by the O Conchobair (White 1943, 166-7). The town was the scene of an engagement in 1598, during the Nine Years War, when it was so badly damaged that it was described by Fynes Moryson (1907, ii, 351) as 'altogether disinhabited'. The cathedral was still ruined and roofless in 1604 and a number of properties were described in 1607 as 'ruinous' or 'lately burned' (Ir Rec Comm 1830, 92). The town was an important garrison site during the Confederate wars and in 1642-3 three hundred royalist troops were garrisoned there (Gilbert 1882-91, i, 169). The census of Ireland, c.1659, noted a population of 359 for the town (Pender 1939, 395).

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN
2. DOMESTIC HOUSES
3. MARKET PLACE
4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

5. THE CASTLE
6. TOWN DEFENCES
7. ST. BRIGID'S CATHEDRAL & EARLY MONASTIC SITE
8. CARMELITE PRIORY OF ST. MARY
9. FRANCISCAN FRIARY
10. NUNNERY
11. HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE
12. SUBURBS
13. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

#### 1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN

Kildare is important among Irish towns in that its street pattern retains traces of a concentric plan which may pre-date the Anglo-Norman invasion. The curvilinear plan formed by Priest's Lane, Academy Street, St. Brigid's Square, and Convent Road either preserves the outline the early monastic enclosure or it represents a set of routeways which circumvented the enclosure at a distance. In either case this curving pattern is an old one. Within this area, the street plan is essentially linear and the main axis of the medieval street plan, as of present-day Kildare, was the east-west route formed by Claregate Street and Dublin Street. This routeway itself is quite possibly of pre-Norman origin and Claregate Street may be the "sraite in cheime chloichi sair" ("the eastward-running street of the flag-stones"), mentioned in 909 (Radner 1978, 166). The antiquity of the other streets is difficult to determine but a number are mentioned in a



document of 1674 (PRONI, D.3078/2/3/5:

Bride Street: "highway to Grey Abbey"

Church Lane/

Rathangan Road: "highway from Fire Castle"

Pigeon Lane: "Abbey Lane without Clare Gate"

Station Road: "highway without Ellis Gate"

The map by John Rocque prepared in 1757 shows that the street pattern of the town, between Convent Road and Bohereenagorr and Shraud on the north has survived practically intact to the present.

## 2. DOMESTIC HOUSING

There are no traces above ground of secular pre-1700 buildings but there is documentary evidence for the presence of fortified town houses in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The burgage plot pattern survives well on the south side of Dublin Street and boundaries survive between Bride Street and Academy Street which, on Rocque's map, can be seen to be burgages. Elsewhere, however, there is very little evidence for the long burgage plot which was a characteristic feature of Anglo-Norman towns.

## ARCHDEACON'S CASTLE

This building is referred to by this name in the parish

records of 1739 and it seems to have been located between the cathedral and Station Road (RD 346/37/230276). It was probably the residence of the archdeacon of Kildare and is probably the same as the castle referred to in the Civil Survey of 1654 as belonging to the Dean and chapter of Kildare (Simington 1952, 223).

#### BISHOP'S PALACE

This was a stone building in ruins at the time of the Civil Survey of 1654 (Simington 1952, 222). It stood in the field immediately north of the cathedral churchyard, known locally as the "palace field" (Devitt 1918-21, 365).

#### HOUSE BELONGING TO GREAT CONNELL

The extent of the Augustinian priory of Great Connell, drawn up in 1540, lists 'a castle or fortillage' as well as 'a messuage called the courte house' among their possessions in Kildare which had been leased to the earl of Kildare (White 1943, 159). It was described as ruinous in 1604 and again in 1607 when it was granted to William Parsons and Nicholas Kenney (Ir Rec Comm 1830, 2:ix, 92).

#### NUGENT'S CASTLE

This building is referred to in a rental of 1684 but its history and precise location remain obscure (BM Harl. Mss. 7200). It was described as being in "Little Broadhooke", a street which cannot be identified now but it may have been

near the Market Square end of Station Road which was known as Nugent Street in the nineteenth century.

#### WHITE'S CASTLE

In 1436 James White, a merchant of Kildare, complained that Cathaoir O Conchobair had twice burned his house because White had refused to give him coin and victuals. Accordingly he was granted royal permission to take stones from 'Rowesplace' and the old walls of 'Smythesplace' in Kildare to build a good hall with a crenellated parapet for himself (Tresham 1828, 258: 94). Nothing further is known of this building.

#### 3. MARKET PLACE

The triangular market place is located mid-way along Claregate Street and Dublin Street. Swan (1985, 86) has suggested that it occupies the space, south-east of the church, between the inner and outer enclosures of the Early Christian monastic site. This is a position which the market place also occupies at Armagh, Kells, Tuam and Downpatrick, and consequently it may be of pre-Norman origin. It is difficult to be certain of this, however, because the regularity of its triangular shape is reminiscent of seventeenth and eighteenth century town planning. In this context, it is noteworthy that when first referred to in 1674, the Tholsel of Kildare was located in Bride Street rather than Market Square where its eighteenth century



successor stands (PRONI D.3078/2/3/5). Rocque's plan of 1757 shows that the lower part of Bride Street was wider in the eighteenth century than it is at present and it is possible that it was the site of the medieval market place.

Throughout the Middle Ages Kildare's principal function was that of a market town but, perhaps because it was so commonplace, it is rarely referred to in documentary sources. In 1458, however, Thomas FitzMaurice, earl of Kildare, was permitted to change the day of the weekly market at Kildare in order to avoid a clash with the market at Naas, and he was also granted a yearly fair (Berry 1910, 507).

#### 4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Milling is the only industry which is referred to with any regularity prior to 1700. The industry appears to have commenced during the Early Historic period and a mill is mentioned in the life of Brigid. This must have been some distance from the town because there is no source of water at Kildare itself. Tully is a possible site. The mills of Kildare are mentioned in 1258 (Sweetman 1875-86, ii, nos. 573, 850, 851), while a windmill is specified in 1297 (Sweetman 1875-86, iv, no. 481), and a water-mill is referred to in 1304 when it was described as ruined (Sweetman 1875-86, v, no. 335). The location of these mills is unknown but it is likely that the windmill was situated on top of the ridge within the town.

## 5. THE CASTLE

The construction of Kildare castle is normally attributed to William Marshall, lord of Leinster from 1190 to 1219, because an inquisition of 1302 notes that he built the castle without the consent of the bishop on land belonging to the church and he had subsequently granted the bishop an annual payment of ten marks in compensation (Sweetman 1875-86, v, no. 132). A document of c. 1185, however, makes it clear that a castle already existed at Kildare by that time (Curtis 1933-43, i, 4). This is not surprising because of the evidence for Anglo-Norman activity there under Strongbow, who died in 1176, and the early evidence for the existence of a borough. Indeed, it is far more likely that it was Strongbow, rather than William Marshall who built the castle without first receiving permission. In the settled conditions of Kildare during the first decade of the thirteenth century it would have been relatively easy for William Marshall to obtain this permission, whereas Strongbow would have had to construct his castle under emergency conditions and was quite likely to ignore the position of the church, as Hugh de Lacy did at Trim.

After Strongbow's death Kildare passed to the Marshalls, from whom it passed to Agnes, wife of William de Vescy c.1270 (Orpen 1911-20, iii, 98-9). Agnes' son William succeeded to the lordship of Kildare c.1290 but he surrendered the castle, manor and borough of Kildare to the King in 1297 (Sweetman 1875-86, iv, nos. 365, 373-5, 481). In 1293 the castle was

captured by John FitzThomas, lord of Offaly (Lawlor 1908, 52), an event probably connected with FitzThomas' quarrel with William de Vescy (Orpen 1911-20, iv, 115). In 1295 John FitzThomas' quarrel with Richard de Burgh, earl of Ulster, led to further unrest in Kildare (Orpen 1911-20, iv, 116-19). It was at this time that the castle was captured by Calbach O Conchobair Failge and many royal documents which were kept there by William de Vescy, justiciar of Ireland from 1290-4, were destroyed (Mills 1905, 118). It was probably at this time, which was described in 1297 as "the time of disturbance, when the Odiimpsies [O Diomusaigh] were outside the town of Kildare" (Mills 1905, 118) that the followers of William Donybroke broke into and robbed the castle, and the followers of John FitzThomas robbed the castle and town of money, cloth, wheat, oats, malt, oxen, cows, sheep and pigs worth £1000. (Mills 1905, 188, 190).

After the surrender of the castle by William de Vescy to the king in 1297 it was held for the crown by constables during the next twenty years. The royal accounts record repair works that were carried out during this time. Between 1297 and 1299 35l. 14s. 8.25d were spent on works in the castle, including the repair of houses, towers and gates, and the building of a new bakehouse, kitchen and well; a further 161. 11s. 7d. was spent on works in 1304-6 (38 ROKPRI, 47-8, 102). The strength of the castle at this stage is indicated by the fact that it successfully withstood a three-day assault by Edmund Bruce in 1316, the same year in which it was granted to John FitzThomas (Orpen 1911-20, iv, 174-5). In



1331 the castle was described as having four towers, a chapel and a Kitchen (MacNiocaill 1964a, 101). In 1333-4 the Justiciar, John D'Arcy, who was custodian of the castle during the minority of Maurice FitzThomas, earl of Kildare, spent 5l. 9s. 1d. on works on the "houses within the close of the castle of Kildare" (44 RDKPRI, 28, 46; cf. Tresham 1828, 39; no. 85). In 1484 the Irish parliament granted aid to Gearoid Mor, earl of Kildare, in order that he could "make great and strong fortifications and ditches at his manor of Kildare" (Bryan 1933, 71). The subsequent history of the castle is obscure. It was garrisoned during the Nine Years War and it saw action in 1598. In that year Kildare was occupied by supporters of O'Neill, who held the "greatest tower or Keep" of the castle while crown forces held one of the other towers (Atkinson 1895, 375-6). The castle was recovered for the crown by Sir Richard Bingham and subsequently garrisoned by his forces (Atkinson 1895, 390, 393).

#### Description (Figs. 86-88)

The castle is located on the eastern crest of the ridge, close to the cathedral. Externally the ground drops away sharply to the north and east but the decline is less noticeable on the south and west. It originally consisted of a polygonal enclosure with four towers and a motte at its southern angle but only three sides of the enclosure, the gatehouse and the lower courses of two towers survive today (Fig. 86). The castle enclosed an area of approximately 0.43

hectares. There is a water tower within the enclosure and the area is now used as a County Council yard. All of the surviving features are of fifteenth century date but the overall shape of the enclosure suggests that the fifteenth century buildings are following a thirteenth century plan.

#### The Gatehouse

Access to the castle was by means of a gatehouse on the eastern wall. This is a rectangular structure of four floors which is still inhabited and has recieved many modifications. The masonry consists of uncoursed rubble limestone. There is an external batter on the north, east and south walls. Internal ground level is about 3 m higher than external and, like the barbican of Trim castle, access must have been by means of a timber gangway leading to the rounded entrance on the east wall. The entrance is now filled with a rectangular sash window. The entrance passage itself is simply a rectangular chamber with a pointed-arched recess on the north and south sides; that on the south has been expanded and a brick window has been inserted. On the north side of the western exit is a flat-headed passage which leads to the stair giving access to the first floor above. Below the ground floor is a basement with a rectangular brick window, clearly an insertion, in its east wall. The stair to the first floor was lit by a round-arched window and a smaller splayed window, now blocked. Part of its north wall has been broken out in order to link the gatehouse with the modern extension on the north. The entrance to the first floor is



lit by a parallel-sided slit window with internal splay and flat rear arch. The floor consists of a rectangular chamber lit by windows in the east and west walls and a garderobe in the south-west angle, which is now blocked off. The east window was a splayed twin-light originally but it is now occupied by a modern sash window. The west window, a single light with concave splay, is now blocked. The south wall has a large pointed recess, a modern fireplace in the centre of the wall, and an L-shaped garderobe in the south-west angle. The entrance to the stair leading to the second floor is in the north wall. It is lit by a large parallel-sided slit window. The north wall of the second floor contains a long narrow chamber which runs the length of the wall and is lit by a narrow, splayed, flat-arched window in the east and west walls, a rectangular twin-light round-arched window in the north wall, now blocked, and a loop at the north-east angle. The rectangular chamber has a twin-light round-headed window with limestone jambs, missing its centre mullion, in the east wall. Access to the parapet is from a stair in the south wall of the second floor, lit by a twin-light rectangular window, now blocked and lacking its mullion. The south-east angle is lit by a loop and a small splayed window, now blocked, in the south wall. The presence of a narrow chamber, now blocked off, in the south-west angle is evidenced by an external window. The roof and parapet are of modern date.

The motte

All trace of the motte has gone but Roque's map of 1757

shows a mound at the southern angle of the curtain wall. The thickness of the wall, where it can be measured, is around

#### The South-west Tower

Sherrard's map of Kildare in 1758 shows a rectangular structure, labelled 'old tower' on the west side of the curtain wall but all trace above ground is now missing.

Their exact course and the area enclosed remains problematical.

#### The North-west Tower

The remains of this structure are incorporated into the rear of Graham's Bakery on the corner of Market Sq. and Station Road. It appears to have been rectangular and was possibly open-backed. The visible wall is 1.6m thick and the tower has maximum dimensions of 9.8 by 4m.

#### The North-east Tower

This consists of the remains of an open-backed rectangular structure with a maximum length of 8.8m; its width cannot be calculated. Internal ground level is some 6 m above the exterior at this point.

The Curtain Wall

The battered wall, built of uncoursed limestone, survives on the north-east, north-west, and parts of the south-east and south-west sides. Externally its height ranges between five and six metres but internally it is 1.5 m high on average. The exterior of the western wall is inaccessible

because it forms the back wall of several structures. The thickness of the wall, where it can be measured at ground level, is 1.6m.

6. TOWN DEFENCES

There are no surviving traces of town defences and both their exact course and the area enclosed remains problematic. The earliest documentary evidence occurs in Henry VIII's charter of 1515 which authorised the burgesses to enclose the town with stone walls and fosses, and granted them murage to pay for this (MacNiocaill 1984a, 178-81). This document cannot be taken as proof that walls were erected at that date, however, and the first clear references to town defences do not occur until the later seventeenth century.

CLARE GATE

First mentioned in 1674 (PRONI D.3078/2/3/5) it evidently stood near the west end of Claregate Street. Its precise position is now unknown but Rocque's map shows an indentation of the street line at the point shown on Fig. 85, which would suggest that this was the location of the gatehouse.

FIRE CASTLE

This building stood to the west of the cathedral, on the south side of Church Lane. It is first referred to as the 'fire castle' in 1674 (PRONI D.3078/2/3/5) and two walls of it are shown on Rocque's map of Kildare in 1757 (see Fig.



85), where they project into Church Lane. This may be the castle belonging to the convent of St. Brigid de Fyrehouse, which is referred to in the Dissolution documents of 1540 as a 'small castle or fortillage' and described as lying within the precincts of the nunnery (White 1943, 163).

#### ELLIS GATE

First mentioned with the other gates in 1674, it appears to have been located on Station Road. Its position is now unknown but, in common with gatehouses elsewhere, it was probably located on the crest of the ridge, before Station Road drops towards the north.

#### WHITE GATE

Also mentioned in 1674 for the first time, this was located at the eastern end of the town, in Dublin Street but its precise position is unknown. Topographically it is possible to suggest that Dublin Street has developed in two stages. The first of these is marked by the block of burgage plots on the south side of the street which terminate in a long linear boundary running east from Bride Street. The second stage was an extension of this pattern and is indicated by the property block on both sides of the street whose internal boundaries are aligned at a more acute angle than those on the west. The position of stage 1, in the core of the town, indicates that it is the earlier and a late medieval date may be proposed. Stage 2 is an addition and is

Probably post-medieval. If this analysis is correct it suggests that the White Gate should be located at the point where the eastern limit of stage 1 meets Dublin Street (Fig. 85).

#### POSSIBLE OUTLINE OF TOWN DEFENCES

The suggested locations of these gates together with the old name for Academy Street, "Black ditch or Cleamore Street", recorded by Rocque, makes it possible to propose a tentative course for the town wall in the Later Middle Ages. On the west the wall would have run from the Fire Castle to Clare Gate, then south along Academy Street to just north of St. Brigid's Square. There it turned eastwards across Bride Street and its line may be preserved on the east side of Bride Street in the property line which forms the boundary of the plots fronting Dublin Street. It then turned north to White Gate as discussed above. There are no indicators as to the line of the wall in the town's north-eastern sector where the castle is situated. On analogy with other Anglo-Norman towns it is to be expected that the castle was sited on the town's periphery and, accordingly, the absence of evidence for town defences here may be simply attributable to the fact that the castle provided all necessary defence in this area. On the north side of the town the wall should have enclosed the site of the bishop's palace in the field north of the cathedral enclosure, and it may have traced a radial course from Ellis Gate to the Fire House, perhaps preserving the line of an earlier monastic inner vallum (see Stan 1985, 86).

## 7. ST. BRIGID'S CATHEDRAL AND EARLY MONASTIC ENCLOSURE

### EARLY MONASTIC ENCLOSURE

The street pattern of Kildare preserves a number of radial features which are almost certainly the relict remains of pre-Norman enclosures. At least two can be suggested, and it is possible that the present churchyard formed a third.

#### Inner Enclosure

The present cathedral and round tower are located within a sub-rectangular churchyard which may have formed the innermost enclosure. The bulge in Station Road, however, is more likely to preserve an ancient boundary. The continuation of this curve on the north side of the cathedral can be seen as a cropmark in the aerial view (Fig. 89). Continuing the line of this curve, it would have crossed Church Lane at the approximate location of the Fire Castle, discussed above in relation to the medieval defences. The south side of this enclosure would have been formed by Claregate Street.

#### Outer Enclosure

The radial course of Priest's Lane, Academy Street, St. Brigid's Square and Convent Road was almost certainly influenced by the outline of this enclosure and it is likely that parts of it were incorporated into the defences of the Anglo-Norman town, as at Kells, Co. Meath. On the north-west and west, the vallum probably lay somewhat within Priest's

indicated by the position of the long property boundary running east from Bride Street. The eastern boundary of the enclosure is not immediately evident but it may be the same as that of the medieval defences postulated above. North of the castle, Rocque's map shows a long property boundary running north towards Station Road. From there it passed, probably behind the houses on Lourdesville, to the kink in the road at the foot of Chapel Hill.

#### ST. BRIGID'S CATHEDRAL

The cathedral is the successor of the pre-Norman church of Kildare. Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 83) suggest that Kildare remained strongly monastic until the end of the twelfth century. The first English bishop, Ralph of Bristol, was not appointed until 1223 and Ware recorded that the cathedral was then in a ruinous state and that Bishop Ralph rebuilt it. The oldest fabric of the present building has been attributed to him by Leask (1960, 89) and others. In 1395 an indulgence was granted to aid the repair of the cathedral (Bliss and Twemlow 1902, 507) and the addition of its stepped parapets has been attributed to this period by Leask (1960, 89). Further repairs and the building of a college are attributed to Bishop Edmund Lane, c.1482-4 (Buchanan 1972, 11).

By 1604, however, the roof of the cathedral was ruinous,

having been pulled down in the attack of 1598 (Buchanan 1972, 11). It was still ruinous in 1611 (Brewer and Bullen 1873, 155) and 1615 (Buchanan 1972, 11). It has been stated frequently that the cathedral tower was bombarded by Castlehaven in 1641 but Cowell (1896-8, 248) considered this unlikely because no traces of battering or cannon balls have ever been found and the collapse of the tower, chancel and north transept was most likely due to the natural failure of its foundations. In 1686 the choir was rebuilt by Bishop William Moreton and it served as the cathedral until the restoration of the entire structure in the late nineteenth century (Craig 1931, 20; Buchanan 1972, 11). By that time the only surviving parts of the medieval structure were the north and south walls of the nave, the walls of the south transept, the south wall of the central tower and possibly parts of the chancel (Figs. 92-3). The reconstruction of the cathedral resulted in the discovery of a number of archaeological finds including two fragmentary pre-Norman slabs (JKAS 4 (1903-5, 379), two burials within the foundations of the south wall of the chancel (Cowell 1899-1902; JRSAL 22 (1892), 186-8), and also a number of floor tiles (JRSAL 22 (1892), 186-8).

#### Description (Figs. 91-4)

The building consists of a nave, chancel, crossing tower and transepts. It is built of unevenly coursed limestone with well cut ashlar quoins. The north transept, the greater part of the chancel, the west windows of the nave, and the east, north and west walls of the tower were entirely rebuilt



during the restoration of 1896.

#### The Chancel

Internally this measures 10 by 7m but only about 5 m of the south wall beside the tower is original. External buttresses, in keeping with the nave, were built in the nineteenth century restoration. The east wall has three graded lancets above a blank arcade of trefoil-headed arches with pointed canopies. The restored north and south walls are each lit by two lancets.

#### The Crossing Tower

The south wall, one-third of the arch on the south side of the west wall, and the east wall to arch level constitute the original medieval fabric. The tower is almost square in plan and rises from square piers with centrally attached shafts. The western piers have the addition of corner shafts on the sides facing into the nave. High pointed arches open into the nave, chancel and transepts. Access to the upper floors is via a spiral stair in a modern octagonal turret, projecting from the north-west angle. The first floor was the belfry stage and it has two pointed windows in each wall; these look onto the roof and have pointed hood mouldings externally. The second floor is marked by an external string course, supported on small corbels, and the walls are stepped in slightly above it. There are three small pointed windows with chamfered granite jambs in each wall on this floor. A stepped parapet, supported on a drainage course, rises above

this floor. The walls are decorated internally by six buttresses on

#### The North Transept

This was entirely rebuilt in the nineteenth century and was closely modelled on the south transept. It has three lancets in the west wall just as the south transept had originally. There may have been a chapel on the east side to maintain the symmetry of the south transept but the wall is now lit by three lancets.

#### The South Transept

The main entrance to the church is through a modern pointed door in the east wall which has been inserted into an earlier large pointed arch. Leask (1960, 89) has suggested that there was a chapel projecting from each transept and the gable line of this chapel is evident externally above the door. The south wall is lit by three graded lancets with pointed rear arches and rounded mouldings running down to the sill. The curved tapering label stops of the inner hood mouldings end about 1m below the top of the window and are similar to those in the nave. The western one has a small head with large pouting lips. The tip of the gable appears to have been rebuilt. There were three narrow pointed lancets in the west wall originally but it now has two plain modern lancets.

#### The Nave



The nave is 9.5m wide by 24m in length and lacks aisles. The walls are supported externally by six buttresses at intervals of approximately 3m. These are joined at the top by pointed arches and form an arcade of six bays, five of which frame a lancet, and the other frames a door. The window nearest the tower is a pointed twin-light. The example in the north wall is probably of nineteenth century date but the southern window is clearly shown in the pre-restoration drawing (Fig. 93). The internal jambs have a concave and convex moulding rising from the sill with a moulded capital decorated with dog-tooth ornament at the impost. The third bay from the west contains a pointed door. The northern example is blocked up but it is visible in the pre-restoration drawing (Fig. 92). The southern door is shown as a blocked one in the pre-restoration sketch (Fig. 93) and its external jambs are modern. Internally the door is flat-arched and there is a small pointed window above. The remaining lancets have pointed rear-arches with moulded capitals and labels terminating in curved stops decorated with dog-tooth or fleur-de-lys. Some of the north wall's mouldings and capitals are modern replacements. The west wall has been largely rebuilt although the north and south returns are probably original. The nineteenth century sketch shows a wall standing to a height of about 2.5 m and a centrally placed flat-arched door, but this is no longer visible. The wall is now lit by three modern graded lancets. The battlements were added in the nineteenth century.

#### ROUND TOWER

Situated north-west of the medieval cathedral. The masonry is of two types. The base and lower courses are of evenly coursed granite while above this the masonry consists of roughly coursed limestone. Barrow (1979, 118-22) notes a further break in the stonework at the sill of the third storey window. The tower is 32.6m high and 5.35m wide above the base. It has seven floors all of which are supported on corbels except for the third floor, which is slightly off-set, and the sixth, which has a wide off-set and no corbels. The door of dressed red sandstone is the most striking feature of the tower. It faces south-east and is set 4.67m above external ground level. It is a Romanesque door of four orders with a tangent gable above, and, as De Paor (1967, 137) has remarked, it is in effect a double porch. The outer (first) order is modern; the second order has chevron decoration on the outer face of the moulding with low mouldings and a chevron motif on the soffit. The jambs of the fourth are decorated with square foliated capitals and the soffit has chevron patterns forming lozenges which enclose rosettes. There are narrow pointed splayed windows in the second, third, fourth and fifth floors while the top floor has five windows. These are not as high as they were originally because the base of each has been blocked. The battlements were added in the eighteenth century.

#### SITE OF FIREHOUSE

Old sketches show the gable of a building north of the cathedral but the only remains in this position today consist of a small rectangular hollow 4.44 by 3.48m, enclosed by rubble built walls some 60cm high and 1m wide.

'CELL'. ?FITZGERALD MORTUARY CHAPEL (Fig.96)

A small barrell-vaulted underground room orientated north-south lies immediately east of the cathedral. The presence of a flat-lintelled window, with internal splay, in the south wall shows that it was originally overground. It is now entered from the west through a rectangular opening reached by eleven steps from modern ground level above. It measures 4.35 by 3.1m. The flagged floor was probably lower than at present and the roof has wicker work centering. Below the window in the south wall is a long shallow niche at ground level. There is a recessed niche with flattened arch at floor level in the north wall. The northern part of the roof has collapsed and a modern grave slab covers the hole.

Stone-roofed Chamber

At the east end of the cathedral and north of the 'cell' is a small stone roofed chamber measuring 1.4 by 1.5m. The roof of this structure is 70cm above present ground level. It is probably part of a burial vault.

Leigh Mortuary Chapel

North-east of the cathedral are the footings of two walls which may have been the mortuary chapel for the Leigh family.



# Architectural fragments

Altar stone. Date uncertain.

Lying outside the north wall of the nave. Rectangular block of limestone with an overhang on one long side. Centre incised with a simple Latin cross.

Dims: L. 148 W. 60 T. 24 cm.

Window spandrel. 16th cent.

South transept. Centre spandrel of a sandstone twin light cusped ogee-headed window grooved for glass.

Dims: H. 31 W. 56 T. 25 cm.

Window-head. 16th-17th cents.

Resting on the Heweston wall memorial (1658) in the south transept is the centre part of a limestone window head with undecorated hollow spandrels.

Dims: H. 27 W. 30 T. 15 cm.

Piscina. 17th cent.

South Transept. Limestone block with a shallow bowl, formed of radiating concave scallops tapering towards a central drainage hole.

Dims: H. 39 W. 36 T. 18 cm.

Diam. of basin 20 cm.

## MONUMENTS

High Cross. Pre-1200.

A damaged undecorated ringed cross of granite is set in a large base south-west of the cathedral. The upper half of the pierced ring is missing and the shaft tapers towards the ring. The base is two-tiered on the east, south and west giving the impression of a plinth close to the ground.

Dims: Shaft: H. c.300 W. 56 X 31 cm

Base: H. 122 W. 132 X 136 cm

Probable cross base (Fig. 97). Pre-1200.

A tall granite monolith with a rectangular basin or mortice is placed within the cathedral on the south side of the nave. The upper two-thirds of the column have chamfered edges. Usually described as a font (e.g. Paterson 1982, 13) it lacks a drainage hole and the sides of the basin are splayed outwards slightly. A grooved line (?modern) runs along the undamaged sections of the rim.

Dims: H. 97 W. 62 W. 50 cm

Mortice: D. 15 W. 44 X 30

Cross-slab. Probably 10th cent. (Fig. 100) Limestone. In two fragments, now preserved in the Chapter House. Decorated in false relief with interlace and key patterns flanking two ringed crosses which are connected by a panel of interlace. Possibly a motif-piece. (FitzGerald 1903-5b, 379).

Dims: H.32 W.35 T. 6-8 cm.

Cross-slab (Fig. 98). Prob. 11-12th cents.



In south transept. Granite. Lower half. Chamfered on one side and decorated with the stem of a cross, outlined by two grooves, whose foot terminates in a bulbar extension. It is somewhat similar to a cross slab at Iniscealtra, Co. Clare which has a lobed foot (Macalister 1949, Pl. 38: no. 891).

Dims: L. 91 W. 34 T. 20 cm. *Carved, both and the circular feet on the right side of the body. On either side of the*  
Cross-slab. Pre-1200 (Fig. 101).

Limestone. In two pieces, now preserved in the Chapter House. Decorated in false relief with a Maltese cross within a circle. This is outlined on three sides by three deeply scored lines, having a two-line interlaced S-scroll at the corner. The remains of a decorated panel survive on the fourth side. Possibly a motif-piece (FitzGerald 1903-5b, 379).

Dims: Calculated H.17 W.14 *Carved. Slightly coffin-shaped, with the cross*  
H.22 W.13 *Decorated with a two-line*

Cross-slab (Fig. 99). Pre-1200.

In south transept. Rectangular. Granite. Decorated in false relief with a Greek cross with splayed terminals. There are two circles in the centre.

Dims: H. 51 W. 39 T. 20 cm. *Relieved, grooved after 1848*  
*Carved in high relief on a large*

Effigy of a bishop (Fig. 103). 13th cent. *badly fragmented*  
Chancel. Effigy carved in relief on a coffin-shaped limestone slab. One long side and part of the two narrow sides are decorated with stiff-leaf foliage. The figure has both hands



resting flat on the chest and is wearing an amice, a full soft chasuble, a dalmatic, a stole with fringed ends and an alb. His head rests on a single rectangular cushion and the feet appear to lie against an animal, possibly a bird, missing its head and tail. He wears a maniple over the left wrist, the mitre is worn over curled hair and the crozier rests on the right side of the body. On either side of the head there is an angel with a censer. He wears gloves and has a ring on the second finger of the right hand. The figure is traditionally identified as John of Taunton, the bishop of Kildare who died in 1258.

Dims: L. 190 W. 64-50 T. 33 cm.

Hunt 1974, no. 87, pls.69-70.

Cross-slab (Fig. 102). Probably 13th-14th cents.

South Transept. Fine-grained granite. Slightly coffin-shaped, missing the upper left corner. Decorated with a two-line Latin cross with expanded terminals outlined by a recessed channel.

Dims: L. 153 W. 48-36 T. 22 cm.

Effigy of a bishop. 14th cent.

Brought into the cathedral from Religien graveyard after 1969 (Hunt 1974, no. 88, Pl. 82). Carved in high relief on a very large tapering block of limestone which is badly fragmented and is lacking all the lower part of the body. The figure is dressed in a chasuble, alb, gloves, maniple, amice/ Kerchief around the neck. He wears a mitre and carries a foliated

crozier turned outwards in the left hand. His right hand is raised in blessing. The figure is placed under a crocketed ogee-headed canopy supported by small figures and the sides are further embellished with spirals.

Dims: L. 180 W. 64 T. 36 cm.

Cross-slab. Prob. 14th cent.

South transept. Lower half of a coffin shaped slab with the narrow shaft of a cross in false relief in the centre. The lower left corner is damaged. Worn incised Lombardic letters on both sides of the shaft: PPC/ ORATE P .. LOD O.

Dims: L. 77 W. 39-31 T. 18 cm.

Walter Wellesley, bishop of Kildare. 1539. (Fig. 104).

South transept. Limestone table tomb, originally from Great Connell. The end panels are complete but the side panels only survive in fragmentary sections. The Bishop is depicted under a pinnacled and crocketed canopy which is supported by two angels carrying shields emblazoned with crosses, the arms of Wellesley. He wears an amice or neck-scarf, a chasuble decorated with a central panel of fine embroidery, a dalmatic fringed around the edges, an alb and girdle. His manipulated left hand holds a foliated in-turned crozier and the gloved right hand is raised in blessing. There was a small animal at his left foot but it has been broken away and the feet rest against a socle decorated with foliage. The lower edge of the slab has a concave chamfer decorated in relief with sprays of foliage, three face masks with foliage springing from the



mouth ("green men"), two grotesques, one figure blowing two trumpets and a shiela-na-gig. Marginal inscription in incised Gothic lettering:

HIC JACET FRATER WALTERUS WELLYSLIEY QUODAM EPUS DAREN  
AC HUJ DOMUS/ COMMENDATARIUS CUIUS AIE PPICIETUR DEUS Q  
OBII IT] AN[NO DOMIINI MCCC (unfinished)

Translation: Here lies brother Walter Wellesley,  
formerly bishop of Kildare and commendatory prior of  
this house, on whose soul God have mercy, who died in  
the year of the Lord 15[39]

The reconstructed tomb panels consist of a number of  
fragments which appear to have been carved by different  
hands. The eastern side panel did not belong to this tomb  
originally. Head end-panel: Ecce Homo; foot end-panel:  
crucifixion; western side panel (in two fragments): three of  
the four niches survive depicting SS John the Evangelist,  
Patrick and Peter; eastern side panel: SS Andrew, Thaddeus  
and Matthias. "The monument is the finest of its period  
remaining in Ireland" (Hunt 1974, 163).

Dims: Mensa: L. 190 W. 98 T. 24

End panel (head): H. 69 W. 81 T. 13 cm.

Foot panel H. 70 W. 54 T. 14

West panel (a) H. 42 W. 40 T. 15

West panel (b) H. 42 W. 40 T. 15

East panel H. 70 W. 107 T. 13cm.

Hunt 1974, no. 89, pls. 186, 218-26.

Richard Fitzgerald of Lackagh. 1575 (Fig. 105).

South Transept. Rectangular limestone slab with an armoured effigy in high relief. The figure is dressed in a suit of Italianate armour. The helmet has a central rib and is embossed with foliage designs. The face was bearded but is now very worn. The hands were joined on the breast but the tips of the fingers are missing as are the feet. A ruff can be seen above the collar and the chest is encased in armour, decorated with marigolds, over which two chains are worn. The arms are covered in lames with foliated couters and the thighs and upper legs are protected by lames while the lower legs are encased in plate armour with foliated poleyns at the knees. The long sword, missing its lower part, has a round pommel with S-shaped cross guard, and hangs from the waist belt by rings. The head rests on a rectangular decorated pillow; the feet probably rested on a dog but this part of the stone has been removed. There are five heater-shaped shields with coats of arms on the dexter side: (1) cross saltire and crescent for Fitzgerald; (2) damaged; (3) Three crescents in chief; (4) larger shield, divided per pale, 1st and 4th: a saltire and crescent; 2nd: three crescents in chief; 3rd: divided per pale by a chevron; (5) divided per pale by a chevron. Incised marginal inscription:

DOMINA MARGARETA B...../ MONVMENTVM FIERI FECIT OB ME  
.... AVV RICH FITZGERALDE/ DE LACKAGHE MILITIS QVONDAM/  
SVI MARITI QVI OBIIT XX [di]E DECEMBRIS ANNO DOMINI  
1575/ WALTERVS/ BRENNAGH ME FECIT.



Dims: L. 246 W. 116 T. 28 cm.

NLI Ms. 772, 4, 2-3; Price 1942, 11-12; ; FitzGerald 1895-7a;

FitzGerald 1895-7b, 254-6

16th cent. tomb 1 (Fig. 108). The South transept. Rectangular end panel decorated in low relief with a crucifixion. The entire surface of the stone is carved. Christ is nailed to a ribbed Latin cross. He is flanked by two female figures, possibly Mary and Mary Magdalen. The letters INRI are on a scroll above the cross. There is a trailing foliage pattern on either side.

Dims: H. 53 W.36 T.17 cm.

Christ's body nailed to a Latin cross.

16th cent. tomb 2. (Fig. 110) The South transept. Two rectangular limestone side panels. False

relief inscription along the top margin in Roman lettering:

HAEC REQVIES MEA IN SECLA SECL... ABITABO QUONIAM  
ELEGIEAM

a) Decorated in low false relief with three ogee-headed niches, separated by low relief pilasters decorated with undulating stems of foliage sprouting from the mouth of an animal. The animals include a wolf, a fox, a rabbit and a cock. The spandrels are filled with foliage.

b) Similarly decorated with a goat, a swan/goose, a unicorn and an animal with horns, clawed feet and a tail. The return of this panel has an interlaced stem of foliage issuing from an anchor-like cross on steps.

Dims: a) L. 91.5 H.50 T.21

b) L. 109 H. 53 T. 21 cm.

16th cent. tomb 3 (Fig. 109).

Four fragments of an elaborate limestone table tomb, three of which are preserved in the south transept, the fourth is placed against the chancel's external east wall.

a) Rectangular side panel decorated on the long side and one with figures in false relief on which are decorated by return in false relief. It has an upper border of bead and reel decoration below which there is a spiral and a pelican feeding her young in a nest. The figure is wearing a crown in piety. The edge of the panel has a foliated stem. The wider face has a recessed panel with a crucifixion depicting Christ's body nailed to a Latin cross.

Dims: H. 53 W. 109 T. 21 cm.

b) Square panel decorated in low false relief with ogee-headed niches and an upper border of bead and reel moulding. The niches are separated by pilasters decorated with foliated stems and the spandrels are filled with foliage and animals, among which is a sheep and a winged animal with both probably derive from the tomb tomb chest as the black talons (Fig. 109).

c) Only the upper half survives with the bead and reel border and parts of two ogee-headed niches. The spandrels have part of an animal, an ivy leaf, a bunch of grapes, a fox-and-goose, and three human heads.

d) The piece in the churchyard is a side panel decorated on one end of the long side in false relief with a stem of foliage below a margin decorated with a bead and reel moulding. The narrow return also has a stem of foliage with an animal above.

Dims: a) H. 61.5 W. 59 T. 22



b) H. 62 W. 62 T. 16

c) H. 37 W. 79 T. 16

d) H. 55 W. 71 T. 10 cm.

16th century tomb 4.

South transept. Two pieces.

a) Lower part of a limestone side panel fragment, decorated with figures in false relief in niches separated by demi-octagonal pillarettes. One figure is wearing a round necked tunic buttoned down the front with a cloak over the shoulders. He is moustached and bearded and carries a staff or spear. Only part of the next figure survives.

Dims: H. 53 W. 33 T. 13 cm.

b) Parts of two figures in similar niches are dressed in tunics and cloaks. One holds a book.

Dims: H. 38 W. 40 T. 13 cm.

Both probably derive from the same tomb chest as the pieces in the modern Carmelite church, which came originally from the Franciscan Friary (Hunt 1974, no. 90, pl. 232).

16th century tomb 5.

South Transept. Two limestone fragments of a side panel which is decorated with two and a half crocketed and cusped empty ogee-headed niches. The lower part of the panel is missing.

Dims: a) H. 40 W. 48 T. 13

b) H. 44 W. 52 T. 13 cm.

A third fragment lies in the chapter house.

Dims: H. 28 W. 28 T. 13 cm.

Fitzgerald grave slab. 16th cent.

Badly damaged limestone fragment with a worn marginal

inscription in Roman lettering: ...RALD ET...

Dims: L. 64 W. 48 T. 24 cm.

Cross-slab. 16th cent.

South Transept. Upper corner of a limestone slab decorated in false relief with an eight armed fleur-de-lys cross. Marginal inscription in Roman lettering:

...TUR DEUS AM/ EN DA.

Dims: H. 51 W. 35 T. 18 cm.

Cross-slab. 16th cent.

South transept. Slightly tapering limestone slab decorated in false relief with an eight armed fleur-de-lys cross having a barred knop and its base set on steps. In two pieces.

Dims: L. 174 W. 57-49 T. 22 cm.

Pardon stone. 16th cent. (Fig. 106).

South transept. Rectangular limestone panel decorated on one long side and one narrow side in false relief. The long side has a crucifixion and an Ecce Homo separated by a figure in plate armour who wears a pisane, carries a spear, and has a sword suspended from the waist; the word CENNRIO is placed horizontally beside the figure. On the left Christ is nailed to a Latin cross with INRI above. The head is bent to one side but the face is damaged. On either side of the figure



are flying angels pulling long screws from His hands while another angel flies upside down below His feet holding a chalice to catch the blood. On the left side of the plaque the upper part of Christ's body is shown against the cross. He is haloed and the hands are crossed. There is an IHS above and ECCE HOMO below. Inscription on scroll beneath:

TO THEM THAT DEVOUTLY SAY/ V PR NR & V AVE BEFOR THIS/  
YMAGE AR GRANT XXVI IERS & XXVI DAYES OF PARDON

The narrow side of the stone has a depiction of St Michael weighing souls (Roe 1976, 262).

Dims: H. 36 W. 78 T. 18

Dragon panel. 16th cent. (Fig. 107).

South transept. Sub-rectangular limestone panel decorated in relief on two sides. The stone is sharply angled on one narrow side and there is a rectangular mortice at the back. The long side has a large winged dragon whose head is twisted back on his body biting the stem of a large leafy spray. The creature has fierce claws and a raised tail which is partly missing. The narrow side has a large leaf and an animal head from whose mouth spring two sprays of foliage.

Dims: H. 44 W. 65 T. 23

Heraldic plaque. 16th cent.

Chapter House. Limestone fragment split in two horizontally. Decorated with a heater shaped shield with a cross emblazoned with five scallops, the arms of bishop Wellesley, and it may

originally have been part of his tomb. Marginal Gothic lettered inscription in false relief SINIII 7EAEY.

Dims: H. 50 W. 36 T. 10 cm.

FitzGerald 1896-8c, 314.

John Ly & Amy FitzGerald. 1612

On chancel's north side, in collapsed mortuary chapel.

Coffin-shaped limestone slab decorated in false relief with a marginal inscription in Roman capitals and a maltese cross on steps. Marginal inscription:

ORATE PRO ANIMABVS IOHANNIS LY DE RABRID ARMIGER/ ET AMY  
FITZGERALD/ VXORI EIVS/ COMMENDAMVS/ ANIMAS NOSTRAS IN  
MANVS SALVATORIS DOMINI NOSTRI IESV/ CRISTI

and on the cross-shaft

DATVM VII DIE MAY 1612 IOHANNIS LI.

INRI over the cross and NICC.. at the foot.

Dims: L. 233 W. 78-58 T. 15 cm

Price 1942, 11-12; FitzGerald 1888-91a, 413.

Grave slab. 1616-19.

Lying against the east wall of the cathedral. Fragment of a rectangular slab decorated in false relief with the Roman capitals C.D. and the date 161. The final numeral is worn but it is either, 6, 8 or 9. Most of the surface of the stone is gone.

Dims: H. 48 W. 54 T. 15 cm.



James FitzGerald and Mary Wogan. 1618.

South Transept. Rectangular limestone slab decorated in low false relief with a cross and a coat of arms. The cross has expanded terminals and part of the inscription is carried on the shaft. The arms are upside down at the foot of the cross. The heater shaped shield is divided per pale with a cross saltire and a molet for a third son in the sinister while the dexter has three birds in chief for Sutton. Inscription in Roman capitals:

MISEREMINI MEI MISEREMINI MEI SAL:/ TEMUOS AMICII MEI  
IESUS : NAM/ MICHI HODIE CRAS UOBIS/ ORATE PRO ANIMABUS  
REDMUNDI F/ ITZGERALD ET ANNAE SUTTON U/ XORIIS EIUS ET  
PRO ANIMABUS IACOBI FITZGE/ ALD ET MARIAE WOGAN UXORIS  
EIUS QUI HOC/ MONUMENTUM FIERI FECERUNT/ IDEM IACOBUS  
OBIIT 24 IUNII 1618.

Dims: L. 206 W. 76 T. 14 cm.

FitzGerald 1888-91a, 413-14; Idem. 1910-12, 97.

Walter Walsh. 1621.

Large rectangular limestone slab missing a triangular section in the middle. Decorated in relief and false relief with an undulating band of foliage and a depiction of St Michael on the right margin, the four evangelists in the corners, and an achievement of arms at one end. The foliage appears to be a combination of acorns, ivy and vine leaves. St Michael, blowing a trumpet, is labelled MICHAEL ARCHA. The names of the evangelists are also inscribed. Main inscription is in

Roman capitals, centrally placed:

HOC MONUMENTUM/ FIERI FECIT WALTE=/ RUS WALSHAEUS/  
ARMIGER QUOND=/ AM DE KILDARE=/ ORIUNDUS EX A=/ NTIQUA  
PRO SAP=/ ia de castELHE=/ aliuu O DICTe=/ a familiaER  
=/ e desmond/ shao WA/ ... AL/ ... QUI O=/ biit 12 DIE  
APRILIS/ ANNO DOMINI 1621.

Dims: L. 220 W. 90 T. 20 cm.

Price 1942, 11-12; FitzGerald 1891-5a, 144-6; J. Assoc.

Preservation Memorials Dead Ireland 1 (1888-91), 410-11.

John Heweston. 1658.

South transept, south wall. Rectangular limestone wall  
tablet, within a moulded frame set on two consoles. Incised  
inscription in a mixture of Roman lettering and script:

HERE VNDERNEATH LYETH THE BODY OF IOHN HE/ WESTON ESQ HE  
WAS BORNE ATT SETTRINGTON IN/ YORKESHIRE AND DYED THE 2  
DAY OF FEBRU 1658/ AGED 45 YEARES THIS MONUMENT WAS  
ERECTED AS A MEMORIAL OF HIM BY CHRISTIAN HIS WIF BY  
WHOM HE/ HAD ISSUE ONE SONNO AND TWO DAUGHTERS THE YO/  
UNGER DYED THE YERE OF HER AGE AND IS INTER/ ED BY HER  
Father

Dims: L. 114 H. 51 T. 23 cm.

Kittson 1888-91, 90; Jrl. Assoc. Preservation Mems Dead 6  
(1904-6), 562.

Plaque. 1683.



South Transept. Limestone block with an incised inscription in Roman letters

HERE WILL L[ie] BISHOP/ OF KILDARE/ AUG 3 1683.  
OF JOHN LEIGH OF BOWEN/ IN THE COUNTY OF KILDARE/ HE  
Dims: H. 46 W. 46 T. 32 cm.

THE MARRIED TO ANNE/ DAUGHTER AND HEIRESS OF/ SR. LESTER/  
FIELD/ OF WILKIN/ BARONET/ IN THE COUNTY OF WILKIN/ HE  
Henry Lyndall. 1688  
DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE 21 DAY OF MAY 1688.

Limestone memorial removed from the interior of the Cathedral at the time of the restoration. Now in two pieces, outside the east end of the chancel. Incised Roman lettered inscription:

HERE LYETH ye BODY OF HEN/ RY LYNDALL DESEASED YE 8 DAY/  
OF APR AND SARAH LYNDALL/ deCEASED ye 21 OF APRIL 1688.

Dims: H. 39 W. 48 T. 10 cm.  
Fitzgerald, 1904-6b.  
is similar to face 1 but is undecipherable. The rectangular panel  
Ussher Belwood. 1691

Removed from the cathedral at the time of the restoration. It now lies on the ground at the north side of the cathedral.  
Inscription in incised script and Roman lettering:

HERE LYETH THE/ BODY OF/ USSHER BELWOOD HE DE-ART/ ED  
THIS 14 DAY OF/ JANVARY 1691.

Dims: H. 49 W. 61 T. 9 cm  
FitzGerald, 1904-6b.

Robert Leigh-Colcough. 1695  
On chancel's north side, in collapsed mortuary chapel.

Rectangular limestone slab. Incised inscription in Roman capitals:

HERE LYES THE BODY OF ROBERT/ LEIGH COLCLOUGH ESQ SECOND/ SON  
OF IOHN LEIGH OF RAHTBRIDE/ IN THE COVNTY OF KILDARE ESQ/ HE  
WAS MARRIED TO MARGARET/ DAUGHTER AND HEIRESS OF SR CAESAR/  
COLCLOUGH OF TINTERN BARONETT/ IN THE COVNTY OF WAXFORD/ HE  
DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE 27 DAY OF MAY 1695.

Dims: L. 194 W. 98 cm

FitzGerald 1898-90, 77-8

Cross shaft. 17th cent.

South Transept. Limestone fragment with a two tiered tenon on top. Rather worn. The center of one face has been removed because it was used as a gatepost in Lackagh. Face 1: upper part of Christ's body, nailed to a plain Latin cross. Face 2 is similar to face 1 but is undamaged. The rectangular panel above Christ's head has the letters M B. Face 3: a heater-shaped shield bearing a cross saltire and a crescent, with a small figure below with head turned sideways. Side 4: blank heater-shaped shield, with a small figure holding a scroll below.

Dims: H. 51. W. 32 T. 18 cm

Cross plaque. 17th cent.

North transept. Small limestone block with a Latin cross on a sloping foot carved in high relief on one face. The surface of the cross is decorated in low relief with foliage on the

arms, pocking in the centre and the shaft has a herring-bone pattern.

Dims: H. 36 W. 22 T. 13 cm.

#### Miscellaneous

##### Paten 1686

Gilt paten inscribed in Roman capitals 'DEO ET ALTARI ECCLESIAE CATHEDRALIS STAE BRIGIDAE DARENSIS SACRUM' and in small letters on the reverse 'EX UNITIS DEVOTIONIBUS MAXIME AMICORUM MICH HEWETSON ET THO. WILSON ILLE PRESBYTER ET PREBENDARIUS ECCLESIAE CATHEDRALIS STI PATRICII DUBL. HIC AD SACRUM DIACONATUS ORDINEM SOLEMNITUR ADMISSUS DIE CONSERRATIONIS HUIJUS ECCLESIA, VIZ FESTO STI PETRI 1686.

FitzGerald 1910-12, 97-8

Seal matrix of Richard Lang 1464-74 (Armstrong 1913, 47-8)

##### Medieval floor tiles

Twenty-one worn line-impressed tiles were found in the cathedral. Twenty of these are cemented into a wooden frame which is kept in the Chapter House, while No.21 is on display in the south transept. The fabric is orange in colour and they are 12 cm square and 2.5 cm thick

1-6. Part of a four tile pattern, it has an oak leaf in the corner and two small trefoils and a fleur-de-lys expanding from a double circle in the centre. There are traces of red/brown glaze on five tiles and yellow on one. Three tiles



are complete and there are three half tiles in the frame.  
(Frazer 1894, 136: Fig. 4).

7-11. Part of a four tile pattern. The centre and corners have an octafoil design within a circular band of alternating quatrefoils and concave sided rectangles. There are traces of white inlay in the design. One tile is complete and there are four half tiles. Similar to an example in St Patrick's Cathedral (Oldham, T. n.d., no. 4).

12-14. Single tile consisting of an eight-petalled flower with triangles within a double circle with an elongated trefoil in the corners. Two complete tiles and one half tile. There are faint traces of white/yellow glaze in the design. Similar tile from St Mary's Abbey (Donnelly 1887, No 4).

15-16. Two half-tiles with an oak leaf in the corner and part of a circular design which enclosed a geometric pattern. They may have been glazed red with traces of white inlay. They can be compared with tiles from St Mary's Abbey and St. Canice's cathedral (Frazer 1895, Fig. 14).

17. Part of a nine tile pattern with a large oak leaf within a circle. Traces of red/brown glaze. Similar to examples from St Patrick's cathedral (Oldham T. n.d., nos. 12, 13a).

18. Part of a four tile pattern consisting of a quatrefoil within a double circle in the corner. There is a mouchette with triangles in the spaces between the edges of the tile and the central pattern which consists of a band of alternating quatrefoils and concave sided rectangles. The

centre of the tile has three trefoils on a single stem emanating from a circular pattern of triangles and convave sided rectangles. Traces of brown glaze. Similar to examples from St Mary's Abbey and Greenoge, co. Meath (King 1984).

19-20. Centre tile of a nine tile pattern consisting of a central circle with quatrefoil surrounded by an outer circle of alternating oak leaves and open circles. There are two complete tiles, one of which has traces of yellow glaze and the other has black inlay. Similar examples are known from St. Patrick's cathedral, Dublin (Oldham n.d., No.11).

21. A crowned lion rampant with traces of red glaze (Fig. 111).

#### 8. CARMELITE PRIORY

This priory, situated west of the cathedral, was founded in 1290 by William de Vescy (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 290). There are few documentary references to the existence of the house, however. In 1297, Walter, son of Nicholas the chaplain, was accused of breaking into the church (Mills 1905, 189) while in 1310 there was an investigation into the theft of a chest kept in "a stone house of the friars" here (Wood, Langman and Griffith 1956, 158). When it was surrendered in 1539 the priory consisted of a church and belfry, dormitory, hall, two chambers, etc. (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 290) but in 1540 all the buildings "except the church and a messuage which the friars used as their hall"

were burned by O Conchobair (White 1943, 167). The priory was granted to David Sutton in 1543 (7 RDKPRI, 65: no. 345) although Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 290) state that it was granted to William Dickson.

No trace of the priory survives today but the ruins were still standing at the end of the eighteenth century when they were drawn by Austin Cooper (Murphy 1896-8, 298; Jrl. Kildare Archaeol. Soc. 15 (1971-6), 436: pl.3, and 490). Cooper's drawing shows a roofless single-aisled church with two pointed twin-light windows in the east wall and three small traceried roundels above. The south wall had six pointed lancets and there was a flat lintelled rectangular doorway towards the west end. The remains were plotted by Rocque on his map of 1757, and this indicates that the medieval priory church stood immediately south of the modern Carmelite church.

#### Monuments

Six limestone panels are set into the north transept wall of the modern Carmelite church.

Tomb panels. 16th cent.

Two end panels said to have come from the Franciscan friary (Hunt 1974, 160). Another part of the same tomb is in Kildare Cathedral.

(1) Rectangular panel decorated in deep false relief with a depiction of Christ stripped of his garment, crowned with thorns and the hands and feet are tied. Incised in Roman

capitals to the right of the figure are the words ECCE HOMO.  
The left side of the stone has a small projecting panel with  
a long stem of foliage.

Dims: H. 72 W. 66 overall W. of panel 56 cm.

Hunt 1974, no.84, pl. 234.

(b) Rectangular panel decorated in deep false relief with a  
crucifixion in an ogee-headed panel with hollow spandrels.  
Christ is nailed to a Latin cross, and is flanked by John and  
Mary.

Dims: H. 73 W. 66 cm.

Hunt 1974, no. 83, pl.233.

Tomb fragment. 16th cent.

Narrow broken panel decorated in deep false relief with the  
upper part of a figure holding a patriarchal cross in the  
right hand, set in an ogee-headed panel with undecorated  
spandrels. Said to be from the Franciscan friary (Hunt 1974,  
160, 243).

Dims: H. 42 W. 29 cm.

Plaque. 16th cent.

Rectangular panel decorated with an animal in high relief.  
The head is turned back against the body with bared teeth and  
curved snout. The hair along the back of the animal is  
curled, the tail is foliated and the feet are clawed.

Dims: H. 40 W. 60 cm.

Tomb panel. 16th cent.

Rectangular panel decorated in relief with an undulating grape vine on the left and two animals. On the right of the panel is a centaur-like figure with a man's head and long beard, a long neck and body with two human hind legs. The tail is knotted and ends in a fleur-de-lys. In between there is a small animal, possibly a monkey, at the base of the panel. He has a small round head with long tongue and four clawed feet. His two hind legs are curved around his neck. This panel is probably part of the same monument as No. 00 in Kildare Cathedral.

Dims: H. 49 W. 61 cm.

Plaque. 16th cent.

Small rectangular panel decorated in relief with an angel in a round necked pleated garment with hands joined and wearing a head band with a fleur-de-lys. Hunt (1974, 160: no. 85) suggests that this is a depiction of St. Michael or St Gabriel.

Dims. H. 29 W. 20 cm

#### 9. FRANCISCAN FRIARY

The precise foundation date of this friary is unknown but it seems to have been established either in 1254 or 1260 by Gerald FitzMaurice, lord of Offaly, or by William de Vesey, or possibly both (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 252). Royal alms for the friary are recorded in 1276-80 (36 ROKPRI, 64). Gwynn

and Hadcock (1970, 252) state that John FitzThomas, first earl of Kildare, was buried here in 1316, but it is certain that Thomas, the second earl, who died in 1328, was buried here before the altar of the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, which he had built (MacNiocaill 1964a, 97). In 1331 Richard, the third earl, was buried on his right, before the altar of St. John (MacNiocaill 1964, 97), while in 1359, Johanna de Burgo, Thomas' widow, was buried beside him (Gilbert 1834, ii, 393). Murphy (1896-8, 301-2) has suggested that eight earls of Kildare were buried in the friary during the Middle Ages. On its surrender in 1539 the friary contained a church and belfry, a dormitory, a hall, three chambers, a kitchen and a cemetery (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 252) but the extent drawn up in 1540 noted that all the buildings, except the church and two-thirds of the cloister, had been burnt by O Conchobair in that year (White 1943, 166). The friary was granted to David Sutton in 1543 (7 ROKPRI, 65: no. 345). Matthews, writing in 1629, records that the friary was destroyed in 1547 but this is probably a mistake for 1540 (Jennings 1934, 150). He also noted that the church had been repaired by the Franciscans in 1621.

#### Description (Figs. 113-14)

The ruined and overgrown remains of the church are situated in low-lying ground, south-west of the town, within a sub-rectangular graveyard. The remains consist of a nave and chancel church, which had a side-chapel on the north

side, and the earthwork traces of the claustral buildings in the field to the south. Austin Cooper's drawing of 1791 shows that it had one, and perhaps two, shallow transepts, and the north transept opened into the north chapel (Murphy 1896-8, 300). The fabric of the church is mainly of thirteenth century date. On analogy with Kildare cathedral it would seem that the buttresses were added on the north side during the fourteenth century, probably at the time the north chapel was built, between 1316 and 1328. The east window and probably the west window were inserted in the fifteenth century. The masonry consists of roughly coursed limestone and no visible quoins or jambs are present.

#### The Chancel

The gabled east wall stands to a height of about 10 m. Both Cooper and Grose show that it had a pointed window with switchline tracery but no trace of this survives. The granite sill of what appears to be a larger window of earlier date, is present externally at the north end of the wall. The east wall buttresses have collapsed and the internal facing of the wall is missing below the window. There is a wall niche some 40cm above present ground level in the north side of the wall. The internal ground level has been raised considerably by collapse. The north wall stands to a height of about 8 m at its east end. It was supported by free-standing rectangular buttresses which have become dislodged from the wall with the passage of time, and are separate from it by as much as 40cm. Traces of a weathering survive on the western



two buttresses. The north wall was lit by six narrow lancets all of which are now in bad condition. Their jambs have been removed and only two retain their pointed rear arches. One splay alone survives of the eastern two lancets. One side of a cusped arch with concave and rounded moulding survives near the east end, set into the wall at ground level. The stone is tufa and the piece may be re-used. At the base of the east end wall is an opening but the internal line of the wall is recessed indicating a wall niche which would have matched that in the south wall. Almost directly overlooking the side chapel is a small splayed opening. The south wall survives in two sections. At its junction with the east wall it stands to a height of 3m for a distance of 3m. The middle section is largely rebuilt and stands to a height of 1.5m. The wall forms the southern boundary of the graveyard and it has been considerably refaced. Close to the east end is a shallow round arched niche 1.6m in length and 30cm deep. The jambs have been removed but the niche still retains plaster.

#### The northern side-chapel

Nothing remains of this chapel, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, but Cooper's drawing shows that it had a pointed window. Immediately east of the chapel site is a depression, some 2 m deep. This has a wall on its east side, 3.50m in length and 1.50 high, and another on the west, 2m long and 2m high. Both walls contain a pointed arch and may form part of the monastic drain.

#### The Nave

The western 6m of the north wall stands to a height of 7m. There may have been a wall cupboard at the west end of the wall but a vertical section of the internal wall facing has collapsed concealing it. Less than half of the west wall survives and the south-west corner has been entirely rebuilt. The northern half of the gable survives to a height of between 8 and 10m. The northern splay of the west window survives but its jambs are missing. The west end of the south wall has a maximum height of 4m. There are three round arched niches in the wall. The eastern one is the largest, 2.76m in length, 1.85m above present ground level and 41cm deep. The centre recess is 2.46m long, 44cm deep and 1.25m above ground level. The western one is 1.68m long, 44cm deep and 75cm above the ground. Externally the roofline of the cloister is visible near the western end.

The claustral remains

These are confined to the area immediately south of the church. The main earthwork consists of a rectangular enclosure 15.5 by 4.4m and enclosed by grass covered wall footings c.75cm high. The northern bank is 1.5m away from the south wall of the church. Two sections of the wall foundations are exposed on the south and east. They are built of roughly coursed mortared limestone. The section on the east measures 2.5 by 0.79m, and is faced on both sides. It has the return of an internal cross wall 70cm wide and 50cm in length. In the angle between the walls there is red brick blocking. The south end of this wall is squared off and may

denote an entrance. The southern section is 4.9m long, 40cm high and 82cm wide.

#### Other Features

East of the claustral remains are two low mounds of unknown function. South-west of the church is a slightly raised area. In the north-west corner of the field, north-west of the church, is a large raised rectangular platform, probably of modern origin.

#### Friars Well

South-west of the friary is a pond labelled by the D.S. map as Friar's Well. It would appear to have formed in low lying ground on the course of a small stream.

#### 10. NUNNERY OF ST. BRIGID DE FIREHOUSE

The pre-Norman monastery of Kildare was primarily a community of nuns and it is clear that this survived until the Dissolution of the monasteries. Practically nothing is known of this religious house during the Middle Ages, however, apart from the suggestion that St. Laurence O'Toole persuaded the nuns to accept the Arroasian observance after 1171 (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 320). The monastic extent made at the time of the Dissolution noted that the precincts contained a small castle or fortilage with a chapel, and that it was farmed by Francis Cosby and Raymond Oge (FitzGerald) in 1548 (White 1943, 163-4). The nunnery was leased to

Redmund FitzGerald in 1574 (12 ROKPRI, 123: no. 2421), and granted to Anthony Deeringe in 1584 (15 ROKPRI, 73: no. 4575).

The community was associated with a perpetual fire, first described by Giraldus Cambrensis in the late twelfth century, and possibly a survival from a pre-Christian sanctuary. Giraldus described the fire as having burned since the time of Brigid; it was surrounded by a circular hedge or screen made of wattles and tended by nineteen nuns who kept it perpetually alight (O'Meara 1982, 81-2). Henry of London, archbishop of Dublin, is said to have ordered the fire to be extinguished in 1220 when he was papal legate but Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 320) doubt the accuracy of this tradition. In 1395 the community was addressed as the "prioress and convent of St. Brigid de Fyrehouse of Kildare", which would suggest that the tradition of the fire continued into the later Middle Ages (Tresham 1828, 154: no. 47). Holinshed's Irish Chronicle, first published in 1577, contained an account by Richard Stanihurst which noted that he had visited at Kildare "a monument lyke a vaute, which to this day they call the firehouse" (Miller and Power 1979, 68). The foundations of a small square stone structure in the cathedral churchyard are traditionally stated to be the remains of the fire-house (Craig 1931, 25-6). A number of old drawings show an old structure in this position with a west gable standing to a height of between three and four metres, and having a ragged opening, presumably the remains of a window. There is no clear evidence, however, to indicate that this tradition is

correct and the name 'Fire castle' shown to the west of the cathedral churchyard on Rocque's map of 1757, suggests that the nunnery either occupied this position or was close to it.

#### 11. CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN

The existence of this church is evidenced by a single reference in 1307 which described the church as standing "in the entry to Kildare" (Mills 1914, 514). A document of 1684 describes Magdalen Hill as "lying in the high way to the Curragh, being an old Windmill Stead the stone walls of an old ruined house" (BM Harl. Mss. 7200). The dedication to St. Mary Magdalen, together with its location outside the town, indicates that this was the site of a hospital.

#### 12. SUBURBS

The earliest reference to extra mural habitation at Kildare occurs in 1674 when the existence of a suburb west of Clare Gate is noted (PRONI, D.3078/2/3/5).

#### 13. MISCELLANEOUS

Beech Grove. Folly.

East side of Chaplin's Lane, near the corner with Dublin Street. D-shaped turret and length of wall incorporating medieval windows and window jambs. Two ogee-headed chamfered

limestone windows, one of which has hollow spandrels. Five incomplete rectangular granite windows. Two have rounded jambs while the remainder are chamfered. These may have been removed from the castle.

Monuments in Market House.

A thirteenth century incised effigial slab from Castledillon (Hunt 1974, no. 77), a FitzGerald mantlepiece dated 1619, a limestone plaque bearing the FitzGerald coat of arms dated 1602, and a plaque dated 1620, all of which were brought to Kildare from Ballyshannon Castle, near Kilcullen.

#### 14. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. Bronze axe "curiously engraved on both sides". Found at Kildare. Cat. Neligan Coll. (1853), lot 4.

2. Bronze palstave. Probably from Kildare town. NMI P1953:34.

3-4. Two bronze spearheads. From near Kildare. NMI 1968: 265, 273.

5. Bronze socketed axe. Found at Kildare. NMI S.A. 1927:59. Report of the National Museum of Ireland .... 1927-28, 14.

6. Hoard of thirty-four Anglo-Saxon coins, deposited c. 991. Found near Kildare. Twenty-five in NMI: S.A. 1927: 103-27. Hall 1973-4, 79.

7. Hoard of Hiberno-Norse bracteates (at least six), deposited c.1135. Found in excavations beneath the floor of

the Round Tower, Kildare, c.1840. NMI. Petrie 1945, 210; Dolley 1966, 84-6.

8. Bronze stick pin. Found near Kildare, 1854. Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. Pryor 1976, 75-88: no. 23.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

##### The Problems

Kildare is important to archaeological research because it is an example of an early ecclesiastical site which developed into an Anglo-Norman market town. The description of Kildare by the seventh century writer Cogitosus is perhaps the best known account of the urban functions of an early monastery. Tenth century references to the 'street of the flag-stone' and to a combmaker's workshop reinforce this picture of a monastic town. Kildare was one of the earliest bases of Anglo-Norman activity and it appears to have functioned for some time as the capital of William Marshall's north Leinster lordship. This transition from monastic town to a chartered incorporated town is significant because Kildare is one of the few sites which possesses undisputed evidence for this process. It is possible that prehistoric evidence may also lie within the town because it has frequently been suggested that the church of Brigid replaced the shrine of a pre-Christian goddess. Surprisingly little is known of the town in the later Middle Ages but it witnessed



new growth in the sixteenth century, initially as a result of patronage by the earls of Kildare and subsequently from the Dublin government. In summary, the ancestry of the modern town is clearly an ancient one and the problem for archaeology is to ensure that Athy's archaeological heritage is properly protected from interference by modern developments and recorded in advance of destruction.

Documentary sources for Kildare are few before 1700 and further information on the early growth of the town is most likely to come from archaeological excavation. The topography of the town poses a number of specific problems which require solving.

The precise extent of the early ecclesiastical enclosures is unknown and their outline on Fig. 85 only represents a calculated guess. It is possible, for instance, that there was a large outer enclosure stretching from Bohereenagorr and the Shraud in the north, to Beech Grove on the east, and to St. Brigid's Sq and Convent Rd. on the south. Some replanning may have occurred in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, particularly in Market Square. Excavations in the square would be very important because this could determine whether it is of Early Christian origin, as Swan has suggested, or not.

Knowledge of housing in the town prior to 1700 is very slight. The excavation of houses is important not only for the information which it sheds on the form and typology of the houses but also because it enables comparisons to be

drawn with houses known from other parts of Ireland and Britain, permitting a better knowledge of the quality of life in Kildare before 1700. Examination of housing would provide clear evidence for the nature of the transition from pre-Norman to Anglo-Norman times.

Surprisingly large parts of the castle survive showing that it was a substantial structure. It is unclear, however, whether its layout is of thirteenth or fifteenth century origin. There may be traces of the suggested motte below ground level and it would be important topographically to determine if the castle was surrounded on all sides by a moat, and if so, of what width.

The course of the town defences is very speculative and the outline suggested above needs to be tested by excavation in order to determine whether it is correct or not. There is a strong possibility that the boundaries of the early ecclesiastical enclosure were incorporated into the later medieval defences but this is a theory which can only be clarified by excavation. Mural towers may be discovered and the foundations of the gatehouses may also survive below street level. Excavation is likely to reveal traces of the defences because even where the wall, or rampart, has been removed it is likely that a ditch would survive intact.

Kildare cathedral is the most important ecclesiastical site in the county and while the opportunity to excavate within the churchyard is unlikely to arise, important evidence for the layout of the early monastery is likely to

survive in the area immediately outside the churchyard. Here, smaller oratories, houses and schools would have been built. The Franciscan friary, south of the town, the Carmelite friary and St. Brigid's nunnery were located within their own precincts and it is important to remember that these were large building complexes, having not only a church and cloister, but ranges of domestic buildings as well. Excavation in these areas is significant not only for the architectural information it will yield on how the form of the buildings changed through time but also because the excavation of a medieval cemetery, such as at St. Helen's, York, can provide otherwise unobtainable information about health, diet, mortality rates and disease among the inhabitants of medieval Kildare. The site of St. Brigid's nunnery has remained elusive but excavation on the site of the 'Fire Castle' might uncover section of it.

The presence of a distinct burgage plot pattern at the east end of Dublin Street suggests an expansion of the town in this area during the seventeenth century. The possibility of extra-mural suburbs in this the vicinity of the Carmelite and Franciscan friaries, at an earlier date, should also be borne in mind.

#### Archaeological Potential

Archaeology does not consist solely of excavation nor does it stop at ground level. The archaeological evidence for Kildare's past comprises all the physical remains of man's

activities on the site of the town, from its Early Christian beginnings until the present day. The surviving street pattern, property boundaries and standing buildings constitute the uppermost levels of the archaeological stratigraphy, and all are relevant to the study of the town's past. Documentary evidence also plays a role in reconstructing the history of early Kildare, but for the wide range of human activity omitted from the written accounts and for the early periods when documentation is slight, archaeology is our only source of information. The evidence of archaeology and topography, of architecture and of documents, is complementary; each gains from the existence of the others and the unrecorded destruction of one form of evidence not only removes part of a town's archive but also diminishes the usefulness of those which are preserved.

The survey of its archaeology indicates that Kildare is a fine example of a early town. The only standing buildings of pre-1700 date are the castle, cathedral and Franciscan friary. With these exceptions the destruction of buildings above ground has been total. Archaeological layers have been destroyed by the construction of cellars and substantial houses on the street frontages, and by the construction of housing estates within the area of the early monastic enclosures during the past thirty years. Comparison of the aerial photographs (Figs. 84, 89) with the modern built-up area shows the considerable changes which have occurred in the past twenty years alone. The area west of the Court House has been levelled recently, possibly removing part of the

castle wall, and archaeological layers were exposed in the section at the north end of that site inside the castle wall. A housing estate, being built at present in the field north-east of Beech Grove may also have removed archaeological deposits, particularly if there was a large outer enclosure to the Early Christian settlement, as Swan has suggested. Despite this large-scale interference it is likely that deposits survive intact behind the street frontages. The open plot of ground between the cathedral churchyard and Lourdesville is potentially a very important archaeological site, because of its proximity to the cathedral, and should not be built upon. There is also open ground at the south-west side of Clare Gate Street and much of the ground west of Academy Street has good archaeological potential. There is, then, a good likelihood of recovering house foundations, refuse pits, industrial areas, and workshops of Early Historic, medieval and seventeenth century date within the town.

#### ARCHAEOLOGY, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

It is evident from the foregoing that archaeology is an important means of learning about Kildare's past and of understanding the character and detailed form of the town today. This is more than just an academic pursuit because without an appreciation of the factors which have shaped Kildare's present character, steps taken to conserve that character will not be wholly effective, or worse, features

basic to its unique identity may be unwittingly destroyed.

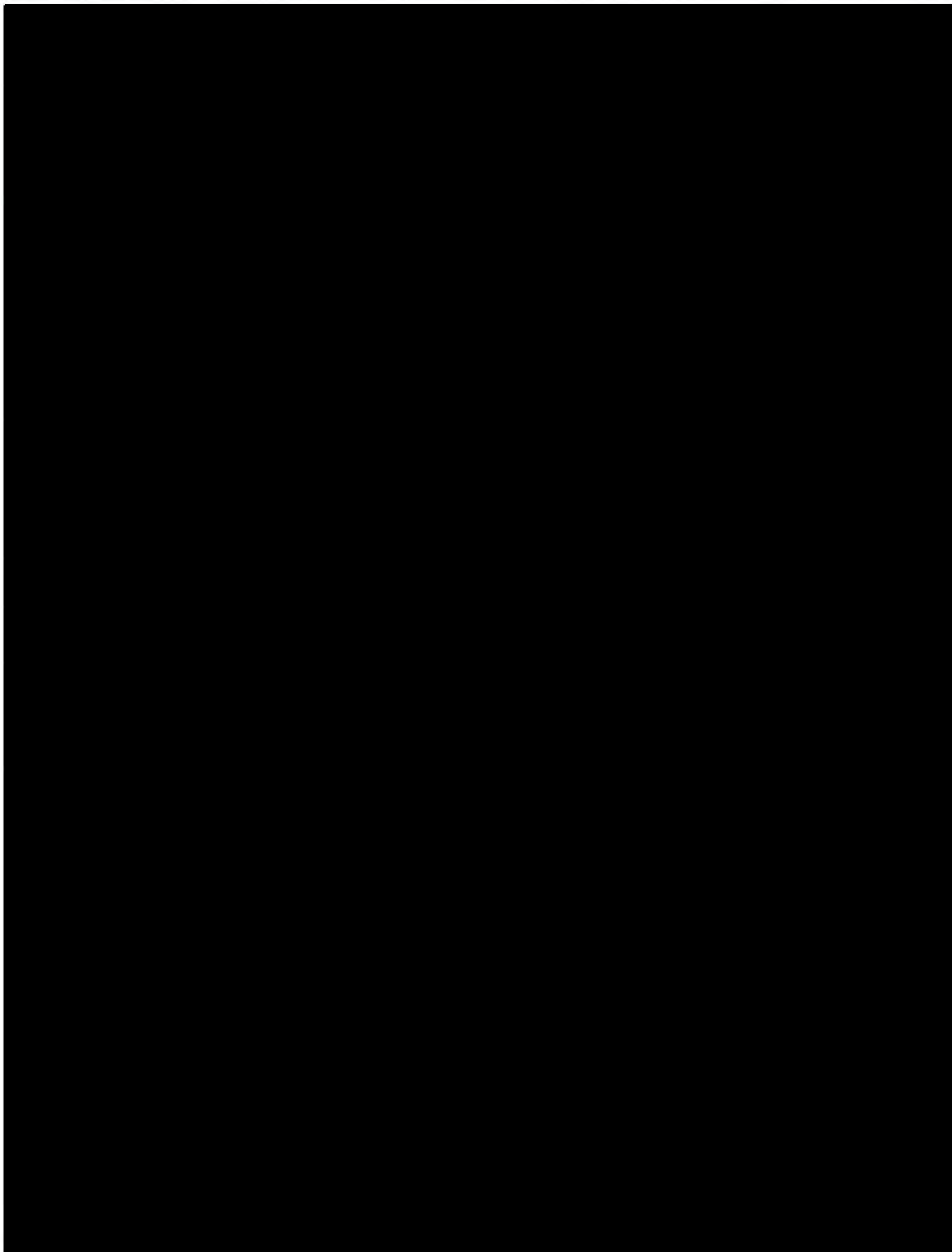
The protection of buried archaeological evidence presents serious problems for not only is there the pressure of redevelopment and the high value of urban properties with which to contend, but the sites themselves are often difficult to define or evaluate; their full archaeological potential may only become apparent when an excavation is undertaken in advance of development or by observations made while development is in progress. It is crucial, therefore, that a concerted effort should be made to safeguard its archaeological heritage and that adequate provision is made for investigation in advance of any redevelopment. This is best achieved by making the realisation of Kildare's archaeological potential one of the objectives of its development plan. The objective may then be achieved by judicious use of planning constraints and by conditions attached to planning consents.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

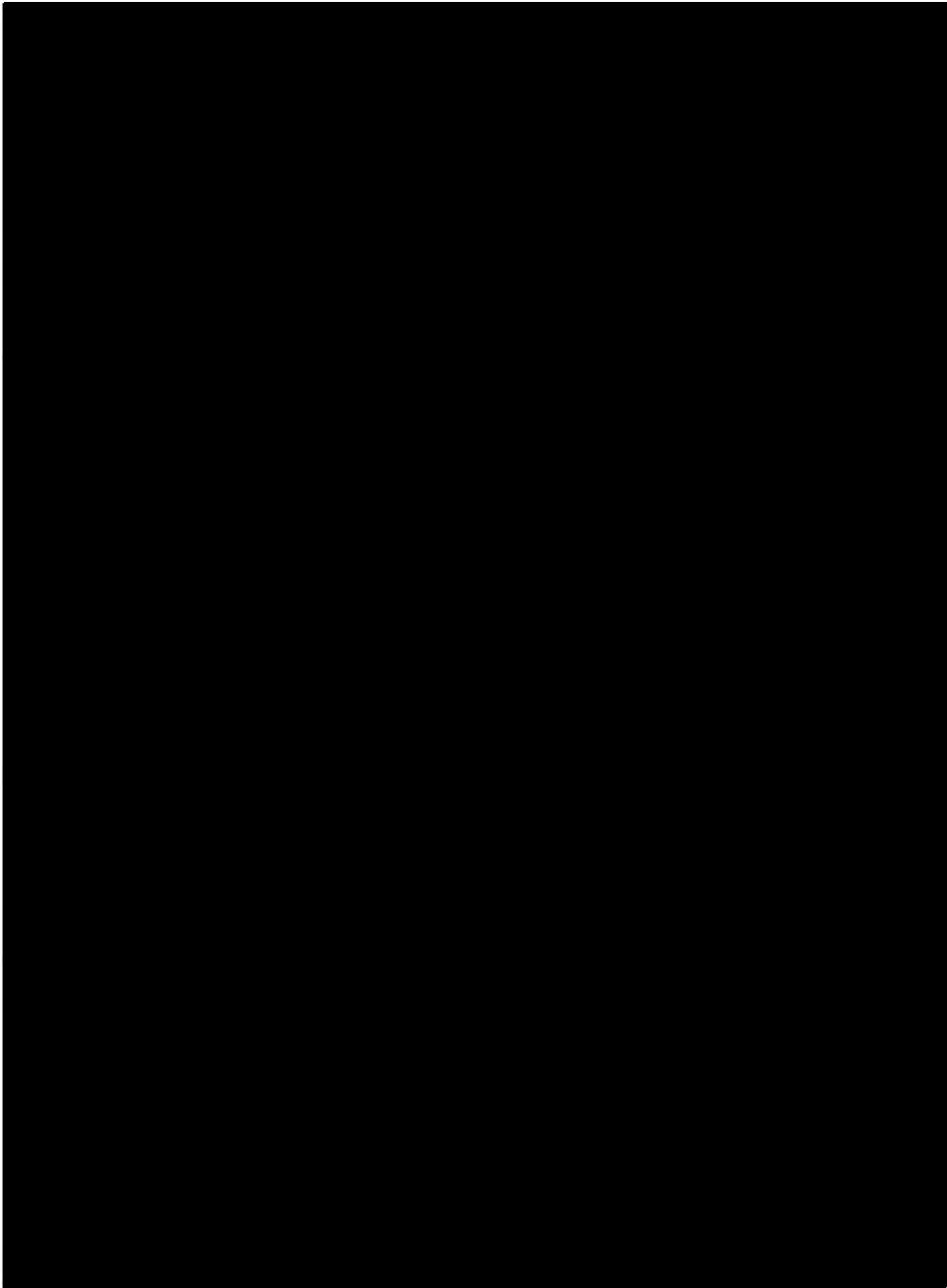
The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 115) delimits the area of archaeological potential within modern Kildare. This comprises the suggested walled area of the medieval town, the area of the early ecclesiastical enclosures, an extension to the west to include a possible suburb around the Carmelite friary, and an extension to the south to include the Franciscan friary. On the east side of the town the shaded area has been extended to include the

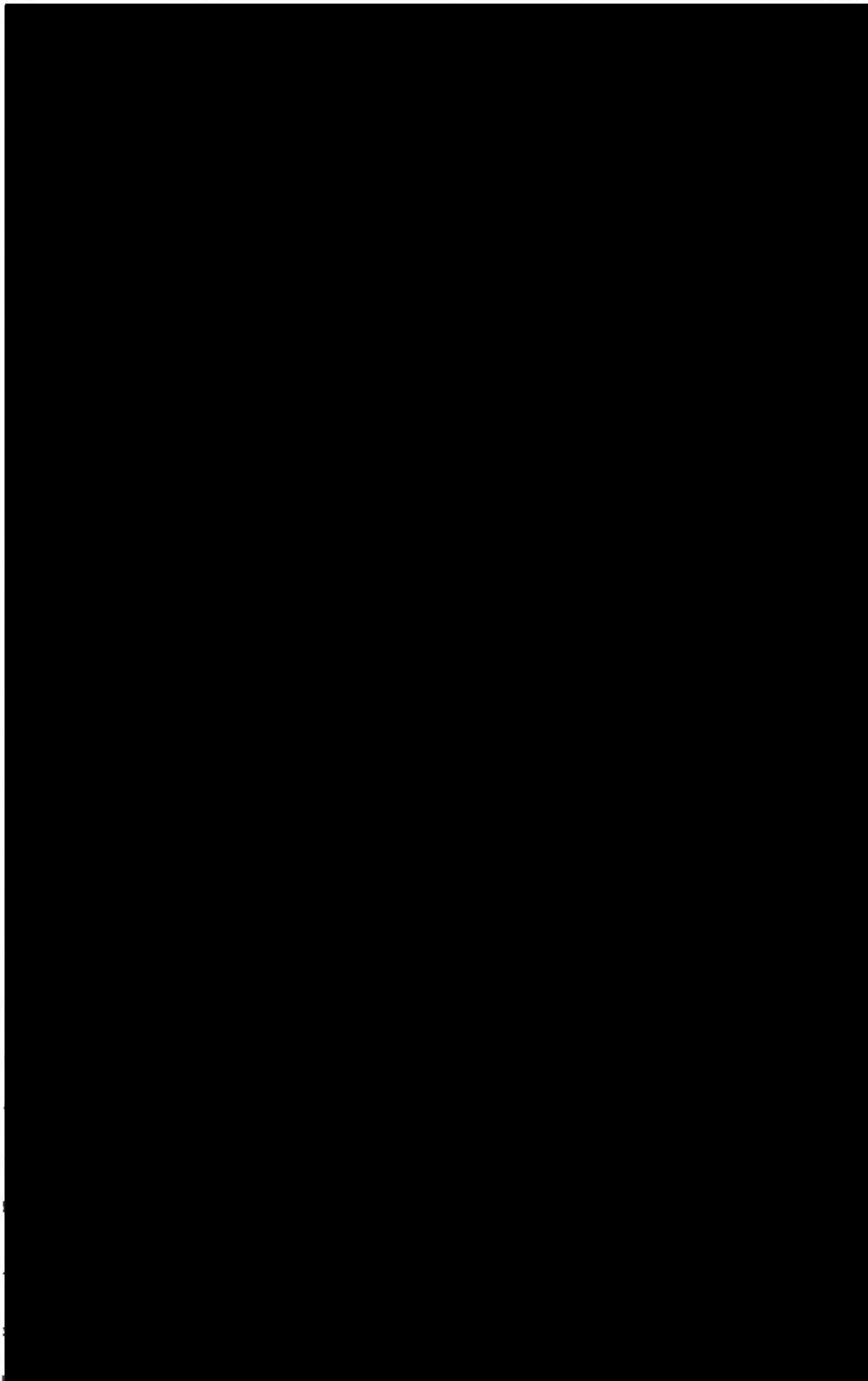
seventeenth century suburb along Dublin Street, as well as the possibility that a large outer enclosure incorporated this area, as Swan has suggested.

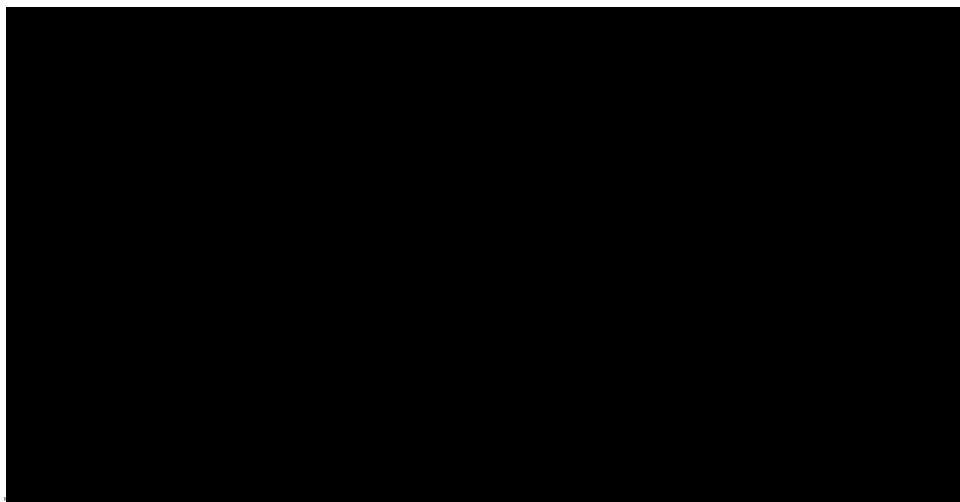
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## KILKEA

KilKea is a townland in south county Kildare, 5 Klm north-west of Castledermot and 8 Klm south-east of Athy, which is drained by the river Greese, a tributary of the Barrow. Ronan (1941a, 49, n. 153) explains KilKea as a corruption of Cill Caoide, "the church of Caoide". Alternately, however, Hogan (1910, 179) has suggested that the original name was Cell Cai. Whatever the precise etymology the name indicates that it was the site of a pre-Norman church. Nothing is known of this early ecclesiastical settlement, however, and despite the existence of a handful of prehistoric finds, the earliest evidence for substantial settlement occurs in Anglo-Norman times.

## MEDIEVAL KILKEA

KilKea formed part of the territory of Omurethi (Ui Muireadaigh), granted by Strongbow to Walter de Ridelsford during the early 1170s (Orpen 1892, 11. 3096-9). Orpen's (1907, 248; 1911-20, i, 386) suggestion that the castle built for de Ridelsford at or near 'Tristerdermot', was in fact located at KilKea has been accepted by all authorities. In particular, the fact that the de Ridelsford fief was subsequently known as the barony of KilKea is strong evidence that KilKea, rather than Castledermot, was the manorial centre (Otway-Ruthven 1961, 170-1). The earliest reference to

the borough of Kilkea occurs in 1280 but it is likely to have been in existence from the beginning of the thirteenth century (Sweetman 1875-86, ii, 379: no. 1801). A reference to the provost of Kilkea in 1305 shows that the borough had a municipal authority.

There is no clear statement of the number of burgages but some approximations can be made from the available information. In an extent of 1311 the burgesses and cottiers of Kilkea paid a rent of 13s. 8d. for the King's portion and 18s. 3d. for Sir John Wogan's portion (White 1932, 13, 16). This gives a total of 32s. and represents a half-yearly return, indicating a yearly rent of about 64s. Unfortunately we have no way of knowing how much was the burgesses' rent and how much the cottiers. The dower assigned to Anastasia, widow of David Wogan, in 1418 included 13s. 4d. burgage rents in Kilkea (Tresham 1828, 223: no. 1c). This may be presumed to be one-third of 40s., suggesting a total of forty burgages at that time. The latest reference to the borough occurs in 1422 (ibid.) and its continued existence beyond the fifteenth century is a matter of doubt. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries all references are to the castle which had become an important seat of the earls of Kildare. The Civil Survey of 1654 mentions only the castle (Simington 1952, 118) but the Census of 1659 returns a relatively high population of 107 there (Pender 1933, 474).

1. SITE OF BOROUGH
2. MOTTE
3. CASTLE
4. CHURCH
5. OTHER SITES
6. MISCELLANEOUS
7. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. SITE OF BOROUGH

No earthworks survive to show the exact site of the borough but it may be presumed that it was in the immediate vicinity of the castle. An abandoned road is visible from the air, running north-east from the eastern end of the churchyard towards Kilkea bridge where part of it is still in use. It is perhaps worth noting in this regard that two sherds of medieval pottery were picked up, as surface finds, close to the bridge in the field south-west of the formal garden.

2. MOTTE

Giraldus Cambrensis records that a castle was constructed for Walter de Ridelsford in 1181 (Scott and Martin 1978, 195) and, as has been outlined above, it can be identified with the motte at Kilkea. Little is known of its subsequent history, however, and the next reference to the castle does not occur until 1356 when Thomas de Rokeyby, justiciar of

Ireland, died there (Gilbert 1884, ii, 393; Butler 1842, 149). The motte formed part of an important manor which passed to the Wogans in 1305 (Sweetman 1875-66, v, no. 411). Kilkea was still held by the Wogans in 1435 (Tresham 1828, 256; no. 31) but nothing is known of it during the later fifteenth century and by 1525 it belonged to the earls of Kildare (Hamilton 1860, 5). The best explanation of this transfer is Ellis' (1985, 65-6) theory that south Kildare was overrun by the Irish after the destruction of Castledermot c.1443 and the area did not return to the control of the Dublin government until the earl of Kildare mounted a virtual reconquest of the area in the 1480s. It is probable that, like Castledermot, Kilkea came into the possession of the earl of Kildare through the act passed by the Irish parliament in 1483, which granted all the 'waste land' between Calverstown and Leighlinbridge to him (Ellis 1985, 65; Bryan 1933, 60-1).

An account of 1418 lists a number of buildings on the manor, providing a visual image of it at this time (Tresham 1828, 222; no. 1c). These included the knight's chamber (probably a hall), a buttery, two small chambers in the White tower with a cellar on the west, the new orchard, a slated barn on the north, a kitchen, a chapel, a prison, a bakehouse with its oven, the new work at the bakehouse, "lez zatys" (?zetis, 'towers'), the vicar's chamber, the cowhouse with a small chamber at the long-stable, and the long-stable itself. These details indicate that there was a sizeable complex of buildings around the castle.



Description (Fig. 116)

Round conical tree-covered mound, broad and relatively low, surrounded by a ditch and bank. It tapers from a basal diameter of 49 by 47.5 m to 23.3 by 24.3 m at the summit, which is enclosed by a low bank, 3.5m wide and 80 cm high. The mound ranges between 8 and 10m in height. Most of the summit is covered by a domed mound, 21m in diameter and 3m high which appears to be of modern origin. The enclosing ditch at the base of the mound is 5.5m wide and 2m in maximum depth. The ditch is absent on the south. A counterscarp bank 9m wide and 1m high on average is present on the west and north-west.

3. STONE CASTLE

The exact construction date of this castle is unknown but surviving features and those documented before the 1849 restoration indicate a fifteenth century date. Its size indicates that it was intended to function as a large manorial castle and it is likely that it was constructed by the great earl of Kildare in the years after 1483. The castle was forfeited after the rebellion of Silken Thomas and not restored to the Kildares until 1552 (Morris 1861, 263). It was garrisoned during the Baltinglass rebellion of 1580 (Hamilton 1867, 266) and was occupied by Confederate forces in 1645-7 (Mahaffy 1903, 47, 649, 728). In the Civil Survey of 1654 the castle was valued at £100 (Simington 1952, 118) and in 1661 it was the residence of the dowager countess of

Kildare (Mahaffy 1905, 209). After 1668, however, the castle was leased to tenants (FitzGerald 1886-8c, 19-20). In 1849 the castle was heavily restored by the then duke of Leinster and became a residence for the Kildares once again, remaining in their hands until 1960. Its most famous occupant was the antiquary Lord Walter FitzGerald who lived here from 1889 until 1923.

Description (Figs. 117-23)

The castle is situated on fairly level ground on the right bank of the river Greese, about 100m south-east of the motte. It appears to be built on slightly higher ground than the motte, but this may be due to a build-up of ground level within the castle complex. The masonry consists of uncoursed limestone with roughly dressed quoins. Most of the cut stone in the doors and jambs was inserted in the 1849 restoration. The interior has also been extensively altered but plans of the castle predating this survive, allowing the pre-1849 appearance of the castle to be reconstructed in the following description and accompanying plans. It is a composite structure, consisting of three main elements: (1) a Keep at the south-west corner; (2) a gatehouse on the north; (3) a central range of two floors running east-west interposed between the Keep and the gatehouse. The presence of an original angle loop in the NW tower, similar to ones in White's Castle, Athy, and Kildare Castle, suggests that this castle was built at the time of the takeover of Kilkea by Gearoid Mor, earl of Kildare, in the late 15th century.

Later, the main entrance of the castle was shifted from the N to the S side and a square tower added in the angle between the Keep and the central range on the S to hold a staircase, resulting in extensive remodelling of the W part of the interior. This may have taken place in the later sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries when Kilkea was a principal residence of the earls of Kildare.

#### Keep

Roughly square with battered base and external dimensions of 10.5m (N-S) by 9.2m (EW), and walls averaging 1.70-1.95m in thickness. A new entrance and stair tower was added on the north-east side, probably in the seventeenth century. The ground floor was divided into two parallel barrel-vaulted chambers by a central wall running NS, now largely removed. The east chamber had splayed rectangular loops in the S and E walls, and parallel-sided doorways in the N and W walls. The west chamber had loops in the W and S walls, that in the S being a cruciform gun loop. The N part of the W wall was set back 20cm internally. The first floor was a single chamber 8.1 by 5.8m. The E wall had a large splayed pointed window with pointed rear arch; the S wall had a large splayed rectangular window, and narrowed internally by 45cm E of the window. The W wall had a fireplace, originally having a mantelpiece dated 1573, and a large splayed rectangular window; the N wall is a recent addition. The second floor had been divided into two rooms by a recent partition running E-W; the E wall had a mural chamber with a splayed loop in

its E wall and an opening to the N onto the stair tower. S wall had a fireplace and rectangular recess; W wall had two large splayed rectangular windows, the S being considerably larger than the other; the N wall was a recent addition with a doorway. Third floor also divided by a recent partition; E wall had a mural chamber opening to N onto the stair tower; S wall had a large splayed rectangular window; W wall had a fireplace and a large twin-light ogee-headed window blocked up, but visible in external elevation (Fig. 119). The S, W and E walls were topped by a parapet above a string course. The present battlements were added in 1849. The W parapet was considerably lower than the S or E parapets and had two chimney stacks. A projecting chimney-flue was present on the S parapet.

#### Gatehouse

A block approximately 12 by 7m, with four floors but perhaps having only three originally. This was entered through a segmentally-arched opening, 4.5 m high, with a portcullis groove immediately inside. This opened into a passage, 2 m wide, leading to a pointed doorway. On the west was an opening leading to a spiral stair. The E side of the gatehouse was altered considerably. At first floor level the staircase occupied the W part of the block, having a splayed cruciform gun-loop in the N wall. E of this was a large chamber with two garderobes in the N wall. The E wall may not have been original, and had a large splayed rectangular window. In the NE angle was a rectangular recess while in the

S wall a splayed doorway led to the central range. At second floor level there was a splayed loop facing NW and a parallel sided door in the S wall, while the main chamber to the E had a rectangular recess in the N wall and a parallel-sided window in the E wall. An external string course, supporting the battlements was present above this floor. The third floor consists of a rounded NW angle tower which contained a stair communicating with NW tower by a parallel sided doorway in W wall.

#### Central Range

A rectangular range of buildings measuring 30m by 9.5m externally. Originally it had two floors but a third floor was added in 1849. The walls average 1.75m thick, and are battered at the east, north-west and west sides. The range had a circular tower at its SE angle, a projecting turret at its W end, and a rectangular tower at the NW.

The ground floor is divided into three chambers, one centrally placed immediately S of the entrance passage, and larger chambers to E and W. E of the E chamber a narrow passage running the width of the range led into the SE tower; it had a splayed, round headed loop in the N wall, and a parallel sided doorway in the W wall led into the E chamber. The E chamber, measuring 8.4m by 6m, was divided into two barrel-vaulted sections running E-W, the vaults being supported on a central pillar. The S wall had a large splayed rectangular window; a large pointed relieving arch around the

embrasure is visible externally. The W wall had a parallel sided doorway leading to the central chamber. The N wall had a large segmentally arched fireplace, c.4m wide, 2m high and 1.9m deep, with a large chimney projecting externally rising above roof level. The central chamber, measuring 4.5m by 6m, was barrel vaulted; the N wall had a large opening onto the entrance passage. The S wall had a large splayed rectangular window with pointed relieving arch externally. The W wall may have been added when the stair tower on the S was inserted. The W chamber, measuring 10 by 6m, was divided into two barrel-vaulted sections running E-W, the vaults being supported on a central pillar. This arrangement may date, however, to the period of the insertion of the stair tower, when much of the S wall would have been removed. The chamber is bounded on the S by N walls of stair tower and Keep, which were not aligned, and a doorway between them led into the Keep. The W wall had a small, splayed rectangular window and a segmentally arched doorway. The N wall had a doorway leading to the gatehouse and NW tower.

On the first floor, the E chamber, measuring 10.9 by 6m, had very tall splayed pointed windows in the E and N walls (both blocked) and two in the S wall. An opening in the SE angle led into the SE tower, and a parallel sided doorway, in the W wall, led into the central chamber. This chamber, measuring 7.7 by 6m, had a doorway opening into the gatehouse in the N wall, and in the S wall, a splayed pointed doorway, probably originally a window, which served during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as the main entrance to

the castle; W of this was an opening to the stair tower, containing the principal stairs. W wall, with parallel sided doorway opening onto W chamber, clearly dated to period of insertion of stair tower, and continued inside line of E wall of Keep as far as N wall of central range. The W chamber, measuring 5.75 by 6m, had fireplace in N wall, and a large splayed rectangular window; and an opening into the W tower in the W wall. The S wall is a recent addition, possibly contemporary with E wall.

Originally most of the central range stood only to first floor level, and was surmounted by a parapet above a string course with stepped battlements on the S side. At the E end, immediately N of the SE tower a section of the central range 2.8m wide was raised to third floor level. At the W end the range was also raised to third floor level; when the stair tower was inserted on the S, its W wall, on the line of the E wall of the Keep, was continued to the N wall of the central range, thus creating a N-S range, consisting of the Keep and the W chamber of the central range, at second and third floor levels. On the second floor, the W chamber, measuring 6.6 by 5.2m, had a fireplace in the N wall and a large splayed rectangular window in the W wall; a recent partition wall separated it from the Keep. On the third floor, the W chamber, measuring 6.6 by 8.25m, incorporated the N end of the Keep, and had a small rectangular window in the W wall and a parallel sided doorway opening off the stair tower in the E wall. At the E end of the central range at third floor level were two small conjoined chambers c.1.5m wide, having



barrell vaults with wicker centering. Each chamber had a splayed loop in the E wall; the N chamber opened onto the wall walk in the N wall, while the S chamber had openings into the SE tower in the S wall and onto the roof in the W wall.

#### South-east Tower

Three-quarter round tower with base batter, and an external diameter of 5.5m. The internal diameter is 1.9m at ground floor, but increases to 2.8 at first floor level. Internal spiral staircase rising to third floor. Each floor had two splayed rectangular loops facing SE and SW, although first floor also had a loop facing NE. The tower was raised, and stepped battlements added, in 1849. Section of a basement passage and two rooms are beneath the level of the tower on the east, but these represent a modern addition.

#### West Turret

Rectangular projecting turret of four floors, approximately 4.5m wide. External base batter. Above second floor level it becomes a round bartizan-like turret supported on corbels. The ground floor was solid apart from a small chamber (?garderobe), entered through a flat headed doorway in W wall. First floor chamber entered through an opening in W wall of central range had a splayed, round-headed loop in W wall and splayed rectangular loop in N wall. Between first and second floors was an angle loop in NW angle. Second floor

chamber entered through E wall via a passage leading from NW tower; splayed rectangular loop in W wall. Third floor chamber rounded, possibly an addition, and entered through E wall via a passage leading from NW tower. It has one splayed rectangular loop facing SW.

#### North-west Tower

Rectangular tower, 7.4 by 4.75m externally, built in the angle between the W turret of the gatehouse and the N wall of central range. The walls average 2.25m in thickness at ground level with an external batter. The ground floor chamber, measuring approximately 3.8 by 2.4m, was entered from the gatehouse via a parallel sided opening in E wall; W and N walls had splayed loops; barrel vaulted. First floor chamber, 4.25 by 3.3m, entered by doorway in E wall; N wall had large splayed rectangular window; S wall had two rectangular recesses; W wall had a rectangular and a trapezoidal recess and an opening leading via stairs to a garderobe in adjacent garderobe tower. Second floor chamber, 4.5 by 3.3m, entered by door in E wall; N wall had large splayed rectangular window; S wall had rectangular recess; W wall had doorway leading via mural passage to W tower. Third floor chamber, entered by door in E wall; N and W walls had splayed, round headed loops. The battlements were added in 1849. A garderobe tower existed in the angle between the NW tower and the W tower and was removed in 1849. It was apparently an addition, because it blocked a window in the NW tower at ground level.

In the 1849 drawings the W and NW towers had no parapet but had roof with hipped gables.

'Temptation Stone'. 15th cent. (Fig. 124).

Re-used quoin on S wall of the modern rectangular tower to the E of the central range. It depicts a man with curled hair, moustache and beard being attacked by an ithyphallic quadruped which is biting his hindquarters, a bird which pecks at his breast and an ithyphallic man with wolf's head who grasps him around the waist. The man appears to be sitting on the wolf man's knees.

Dims: H.86

FitzGerald 1896-8a, 27; Anderson 1971-6, 243-50; Harbison, 1977-8.

Console with monkey carving.

A reassembled machicolation on the wall of central range close to the SE tower has one console decorated in relief with a monkey. The animal wears a chain around the neck, the arms and legs are carved as if it were gripping the stone by the nails and toes and the face has a long pointed wrinkled chin.

Dims: H.c.50cms W. c, 30cms

FitzGerald 1896-8a, 28; Synnot 1973, 30-31

Stone Table. 1533 (Fig. 127).

Originally from Maynooth, in the formal garden SW of the castle. Rectangular with chamfered corners and is supported on four corner supports and one central support. The legs

are decorated with Renaissance motifs in false relief including, swags, garlands, foliage, facemasks and figures carrying bowls of fruit or garlanded shields with the FitzGerald arms. An inscription on the apron below the bevelled rim of the table is in relief 'GERALDOVS COMES KILDARIE FILIVS GERALDI A D MCCCCCXXXIIII SI DIEV PLET CROMABO'. Between the words of the inscription there are stops in the form of saltire shields.

Dims: H.94 W.147 by 121

FitzGerald 1907-9b, 384.

Missing Mantlepiece.

The whereabouts of three stones of a decorated mantlepiece is unknown. One stone had a monkey and an inscription 'SI DIV PLET CROMABO 1573, another had the arms of FitzGerald, a cross saltire, and the third had an eagle displayed.

Fitzgerald 1896-8a, 13-14

Monuments collected by Lord Walter Fitzgerald. (Figs. 125-6)  
These are gathered together in a modern arcaded area, south-west of the castle, above the formal garden. These include a seventeenth century cross from Narraghbeg (Omurethi 1899-1902, 470-4), the shaft of a seventeenth century cross from Cross Morris (FitzGerald 1891-5b, 250-1); a sixteenth century inscribed stone from Aghanure (Fitzgerald 1907-9a, 100-1); a sixteenth century mantlepiece; a seventeenth century FitzGerald heraldic shield; a fragment of seventeenth century figure sculpture; four window mullions; and four quernstones.

#### 4. CHURCH

The church of Kilkea is first referred to in a list of the deaneries of Dublin, dating to c.1270-80 (Gilbert 1897, 145) but it is likely from the placename evidence that this is the successor of a pre-Norman church. Little is known of its history in the Middle Ages. It is listed in the ecclesiastical taxation of 1302-6 (Sweetman 1875-86, v, p. 243) and Thomas Power, vicar of Kilkea is referred to in 1435 (Trasham 1828, 256: no. 31). By the close of the Middle Ages the church of Kilkea belonged to the nunnery of Graney but the date at which it became part of their possessions is unknown (White 1941, 207; White 1943, 124-5). After the Dissolution it was granted to the Lord Deputy, Sir Anthony St. Leger (Morrin 1861, 164). The Royal visitation of Dublin diocese in 1615 noted that the church and chancel were in good repair (Ronan 1941a, 49) but by 1630 they were ruinous (Ronan 1941b, 95).

##### Description (Figs. 128-9)

The building consists of a nave and chancel, with two chapels, one to the W of the nave (FitzGerald mortuary chapel) the other on the N side of the chancel. The masonry, including dressed stones is roughly coursed limestone.

The CHANCEL measures 9.5 by 4.5m internally. The E wall stands to a height of 5.5m and has a triple light splayed round headed window with flat lintelled rear arch. The limestone jambs and mullions are tooled and chamfered

externally, but the mullions are modern. It has a rectangular hood moulding and the rear arch is flat lintelled. The external NE corner has dressed quoins. The N wall stands to a height of 3m at the E end but is only 60cm high at the W end. A parallel-sided doorway and an angled squint communicate with the chapel to the N. At the E end of the wall, E of the N chapel, is a single light splayed round headed window with flat lintelled rear arch and tooled chamfered jambs with a rectangular hood moulding. The S. wall is almost entirely missing except at the W end where it is 60cm high. At the W end is a wall footing facing into the nave, which is probably modern.

The NAVE measures 13.15 by 7.25 internally. The S and N walls stand to a maximum height of 1m and in many places little more than the foundations survive. Both walls had a door near the W end; both doors had finely dressed chamfered limestone jambs with triangular stops. The jambs of the N door are displaced. Neither door has an arch but dressed stones lying nearby suggest that they had round arches. The W wall rises to 6.5m at the N end and it had a multi-light window but only the N splay survives.

FitzGerald mortuary chapel (Fig. 129).

This is a seventeenth century structure built against the W wall of the nave. It measures 5 by 3.1m internally and is built of uncoursed rubble limestone masonry. The featureless S wall stands to a height of 1m internally although it is level with ground externally. The gabled W wall stands to a

height of 6m. There is a door in the centre of the wall with a four-pointed arch and flat lintelled rear arch. The jambs of the door are tooled and chamfered, the tooling differing from stone to stone, and the chamfers have triangular stops. Above the door there is a rectangular splayed window with chamfered jambs and flat rear arch. The N wall is represented by footings c.20cms high.

#### North Chapel

Built onto N wall of chancel and NE angle of the nave. It measures 6.8 by 3.7m internally and is built of roughly coursed limestone masonry. The E wall stands to a height of 5m. It has a twin-light splayed round headed window with tooled, chamfered jambs and mullions with triangular stops at end of the chamfers; the mullions, however, are modern. It has a flat-lintelled rear arch and a rectangular hood moulding with angled terminals. The W wall stands to a height of 2.2m. It has a pointed parallel sided doorway with tooled chamfered jambs and triangular stops at end of chamfers. The rear arch is missing. The N wall stands to a height of 3m. It is broken down at the E end and has one rectangular recess at ground level and two single light round headed windows with tooled chamfered jambs. The head of the E window is missing and the windows were probably splayed internally but only external wall face survives. The windows were re-erected in 1892.

FitzGerald 1899-1902b, 242-7



### Architectural Fragments

Lying around the graveyard and inside the church, particularly near the doors, are a large number of window mullions, jambs, window heads and arch stones. They are all limestone and would appear to be 16th century in date.

### Monuments

Font. Possibly pre-1200.

Large undecorated circular granite basin lying upside down on pathway on S side of church. It has a side drainage hole.

Dims: H.44 Diam. 68

Font. 16th cent. (Fig. 130).

Octagonal undecorated limestone font in the nave of the church. Crudely carved. The basin is straight sided and shallow and it has a side drainage hole.

Dims: H.60 Diam. 66

Depth of basin 18 Diam. 50

FitzGerald 1899-1902b, 244.

William Fitzgerald. 1623.

In Fitzgerald Mortuary Chapel. Limestone. It consists of a cross slab resting on a side and end panel upon a plinth. The side panel is broken and one section is lying on the ground. The decoration is in low false relief.

Table: Banded fleur-de-lys cross on steps with IHS in centre of the transom and a band with initials WFG and IK. There is a sun and moon with face above the cross. Marginal

inscription in Roman capitals:

HIER LIETH WILLIAME/ FITZGERALD AND HIS FIRST WIFE IOAN  
KEITING AND HIS SECOND WIFE CISLE GEIDON: IVANE/ OIE  
THE 21 DAY OF FEBRVARI IN THE YEAR OF OVR GOD 1623.

The table is chamfered to fit the side and end panels.

Dims: L.195 W.76 T.14 cm

Side panel: Decorated with the symbols of the Passion within  
round arcades.

Dims: L. 153 H. 56 T. 16

End panel: A crucifixion.

Dims: H.55 W.64 T.12

FitzGerald 1899-1902b.

Fitzgerald wall plaque. c.1623 (Fig. 123).

Mural limestone plaque set into the E side of the W wall of  
the nave. Probably above the FitzGerald table tomb originally  
but removed when wall collapsed. It is now cracked in two.  
Roman lettered inscription in low false relief

VIVO EGO Ia MORIOR MIRARIS VERBVLA LECTOR/ IN TERRIS  
MORIOR VITA SECVNDA POLO EST/ VITA NIHILL PRIA EST ET  
MIHI POPA SECVNDA/ VITA PRIOR OOLVS EST VITA SECVNDA  
DECVS/ ECCE GERALDINO FVERA COIVNCTA GVLIELMO/ ECCE  
KEATINGA PIO IVNCTA IOANNA VIRO/ CAECILIAE CONIVX CLARA  
DE STIRPE GEIDON/ IVNCTVS ERAT QVI TRES CONDIMVR HOC  
TVMVLO.

Dims: L.115 H.46 T.11

FitzGerald 1899-1902b, 240.

Heraldic plaque. 1630. Large limestone plaque decorated in false relief with the arms of FitzGerald. Lying on the ground at the W end of the nave. The FitzGerald arms are on a heater shaped shield with helmet and lynx above. Below the shield in the lower corners are two small shields; the left one has the arms of FitzGerald impaling Keating while the right has the FitzGerald arms impaling Gaidon. Below are the initials: IK 1630 SG.

Dims: H.80 W.60 T.18

FitzGerald, 1899-1902b, 240-1.

Mermaid stone. 16th-17th cent. (Fig. 131).

Lying on the ground at the W end of the nave is a limestone panel decorated in relief with a mermaid. She has two long strands of hair, one of which she holds in her right hand, pendulous breasts, and her left hand holds a comb/mirror. The lower part of her body is shaped like a fish and a snake-like creature is biting her tail.

Dims: H.48 L.77 T.15

FitzGerald 1899-1902b, 241

Monkey stone. 16/17th cent.

Set into the W wall is a limestone panel decorated in relief with a monkey with collar and chain and holding a helmet in one hand.

Dims: H.49 W.84 T.22

FitzGerald 1899-1902b, 240-1

Cross-slab. 17th cent.

Lying on the ground at the E end of the church is a limestone slab decorated in low false relief with a fleur-de-lys cross. The stem of the cross is incised but the base is missing. The head of the cross is surrounded by four segmented circles and there is a cross crosslet in the upper right corner.

Dims: L.150 W. 57 T.12

FitzGerald 1899-1902b, 243.

Missing monuments

Three heraldic shields dated 1573 with the arms of Browne and Fitzgerald and a monkey panel are missing (Synnot 1973, 31)

## 5. OTHER SITES

Mill.

In 1621, the earl of Kilkea held a watermill as part of his manor of Kilkea (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Co. Kildare, Jac 1: no. 40). This was presumably the corn mill noted in the Civil Survey of 1654 (Simington 1952, 118). According to FitzGerald (1896-8a, 25), the Manor or Black Mill was removed c.1829.

## 6. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. Bronze flat axehead of Ballyvalley type. Found in river Grease at Kilkea, 1846. NMI 1945: 294. Harbison 1969a, 37:

no. 954.

2. Bronze sword. From Kilkea. NMI 1945: 305. Eogan 1965, 67.

3. Chert arrowhead, two bronze pins, iron knife and five iron keys. From Kilkea demense. NMI 1945: 262, 313, 316, 324, 326-30. Cf. JKAS 3 (1899-1902), 196.

4. Medieval glazed potsherd. From motte at Kilkea Demense. NMI 1976: 545.

5-6. Two medieval potsherds. Found in Kilkea Demense in the course of this survey.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Kilkea is an example of a shrunken medieval borough. The placename evidence suggests that it was a pre-Norman church site and this was probably what attracted the Anglo-Normans to the location. The motte was built during the initial stages of the Anglo-Norman invasion and the borough was probably established during the thirteenth century. The account of 1418, quoted above, provides an image of the range of buildings that were associated with the manor but little is known of the borough except that it had about forty burgages in the fourteenth century. The settlement declined during the Later Middle Ages, so much so that no trace of the original borough survives. The castle appears to have been built in the final quarter of the fifteenth century by

Gearoid Mor, but even this enterprise does not appear to have rejuvenated the old borough. The subsequent story of Kilkea is largely the story of the castle and only excavation will determine whether any settlement was associated with it or not in post-medieval times.

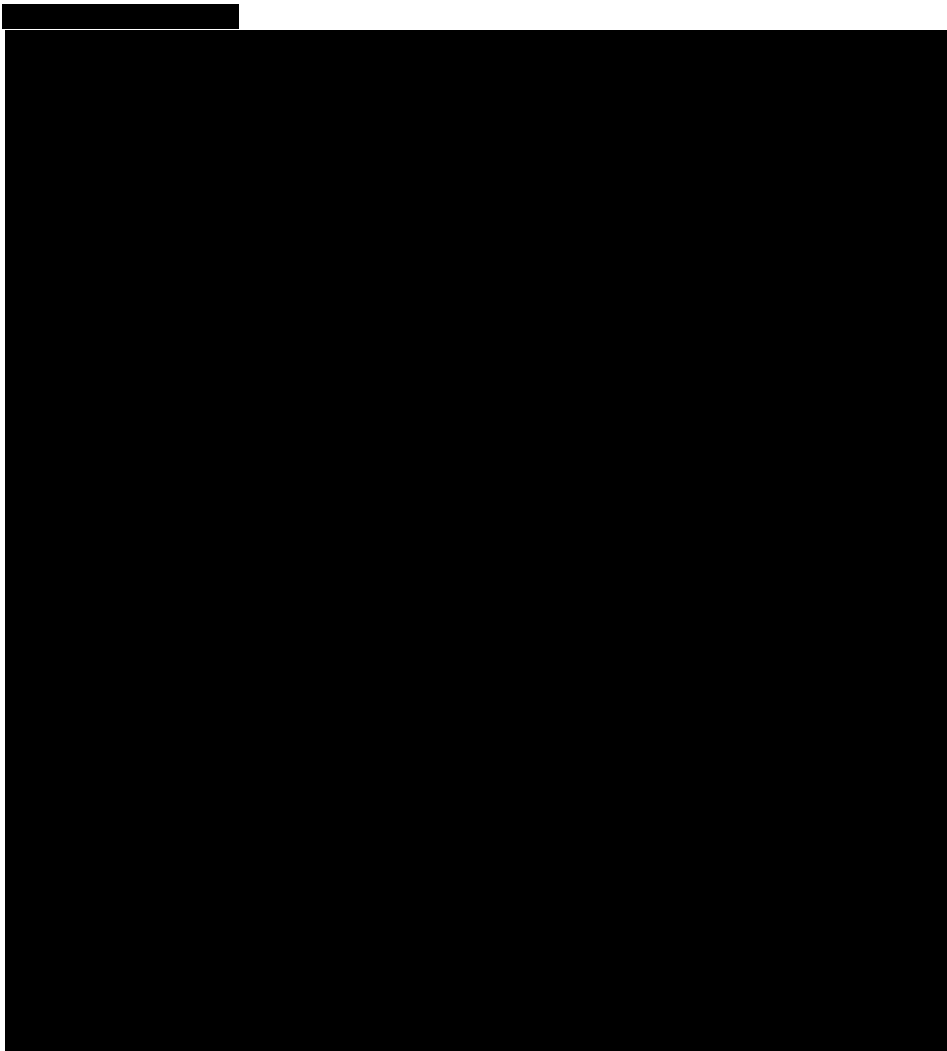
The castle is in excellent condition and functions as a hotel, while the motte is preserved in the grounds. The only evidence for interference with the archaeological deposits is the landscaping of the gardens. Elsewhere, however, it is likely that archaeological layers survive below ground, and house foundations, pits and debris scatters may be anticipated. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of the medieval settlement, and the nature of its houses and streets.

In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough, which began as a settlement during the Early Christian period, was occupied throughout the Middle Ages. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. It is unlikely that the site will come under pressure from development but extensions to the hotel, or similar building works, should be preceded by archaeological investigation.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 133) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Kilkea.

This is based on an estimate of the likely location of the borough. The location of the watermill is shown near Kilkea bridge, and this is an area also worthy of investigation. Because of the lack of information at present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.







## KILL

Kill is a small village, some 6.5 km north-east of Naas. The main Dublin-Naas road by-passes the village which is located on relatively low-lying ground at the western fringe of the Wicklow mountains. The small Kill river, which joins the Painestown river, a tributary of the Liffey, flows through it. The name is derived from Cell, 'a church'.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The original dedication of the church commemorated in the placename was to St. Brigid (O.S. Letters, Co. Kildare i, 65; ii, 154). O'Donovan (1860, 223), Comerford (1885, 170) and Radner (1978, 167, 230) have suggested that Kill was the burial place of Cearbhall, the early tenth century King of Leinster, and eight of his predecessors which is referred to as Cill Nais and Cill Corbain in the early sources. It is clear, however, that the pre-Norman church of Kill was dedicated to St. Brigid and it should not be identified with Cill Nais or Cill Corbain, which was at Naas itself.

Kill formed part of "the cantred of Offelan nearest to Dublin" which was granted by Strongbow to Adam de Hereford in the sub-infeudation of Leinster (Orpen 1911-20, i, 378-9). Adam granted it to his brother John, who was in turn succeeded by his son Thomas (Gilbert 1889, 102-4). Charters of this Thomas de Hereford provide some information on Kill in

the early thirteenth century. One charter, in which he granted the church of Kill to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin, demonstrates that the abbey had a court and grange there, and he himself a demense, in the years between 1215 and 1223 (Gilbert 1889, 80-1; FitzGerald 1915-17, 222). In other charters, which predate Thomas' death before 1224 he granted a house and messuage in his vill of Kill (Gilbert 1889, 82-3, 363; Brooks 1950, 183 n.12). The latter charters are witnessed by William, the provost of Kill. He may have been provost of the borough but in the absence of other thirteenth century evidence for the borough it is equally possible that he was provost of the manor, as was John FitzRobert in 1293 (Sweetman 1875-86, iv, p. 53 no. 106).

On the death of Thomas de Hereford, Kill passed to Milo de Rochford, husband of Thomas' daughter Elianora (Gilbert 1889, 103-4; Otway-Ruthven 1961, 167-8) and it remained in de Rochford hands until the mid-fourteenth century (Sweetman 1875-86, ii, no. 1963; iv, no. 259; 39 RDKPRI, 67; 43 RDKPRI, 36, 47; 47 RDKPRI, 52). Its subsequent history is unclear but it seems that the manor passed to St. Thomas' Abbey which already had substantial holdings there. In 1338 Eglentina, widow of William de Rochford, granted to the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem all the lands, rents, etc., which she held as dower in Celbridge and Kill (McNeill 1932, 97). In 1343-4 an inquisition found that Edmund de Rochford and Richard Badowe held two parts of the manor of Kill, which was subsequently acquired by Nicholas, abbot of St. Thomas' Abbey (Tresham 1828, 45: no. 72; 47: no. 137; 48: no. 70). The

abbot subsequently enfeoffed William Sampford of the manor, who in turn enfeoffed John Gernoun, and it would appear that this indicates the date that the manor was acquired by St. Thomas' Abbey. It remained in their hands until the Dissolution (White 1943, 39).

In 1541 the manor was leased to Thomas Alen (7 RDKPRI, 56: no. 245); in 1546 it was granted to Robert St. Leger (7 RDKPRI, 79: no. 465) and by him to a consortium who in turn granted it to Richard Aylmer in 1551 (Morris 1861, 119, 122, 164, 240; 8 RDKPRI, 106: no. 745). In 1581 it was noted that "a great part of Kill" was saved from attack by the rebel Viscount Baltinglass by Mr. T. Lee (Hamilton 1867, 322). Kill was held by another consortium, including Thomas, Gerald, Richard and John Aylmer, in 1609 (Ir Rec Comm 1826, Co. Kildare: Jac I, no. 41). The first evidence for the existence of a borough at Kill occurs in 1608 when the borough of Kill was included in a list of boroughs and towns in County Kildare (Russell and Prendergast 1874, 577), and Richard Dowlin was named as provost of the town of Kill (Brewer and Bullen 1873, 24). These references are somewhat enigmatic in view of the absence of any other evidence for the existence of a borough at Kill and it is not known when this borough was first established. On his death in 1629, Thomas Hamlin held a castle, six messuages and 120 acres in the vill of Kill from the earl of Kildare (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Co. Kildare, Car I: no. 78). The census of 1659 recorded a population of 92 at Kill (Pender 1939, 402).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. SITE OF BOROUGH
2. THE MOTTE
3. PARISH CHURCH OF SS. MARY & BRIGID
4. GRANGE OF ST. THOMAS' ABBEY
5. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. SITE OF BOROUGH

It is difficult to know whether the present village of Kill occupies the site of the medieval settlement or not, because the only indicators of its position are the motte and the old parish church. The present Main Street, however, almost certainly preserves the street plan of the seventeenth century borough. The street runs from north-east to south-west and curves slightly around the old church, possibly reflecting the line of an Early Christian enclosure.

2. THE MOTTE (Fig. 134)

This was presumably erected by the de Herefords in the late twelfth or early thirteenth centuries but no contemporary references survive. In the extent of 1540 it is referred to as "a small mountain surrounded by a dry ditch, on which the capital messuage of the manor was situated, and where the Court Baron is still held, when the turn for it comes" (White 1943, 39).

#### Description

Situated SE of the village, it consists of a tree covered mound, enclosed by a ditch with slight counterscarp bank, and a bailey on the NW. The Kill river flows through the ditch on the SW.

The motte is a round conical mound 12m high which affords extensive views on all sides except the E where it is overlooked by Kill Hill. It tapers from its basal dimensions of 59m (N-S) by 45m (E-W) to the summit, which measures 21m (N-S) by 20m (E-W), and contains a deep depression. The external ditch is 8.5m wide and has a depth of 3m below the top of the counterscarp bank.

The sub-rectangular bailey measures 57m (E-W) by 20m (N-S), and is enclosed by a bank and ditch. It declines in slope from E to W, and is enclosed by a bank on the NW, N and NE, which averages 1.5m in height and 2m in width. On the NW and N there is a drop of about 3m to a stream which runs into the river, while on the NE there is a drop of about 2m to a triangular platform.

There is a small conical mound, 4.5m in diameter, immediately S of the motte.

### 3. PARISH CHURCH OF SS. MARY & BRIGID

Placename evidence suggests the presence of a pre-Norman ecclesiastical site at Kill. The recorded dedication of the

church to SS. Mary and Brigid, in the early thirteenth century (Gilbert 1889, 80-1), together with the tradition recorded in the nineteenth century (O.S. Letters, Co. Kildare, i, 65; ii, 154) indicates that Kill was originally Cill Brighde. From this it may be deduced that the Anglo-Normans took over a pre-existing church of St. Brigid and added the dedication to St. Mary (FitzGerald 1915-17).

The church of Kill had been granted to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin, by 1202, when the papal legate, John of Salerno, confirmed the grant (Gilbert 1889, 224). The church was evidently one of some importance. A grant of early thirteenth century date was witnessed by Duliano and Walter, both chaplains of Kill (Gilbert 1889, 94), while another early thirteenth century grant noted that the chapel of the vill of William de Hyrais belonged to the mother church of Kill (Gilbert 1889, 98). After a dispute over this chapel in 1224-5, the canons of St. Thomas' Abbey agreed to grant it to Robert the Cleric for his life but reserved the baptism of infants, burial, the attendance of parishioners and the payment of dues on the four solemn feasts of the year, to the mother church of Kill (Gilbert 1889, 335-6; Sheehy 1962, 244).

Nothing is known of the history of this church in the Later Middle Ages, but it clearly remained inappropriate to St. Thomas' Abbey, and the vicarage was listed in the abbey's extent in 1540 (White 1943, 40). The church continued to function after the Dissolution. In 1597 William Coe was



Presented to the perpetual vicarage of the parish church of Kill (Morrin 1862, 432), and John Lightbond was presented in 1629 (Morrin 1863, 441).

#### Description

The church is located on the south side of Main Street. It is a structure of nineteenth century date and has a rectangular graveyard on the S. The only hint of a pre-Norman foundation is the slight curve in the street, NW and W of the church, which may preserve the line of a former enclosure.

Font. ?16th cent. (Fig. 135).

Square limestone font with straight sided basin outside the N door of the church. Roughly tooled interior with a central drainage hole. The edges are damaged.

Dims: H. 39 W. 51 by 51 cm

Basin. Diam. 42 Depth 27 cm

#### 4. GRANGE OF ST. THOMAS' ABBEY

Even before they acquired the whole manor of Kill, St. Thomas' Abbey held extensive holdings there. A charter of 1215-23 refers to the court in which the grange was situated (Gilbert 1889, 80-1), while another charter of 1206-23 noted that the abbey held a grange, a croft, a garden and a haggard, and indicates that these were located in or near 'Balikaerdeval' (?Kerdiffstown) (Gilbert 1889, 298-9). Further reference to the grange of Kill occurs in 1293 when

William de Vesci, lord of Kildare, prevented the abbot of St. Thomas' from ploughing and sowing his land, and distrained the abbot of livestock, corn, hay, etc., some of which he detained in the abbot's grange in the manor of Kill and more in gardens within Kill (Sweetman 1875-86, iv, no. 106).

## 5. MISCELLANEOUS

### Castle.

An inquisition of the holdings of Thomas Hamlin who died in 1629 noted that he held a castle in Kill from the earl of Kildare (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Kildare, Car. 1: 78) but no further references to this castle, presumably a late medieval tower house, are known.

### Enclosure.

An embanked oval enclosure is shown by the O.S. E of the motte, in the same field. The field is marshy and the monument is almost unnoticeable. It is a low platform, 20cm high, enclosing an area 57m (N-S) by 32m (E-W).

### Enclosure.

SE of the oval enclosure above, in the same field, a semi-circular enclosure is also shown by the O.S. This is not visible at present and the ground slopes naturally away to the S and W. The siting would however be suitable for a ringfort which may have been ploughed out.

## 6. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1-2. Two sherds of 13/14th century pottery were picked up by Survey staff in a cutting opposite the Parochial House.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Kill is a good example of a shrunken borough. The place-name evidence suggests that it was the site of a church in pre-Norman times and it was probably this feature which attracted the Anglo-Normans here in the late twelfth century. Evidence for the existence of the borough in medieval times is slight but it was clearly in existence during the seventeenth century. Little is known of the size or extent of the medieval settlement but it is likely that the present street pattern derives from the seventeenth century and it is probable that archaeological evidence of seventeenth century date will be more common than that relating to earlier periods. The slight curve in Main Street may preserve the line of an early ecclesiastical enclosure, however, and the possibility of discovering Early Historic evidence should not be overlooked.

Kill is now essentially a dormitory town for Dublin and its archaeological heritage is likely to come under continuing threat from the development of housing estates. The estate immediately south of the old churchyard, for instance, has almost certainly removed archaeological deposits and probably destroyed part of the Early Christian enclosure. The construction of the Naas road may also have

removed portion of the settlements archaeological deposits at the north-east corner. Deposits probably survive over much of the rest of the site, however, and in common with other borough sites it is to be expected that archaeological remains survive below ground, particularly in the form of house foundations, pits and debris scatters. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of the medieval settlement, and the nature of its houses and streets, and those of its seventeenth century successor.

In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough, which began as a settlement during the Early Christian period, was occupied throughout the Middle Ages. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough will come under pressure from housing development in the near future because of its proximity to Dublin. It is important, then, that any future development should be monitored otherwise archaeological information is liable to be lost needlessly.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 136) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Kill. This is based essentially on the area formed by the known monuments, together with the area of the seventeenth century Main Street. Because there is a lack of information at

Present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested  
that all works within the shaded area be monitored.





## LEIXLIP

Leixlip is situated in the extreme north-east corner of county Kildare, at the junction of the river Liffey with its tributary, the Rye water. The main Dublin-Galway road runs through the town. The name derives from the Old Norse Lex-hlaup, "salmon leap", the name of a waterfall on the Liffey, just above the town, which existed until the construction of a hydro-electric power station some years ago. Medieval documents generally refer to Leixlip as Saltus Salmonum but 'le Lexlep' occurs at least as early as 1339-1400 (Tresham 1828, 155: no. 61).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The existence of a Scandinavian placename may indicate Viking settlement at Leixlip. O'Donovan (AFM sub anno 915, note e) felt that the neighbouring townland of Confey, just north of Leixlip, was the site of the longphort of Ceannfuait, established by Sitric in 915, and the scene of a battle between the Vikings and the Laigin in the same year. Hogan (1910, 226), however, placed Ceannfuait near St. Mullins in county Carlow. In the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries Leixlip was also known by the name 'Ernia' or 'Hernie', most likely a derivation of An Urnaidhe "the oratory" (O.S. Letters, Co. Kildare, ii, 157), perhaps indicating a pre-Norman ecclesiastical site. Apart from these



Potential indicators of activity, the earliest definite evidence for settlement at Leixlip occurs in the late twelfth century.

Giraldus Cambrensis records that the cantred of Ui Faelain nearest Dublin, in which Leixlip was situated, was granted by Strongbow to the de Herefords, having been allotted previously to Robert FitzStephen by the King (Scott and Martin 1978, 143). The principal grantee was Adam de Hereford who divided his grant with his brothers but he retained Leixlip in his own hands (Gilbert 1889, 102; Orpen 1911-20, i, 379; Brooks 1950, 203). Adam had a castle here and established a borough at an early date (Gilbert 1889, 142-4). He granted the church and a burgage within the town to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin (Gilbert 1889, 162-3; McNeill 1949, 36), and subsequently another burgage to St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin (Gilbert 1884, i, 236). This burgage was still held by St. Mary's Abbey at the time of the Dissolution (White 1943, 22), an indication that the borough enjoyed a relatively undisturbed existence throughout the Middle Ages, despite being burned and looted by Edward Bruce's army in 1317 (Gilbert 1884, ii, 299). John Cat and Richard Hellegench, provosts of the borough, are mentioned in 1324 (42 RDKPRI, 51) and 1329-30 (43 RDKPRI, 39-40), while in 1570 Sir Nicholas White was granted £10 issuing from thirty-two burgages, and payable to the provost of the town (11 RDKPRI, 234: no. 1558). A population of 100 was recorded in the census of 1659 (Pender 1939, 402).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. STREETS & STREET PATTERN
2. MARKET PLACE
3. DOMESTIC HOUSES
4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS
5. THE CASTLE
6. ST. MARY'S PARISH CHURCH
7. AUGUSTINIAN PRIORY OF ST. CATHERINE
8. OTHER FEATURES
9. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

### 1. STREETS & STREET PATTERN

The town was confined to a narrow strip of land between the river Liffey on the S, a high ridge on the N and the Rye Water on the W. Main Street runs EW along the centre of this strip of ground. The W exit from the town climbs a hill to the NW while the present Main road to Dublin swings to the S over the Liffey. The original road continued E along the N side of the Liffey. Towards the E end of the Main St. one road, Captain's Hill, climbs the ridge on the N. It is difficult to know the antiquity of this street pattern and it may be no older than the seventeenth century.

### 2. MARKET PLACE

This was almost certainly located in Main Street.

### 3. DOMESTIC HOUSES

The burgage plot pattern survives well on the N and S of Main St, but no visible evidence for pre-1700 houses survives.

#### BLACK CASTLE

The earliest evidence for the existence of this building is in 1562 when it was granted to William Vernon (11 RDKPRI, 80: no. 453). In 1570 it was granted to Nicholas White (11 RDKPRI, 234: no. 1558). An inquisition of 1621 notes that the earl of Kildare held a castle at Leixlip (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Co. Kildare: Jac. I: 40), and in 1654 the Civil Survey notes that the 'Black Castle' was on the lands of the earl of Kildare (Simington 1952, 13). At the beginning of the twentieth century, it was described as "a residence so modernised as to be indistinguishable except to one well acquainted with the locality" (JKAS 3 (1899-1902), 341). Its location was pointed out at the eastern end of the town where it is marked on the O.S. map.

#### Description

This four storeyed building has been heavily modernised and apart from the fact that it is tall and narrow, it lacks any diagnostic features. It measures 7.5 EW and 6.5 NS and has a modern one storeyed extension on the S. The entrance door is 80cm above street level and is reached by a short flight of steps which are built parallel to the front wall of

the house. The walls average 65cm in thickness.

#### 4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

A mill, or mills, figures prominently in the records of Leixlip throughout the Middle Ages, and milling was clearly an important part of the town's economy. The earliest reference occurs in a grant by Adam de Hereford, made before 1212 (Gilbert 1884, i, 236), of a burgage "near the burgage of St. Thomas, beyond one facing the mill" (Gilbert 1884, i, 236). The burgage of St. Thomas was situated near the castle and accordingly it may be inferred that the mill was close to the castle (Gilbert 1889, 143). In 1303, 25s. 6d. were spent in repairing mills and in bringing a millstone to Leixlip (38 ROKPRI, 86). In 1325-7 Robert Lenginour accounted for sums spent on the King's mill at Leixlip, including the purchase of French millstones, repairs to the mills and repairs to the mill-pools "newly constructed of lime and stone" (42 ROKPRI, 77). One of the reasons for the dismissal of Thomas Bath in 1455 was that he had allowed a watermill at Leixlip to be wasted and destroyed (Berry 1910, 305). The extent of St. Mary's Abbey in 1540 mentions a messuage near the mill at Leixlip (White 1943, 22), almost certainly the burgage originally granted by Adam de Hereford. A mill on the Liffey is mentioned in the grants to William Vernon in 1562 (11 ROKPRI, 80: no. 453) and Nicholas White in 1570 (ibid., 234: no. 1558). The Civil Survey of 1654-6 noted a corn mill and a cloth mill at Leixlip (Simington 1952, 13). Apart from the

mill near the castle another mill was probably sited E of the town and approached along Mill Lane, at the end of which is a mill stream.

## 5. THE CASTLE

Adam de Hereford's grants to St. Thomas' Abbey, mentioning his castle of 'Hernia' or 'Ernia', can be dated to before 1212 (Gilbert 1889, 142-3). This was probably a motte erected in the late twelfth century on the high ground overlooking the junction of the Rye Water with the Liffey. By the time of these grants the castle had a grange and a chapel attached (ibid., 142).

The manor of Leixlip passed from Stephen, Adam de Hereford's son, to the Pippard family, probably about 1252 as Brooks (1950, 207) suggests. In 1294 Ralph Pippard granted all his castles and manors in Ireland, including Leixlip, to his son John (Curtis 1933-43, i, 129). John returned Leixlip to his father in 1297 (ibid., 362) and in 1302 Ralph granted all his manors in Ireland to the King (Sweetman 1875-86, v, no. 149). In 1331 John de Grauntsete was given custody of the manor and castle of Leixlip for ten years (43 RDKPRI, 64) but in 1336 they were given to Roger Outlaw, prior of Kilmainham (47 RDKPRI, 41-2), and they were to be held by the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem for over a century.

There is clear evidence for construction work during the first half of the fourteenth century when the castle was in

the King's hands. In 1303/4 monies were spent on constructing a Kitchen in the castle, building a Kiln to burn lime for the works on the castle, breaking stone and cutting wood (38 RDKPRI, 86, 95). In 1329/30 £9 6s. 8d. were spent by Master Robert Lenginour on repairs to the castle (43 RDKPRI, 39-40). In 1341-2 Master Robert Lenginour received a total of £11 9s. 10d. for carrying out works on the castle, and he received further monies in 1343 (47 RDKPRI, 54, 59; 53 RDKPRI, 30).

The continuing importance of the castle is evident in 1463 and 1465 when criminals were ordered to surrender themselves there (Berry 1914, 107, 267, 285). In 1455 Thomas Bath, receiver of the manor for the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, was discharged because of negligence (Berry 1910, 305) and Leixlip passed out of the Order's hands between then and 1479/80, when it was granted to Thomas Daniel, lord of Rathwire (Morrissey 1939, 739). In 1496, Henry VII granted Leixlip to Gearoid Mor, 8th earl of Kildare, on the occasion of his marriage to Elizabeth St. John but it was forfeited after the rebellion of Silken Thomas in 1536. Subsequently it was granted to Matthew King (Morrin 1861, 42), John Alen (F. FitzGerald 1896-8, 397), and William Vernon (11 RDKPRI, 80: no. 453). In 1570 it was granted to Sir Nicholas White and it remained in his family until the eighteenth century (11 RDKPRI, 234: no. 1558; F. FitzGerald 1896-8, 397-400).

#### Description (Figs. 137-8)

Situated on a promontory, SW of the village, overlooking

the confluence of the Rye Water and the Liffey. The castle, an amalgam of several building-phases, is still lived in. Guinness and Ryan (1971, 211-18) have identified the pre-1700 sections as a circular tower in the NW corner, the recessed N facade with a rectangular hall at the rear of the facade, a sub-rectangular addition south of the hall and a small rectangular building at the south of the complex (Fig. 138). In our opinion, however, the only sections of the building which date to before 1700 are the NE tower and the rectangular hall. The east wing is of mid-eighteenth century date and further additions were made on the south in more recent times (Bence-Jones 1978, 183).

The three-storied tower has a battered plinth and the walls average 1.2m thick. The internal diameter is 6.7m. Modern sash windows have been inserted on the S, W and N sides and a chimney into the NW wall. There are two narrow windows with internal splay on either side of the eastern opening into the house, and a spiral stairs in the angle between the tower and the front facade.

The wall of the front facade is 1.5m thick. The sub-rectangular addition at the rear of the main hall has walls ranging in thickness between 1 and 1.1m. There is a large fireplace in the S wall of the main hall and the wall thickness here is 2.4m. A narrow room, with its axis N-S above the main hall is called the Chapel. The main staircase and the bolection mouldings of the panelling in the chapel may be late 17th century.



#### Chapel of St. Patrick

Adam de Hereford's grant to St. Thomas' Abbey, dated before 1212 (Gilbert 1889, 142), specifically excludes the chapel of St. Patrick in his castle of Hennie. This continued to function throughout the Middle Ages. In 1310-11, Edward II granted the chantry chapel (cantaria capelle) of Leixlip castle to Andrew of Kent (Tresham 1828, 18: no. 125). Henry Poule, rector of the "chapel royal in the castle of Lexlype" is referred to in 1407 (tuemlow 1904, 124-5) and this is presumably the "free chapel of Lexlep" granted to Henry Poule in 1408, and to Thomas Darcas in 1480 (Tresham 1828, 182: no. 55; 263: no. 75).

#### 6. ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH

The church of St. Mary of Hennie was granted by Adam de Hereford to the abbey of St. Thomas in Dublin, before 1212 (Gilbert 1889, 142). This date can be established because the grant was later altered by William de Piro, bishop of Glendalough, who died c.1212 (Gilbert 1889, 328-9). In the ecclesiastical taxation of 1302-6 a moiety of the church of Leixlip was valued at 100s. (Sweetman 1875-86, v, 240). The church was damaged and looted by Bruce's army in 1317 (Gilbert 1884, ii, 299). In 1463 the full tithes of the church of Blessed Mary of Leixlip were restored to St. Thomas' Abbey by parliament (Barry 1914, 163-5) after it had been claimed that the abbey had lost half of its tithes in the reign of Edward II (1307-27). The rectory of Leixlip was

still in the possession of St. Thomas' Abbey at the Dissolution (White 1943, 42) after which the tithes were held by Nicholas Stanynghurst (ibid., 43). The rectory was leased to Richard Manwaringe in 1567 (11 ROKPRI, 162: no. 1077) and surrendered by his widow in 1584 (15 ROKPRI, 35: no. 4382), and was subsequently leased to James Ryan (ibid., 44: no. 4430). The visitation of archbishop Bulkeley in 1630 noted that the church and chancel at Leixlip were ruinous at that time (Ronan 1941b, 97). According to the parish records a major restoration of the church was commenced in 1675.

#### Description (Figs. 139-41)

Situated at the SW end of Main St. It is a simple nave and chancel church of thirteenth century date, with a fifteenth century W tower, and a modern N porch. The masonry consists of roughly coursed limestone with no dressed quoins but much of it has been rebuilt and fragments of earlier windows and doors inserted in the walls. The church, which measures 27m by 7.5m internally, has been re-roofed and the height of the walls increased by 1m. The steep pitched line of an earlier nave roof can be seen in the E wall of the tower and the earlier roof of the chancel in the E gable of the nave.

The east wall of the CHANCEL is lit by a modern round twin-light window with rounded rear arch. The north and south walls have one round arched window, also of modern date. The north window is blocked and one side of a small pointed

Window with chamfered sandstone jambs is visible E of it. Externally there is a chamfered single-light ogee-headed window at the west end of the south wall. It is not clear if it has been inserted or blocked. There is a small worn head, with a fleur-de-lys crown, in thirteenth century style on the S wall.

The N wall of the NAVE has two modern pointed windows at its W end, the easternmost of which is blocked internally. Externally there is a blocked pointed door with chamfered sandstone jambs in the centre of the wall, and a blocked rectangular window with limestone jambs towards the W end. There is a modern doorway at the E end of the nave which opens into the modern porch. There is a small wall cupboard E of this door. The W. wall has a splayed flat-arched doorway with modern wooden frame. There is a blocked splayed slit at first floor level which opened into the tower. The S wall is lit by three round arched windows and one pointed window at the W end of the wall. Externally the limestone jambs of a large window are visible in the masonry towards the W end. There is also a blocked slit window with roughly chamfered limestone jambs at the E end.

The four storeyed rectangular TOWER measures 3.5 by 3m internally (Fig. 140). It is built of evenly coursed blocks of undressed limestone and lacks dressed quoins. The walls are 1.25m thick. There is a projecting stair-turret in the NW corner lit at each level by rectangular double splayed slits. The ground floor has a pointed barrell vault but the walls

have been plastered over so that no features are visible internally but externally there are two blocked up double splayed slits in the N and S walls. These are at a very low level, just barely above the ground, and it would appear that the present floor is higher than the original. Two low stone benches (wall footings) run along the N and S walls of the tower internally. The W wall has a round arched door with flat rear arch and chamfered yellow sandstone jambs. Access to the first floor is via a flat lintelled door in the NW leading to the spiral stair. The first floor is entered through a door in which a re-used grave-slab is used as the lintel. The room has a pointed barrel vault with wickerwork centering with a large hole in it on the W side to allow the clock weights to move up and down. The E wall has a blocked rectangular slit high on the E wall which opened into the church. There is a wall cupboard in the south wall and a splayed single-light cusped ogee-headed window with chamfered limestone jambs and flattened rear-arch in the centre of the wall. High in the wall is a double splayed, flat lintelled rectangular slit. The W wall has a similar window but with concave splay, window seats, and a small wall cupboard. The N wall has a blocked-up fireplace with overhanging chimney supported on a corbel. The second floor is entered on the NW through a lintelled door. The E wall has a projecting canopy in the NE corner for a fireplace which protruded onto the floor, and in the centre of the wall is a partially blocked up pointed arch with a rectangular opening which looks onto the roof rafters of the nave. The S and W walls have a

single-light ogee-headed window with chamfered limestone jambs, segmental rear arch, concave splays and a window seat. There is a wall cupboard in the N wall. The ceiling is modern but it is supported on the original corbels. The third floor is entered through a lintelled door in the NW corner. The E wall is reduced in thickness about 60cm above the floor and the top of the inner part of the wall forms a banch between the N and S walls. Inserted into the centre of the thinner section of wall is a round arched window with flattened rear-arch and splays which widen to the exterior. Above the window the wall returns to its original thickness and a low supporting arch stretches from the N to the S wall. The S and W walls have a blocked rectangular window with flattened rear arch and internal splay. The modern roof is supported on brick work which appears to have been built above the original roof line because at least four stones in the S wall are sloping towards the outside and may have been the drainage stones of the original roof. There is a drainage course externally below the parapet. There is a carved head with bulging eyes and a moustache placed high on the W end of the stair-turret's N wall. Another head faces out from the E end of the tower's N wall. It has a fringe of hair across the forehead, bulging almond shaped eyes, an elongated nose and an upturned slit for the mouth.

#### Monuments

Cross-slab. Late 13th/ early 14th cents.

Used as a lintel at first floor level in the tower. Decorated

in low relief with a cross consisting of two broken circles,  
an expanded rectangular knob with rounded terminal and the  
cross-stem.

Dims: L.77 (min) W.20 T. 18

White wall memorial. 1664.

Two rectangular plaques set in an architectural frame in  
the N wall of the chancel arch. The frame has a heavy coat of  
blue paint and the tablets are covered in black gloss paint.  
The upper stone has a heater shaped shield in relief with the  
arms of White impaling Moore; dexter: argent a chevron gules  
between three roses of the last; sinister: azure on a chief  
indented three mullets gules. The inscription on the lower  
tablet is badly incised in Roman lettering:

THIS TOMB WAS ERECTED: BY THE LADY URSULA/ WHITE/  
DAUGHTER TO THE LORD MOORE/ HERE LYETH THE BODY OF SR  
NICHOLAS WHITE/ KNIGHT DECEASED THE 24TH OF FEBRUARIE  
1654 AND/ HIS SON NICHOLAS WHITE ESQ: DECEASED THE 31 OF  
DECEMBER/ 1664.

Dims: Upr. stone H.58 W.41

Lr. Stone H.44 W.92

Fitzgerald 1892-4a, 142

Deborah Williams. 1697.

Large rectangular limestone slab set in the chancel floor.  
Incised inscription in Roman capitals:

DEPOSITV DEBORAE RELICTAE/ GV WILLIAMS ARCHIDIAC CASSEL/  
SORORIS NARCISSI AEP1 DUB/ QVAE DECESSIT 24 MAR 1697-8/

RET 65.

Dims: L.220 W.112

FitzGerald 1892-4a, 142.

Font

Large rectangular font set on top of the stone bench/ wall footings in the tower's ground floor. Circular basin, lacking a drainage hole. Coated in black gloss paint. The slab underneath the basin may be part of a stepped base.

Dims: H.36 W.68 T.66

Basin Depth .22 Diam. 47

FitzGerald 1892-4a, 142.

Grave-slab. 17th cent.

Set into the S wall of the chancel. Round-headed limestone gravemaker. Much of the surface has flaked off. Decorated in low relief with a skull and crossed bones below an equal armed cross and an incised inscription in Roman capitals: HERE LIETH THE/ BURLALL PLACE OF/ HENRY .../ MAY. There are a few letters below the skull T...N..O'.

Dims: H.86 W.48

## 7. AUGUSTINIAN PRIORY OF ST. CATHERINE

This priory was founded in 1219 by Warisius de Pech, lord of Lucan (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 192), who later increased the endowments in order to provide for six chaplains. The priory was subordinated to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin, in 1236 and united to St. Thomas' as a conventual dependancy in 1287.

In 1323 it was appropriated to St. Thomas' as a non-conventual cell, to be served by a canon of St. Thomas', because it was impoverished and heavily in debt (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 192). In 1539 the church and attached lands were granted rent-free to Patrick Fynne, a former canon of St. Thomas', on condition that he maintain the church and other buildings (White 1943, 28-9). The church of St. Katherine, "near the Salmon Leap" was listed in the surrender of St. Thomas' Abbey (Morrin 1861, 134) and in 1569 its site was granted to Sir Nicholas White (11 RDKPRI, 205: no. 1369).

#### Description (Fig. 142)

A roofless house occupies the site of this church on a low plateau above the Liffey, NE of the village. It is built of uncoursed limestone, with a considerable amount of brick, and has blocked up openings in each wall. The internal measurements are 8.75 (N-S) by 7.45m (E-W) and the floor is missing. There are roughly dressed quoins on the NE, SE and SW angles and the E window is a twin light multi-cusped pointed window with internal splay. The E wall is 1.10 thick and the S wall is 95cm thick. There are two brick windows in the S wall and a brick door in the W wall. The E gable is crenellated with brick. There are no surrounding buildings.

#### 8. OTHER FEATURES

Chapel of St. Abban



An inquisition of 1604 records that in 1535 James Cottrell, late abbot of St. Thomas', Dublin, had granted the tithes of a moiety of Leixlip to 'John Dee, vicar of the church or chapel of St. Abban, lying within the manor of Leixlip' (JKAS 3 (1899-1902), 489). Nothing else is known of this chapel.

St. Catherine's well.

On top of the hill, N of the priory site, on the E side of the road. There are two grotto-shaped structures, plastered internally, over the well.

#### 9. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. Mesolithic core axe. Found in a garden at Leixlip, Co. Kildare. Woodman 1978, 323.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Leixlip is important to archaeological research because it is one of the few rural sites connected with the Vikings. It is quite possible that there was a settlement here in Viking times and the church name, An Urnaidhe, is a further pointer to settlement here in pre-Norman times. The extent of the Anglo-Norman borough is unknown and the present street pattern and burgage plot pattern appears to date to the seventeenth century.

It is likely that archaeological deposits have been destroyed on the street front but archaeological layers probably survive below ground in the plots behind the frontage. The area in the vicinity of the bridge is particularly important because of the likelihood that waterlogged archaeological deposits survive, and these would shed considerable light, for instance, on the first bridge and its successors.

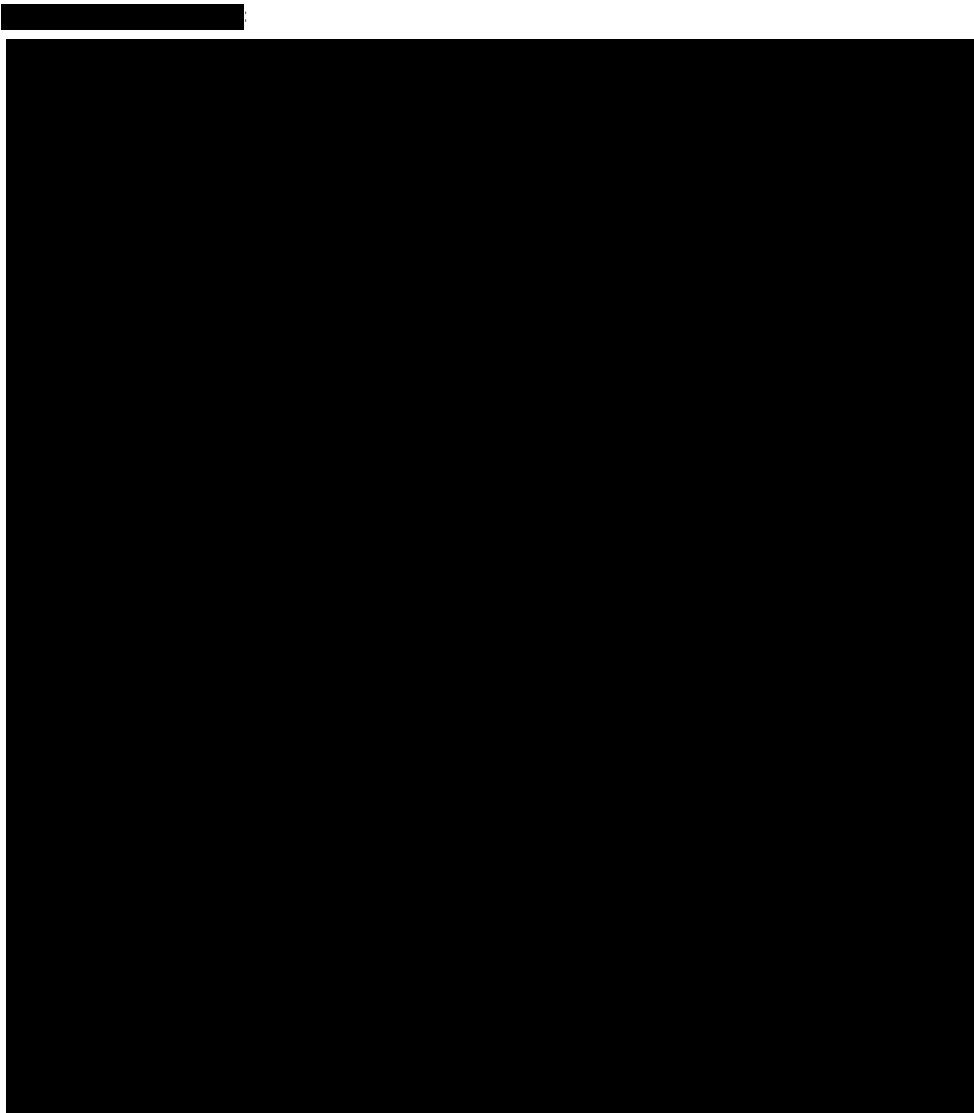
In common with other medieval sites it is to be expected that archaeological remains survive below ground, particularly in the form of house foundations, pits and debris scatters. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of the medieval settlement, and the nature of its houses, streets, and defences, if any.

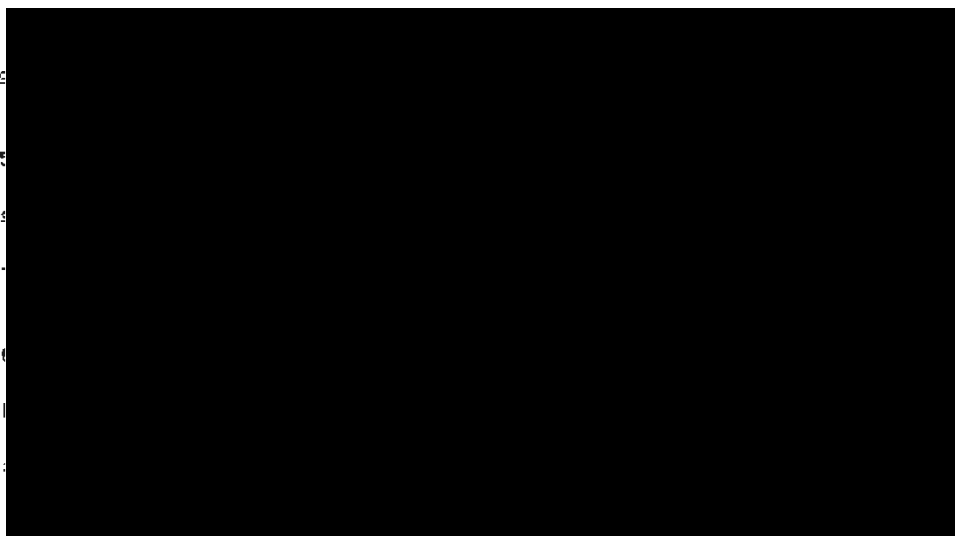
In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough, which may have begun as a settlement in Viking times, was occupied throughout the Middle Ages. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough will come under pressure from housing development in the near future because of its proximity to Dublin. It is important, then, that any future development should be monitored otherwise archaeological information is liable to be lost needlessly.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 143)

delimits the area of archaeological potential within Leixlip. This is based essentially on the area formed by the known monuments, and because there is a lack of information at present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.





## MOONE

Moone is a small village located on the main Dublin-Carlow road, 8 km north of Castledermot and 17 km south of Kilcullen. It is located on upland soil at the western edge of the Wicklow mountains. The original settlement of Moone was located 1 km to the west, in the valley of the river Greese, a tributary of the Barrow. The name is derived from Maein Cholaim Cille, 'Colmcille's property' (Dinnseanchas 3, no. 2 (1968), 55-7).

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest settlement at Moone is the ecclesiastical site, dedicated to Colmcille. The foundation date of the monastery is unknown and the first documentary references occur in the eleventh century, when the deaths are noted of Aedh O Flanagan, erenagh of Maein-Choluim-Cille (AU-1005) and Abbot Colum O Flanagan, in 1015 (AFM, s.a. 1014). In 1040 Maein Choluim Chille was one of four churches plundered by Diarmait Mac Mael na mBo (AFM).

It is likely that it was the presence of the monastery which attracted the Anglo-Normans to this site. Indeed, it would appear that Moone was one of the places which Strongbow, as lord of Leinster, choose to retain in his own hands. Unfortunately no information survives on the first half-century of Anglo-Norman rule at Moone but it is likely

that a borough was established at the beginning of the thirteenth century. C.1223 William Marshall the younger granted a charter to the burgesses of Moone which granted them their burgages "for the rent which Geoffrey FitzRobert first settled, to wit a burgage with the appurtenances by the rent of 12d. yearly (MacNiocaill 1964b, 250; Mills 1905, 371). From this it would appear that the borough was established at the time when Geoffrey FitzRobert was seneschal of Leinster, c.1200 (Orpen 1911-20, ii, 226). The charter of c.1223 granted the burgesses of Moone a number of privileges including the right to be tried only in the hundred of the town, which was to be held in the town once a week; freedom from tolls and customs; restrictions on outside merchants trading in the town; freedom to marry and dispose of property at will; the right to have a gild merchant and other gilds (MacNiocaill 1964b, 246-50). There is no reference to an autonomous municipal authority in the charter but this was clearly in existence by 1302 when the 'provost and community of the town of Moen' were summoned to answer queries concerning their use of common of pasture nearby. The c.1223 charter also indicates that the earl had a castle, governed by a bailiff, a hospice and mills at Moone by that time. There was also a church of some importance by this date, indicating that Moone was a well-established and prosperous settlement by 1225. The borough continued to function in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Adam Tanner, provost of MonacolumKyll is mentioned in 1328 (White 1957, 21) while the dower assigned to Anastasia, widow of

David Wogan, in 1418 included 4marks 13.5d. of burgage rents from Moone (Tresham 1828, 223: no. 1c). This amount represents slightly more than sixty burgages, one-third of the total of 180, suggesting that the number of burgages was the same as in 1299. The subsequent history of the settlement is unknown and later references are scarce. In 1580, during the Baltinglass rebellion, a garrison was stationed there, presumably in the castle (Hamilton 1867, 266). The Civil Survey of 1654 stated that the manor of Moone was held jointly by Thomas and Maurice Eustace and it noted two castles and a mill there (Simington 1952, 116). The census of 1659 returned the relatively substantial figure of 109 for Moone (Pender 1939, 404).

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. SITE OF BOROUGH
2. INDUSTRIAL AREAS
3. CASTLE
4. ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH & EARLY MONASTIC SITE
5. OTHER FEATURES
6. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

##### 1. SITE OF BOROUGH

It is difficult to be certain of the exact site of the borough but the most likely position is on either side of the



road on the W of the church because the ground beside the river is marshy while the ground NW of the road leading from the gates of Mooneabbey House is steep.

## 2. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

The ruins of substantial mills are beside the river, SW of Moone Bridge. They are 18-19th century but may be on the site of the medieval mills.

## 3. CASTLE

There was a castle at Moone by c.1223 and it functioned as the manorial centre of Moone (MacNiocaill 1964b, 247, 249). In 1247 Anselm Marshall, the last lord of Leinster, died. In the resulting partition Moone was given to William Marshall's daughter Isabel who was married to Reginald de Mohun (Orpen 1911-20, iii, 97, 101). It remained with the de Mohuns until 1299 when it was surrendered to the King (Sweetman 1875-86, iv, 270). An extent of the lands drawn up in that year noted that the burgesses paid £8 0s. 4d. yearly for their burgages, an amount which suggests a total of 160 burgages (Sweetman 1875-86, iv, 309-10; v, 115-17; Mills 1914, 28-30). It also accounted for the returns of the court and the hundred there, and noted that John de Mohun held two water-mills, and a messuage and curtilage at his manor of 'Grange Mohoun'. In 1305 the king granted lands and tenements at Moone to John Wogan, the justiciar (Sweetman 1875-86, v,



127-8) and Moone was to remain in the hands of the Wogans until 1447 when it passed to the Eustaces (Tickell 1946-63, 395-6, 398-9).

The form of the castle is unknown throughout this period and, indeed, there is no direct historical evidence for the presence of the castle. The reference to a garrison at Moone in 1580, however, almost certainly indicates that it was the castle that was garrisoned (Hamilton 1867, 266). The Civil Survey of 1654 noted the presence of two castles at Moone, one of which was valued at £40, the other at £15 (Simington 1952, 116); both were presumably held by Thomas and Maurice Eustace, the proprietors of the manor. Lewis (1837, ii, 391) noted "the remains of an ancient castle, supposed to have been built by one of the first English adventurers, on the bank of the river, above which, one tower yet standing forms a conspicuous object .... It recieved considerable injury during the disturbances of 1798".

#### Description (Figs. 144-5)

Rectangular tower house of four storeys with wall walk above. It stands on a slight rise above the Greese river in the grounds of Mooneabbey House. It has basal dimensions of 8.4 N-S by 8.1m E-W and is 15.25m high. It is built of uncoursed rubble limestone with some dressed quoins in the NW corner of the batter. There is a batter on the N and W sides which is an addition because it blocks two loops and what was possibly an original entrance in the N wall of the ground

floor. The N half of the E wall is stepped out at ground level and above this there is a gabled roof line indicating the former presence of a building attached to the N wall. Traces of its N return, about 80cm thick, are present in the N end of the E wall and a break in the S end of the wall would indicate that the building was 5.9m wide. The present entrance of the tower house, in the E wall, probably communicated with this structure. The interior of the tower from first floor level upwards has been fitted out as a dovecote.

The tower house is entered through a rectangular opening in the N end of the E wall. The door lacks its jambs and has a round arch of brick. The presence of a murder hole above the door, however, indicates that this was an original entrance. The W part of the entrance is largely faced with brick and opens through a flat arched doorway, with a modern wooden frame, into a rectangular chamber with a pointed barrell vault. The chamber measures 4.5 NS by 3.55m EW and is a maximum of 5 m high. A round opening, 1.5m in diameter, is present in the vault above the S wall, and rises to a height of 2m until it is sealed by corbelling. There are rectangular wall cupboards at the E and W ends of the W wall and a rectangular window with wooden frame in a widely splaying embrasure with rounded rear arch in the centre. The N wall has rectangular splayed slits at the N and S ends, both of which are blocked by the external batter, and a large splayed recess, probably a doorway, with segmental rear-arch in the centre, which is also blocked by the batter. A straight

stairs in the thickness of the E wall, S of the doorway leads to the first floor.

The stairs in the E wall is lit just below 1st floor level by a rectangular slit window, parallel sided externally and splayed internally with flat lintelled rear arch in the S wall. At this point the stairs double back and continue in a northerly direction to first floor level. The stairs open into a narrow flat lintelled corridor running roughly NS which is lit by a rectangular splayed slit with flat lintelled rear-arch in the centre of the E wall. In the W wall of this corridor, at the N end, is a splayed flat lintelled opening which was the original entrance to the main chamber but is now cut off from it by the stones of the dove-cote. The main chamber is now entered through an opening broken through the W wall at the S end of the corridor. The E wall had a wall cupboard in the N end. The W wall is concealed by the dove-cote. There is a large parallel sided opening with lintelled rear-arch in the centre of the N wall and a wall cupboard in the E end of the wall. The W end of the S wall has a widely splayed round-headed window with flat lintelled rear-arch and tooled limestone jambs. The stairs to the second floor open from the E end of the S wall and are lit by a rectangular splayed slit with flat lintelled rear arch. There is no longer access to the main chamber of the second floor because it is blocked off by the dove-cote. The corridor to the E has a stepped roof and narrow pointed splayed windows with flat lintelled rear arches and tooled chamfered jambs in the N and E walls. The main chamber has a

blocked single light ogee-headed window with tooled chamfered jambs in the S wall and a twin-light pointed window with tooled and chamfered jambs in the W wall.

The stairs to the third floor are lit by a splayed ogee headed window with flat lintelled rear arch and tooled limestone jambs in the S wall. The eastern half of the window is filled with blocking stones. To the E is a rectangular double splayed slit with flat lintelled rear arch. The main chamber is also blocked off by the dovecot on this floor. The eastern passage is much wider at this level and takes the form of a sub-triangular room with a stone-arched fireplace sitting out on the floor from the E wall. There are two stone shelves on either side of the chimney breast. The room is lit by a double splayed rectangular window with flattened arch in the E wall, a pointed splayed window with flat lintelled rear-arch and tooled limestone jambs and sillstone with hole for securing a shutter in the N wall. There is also a flat lintelled splayed opening at the junction of the W and N walls. The roof has several courses of corbelling. In the SE angle outside the chamber is a garderobe chute opening directly underneath to the E and a blocked flat lintelled window directly above.

The parapet level is differentiated externally by a drainage course in the S, W and N walls. The stairs ascend through the S wall and are lit by a small splayed flat lintelled window. The roof is steeply pitched and of brick. It is very overgrown and the parapet has collapsed in places.



#### 4. ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH & EARLY MONASTIC SITE

The first reference to the church of Moone occurs in 1179 when it was included in a list of churches within the diocese of Glendalough (McNeill 1950, 5; Sheehy 1962, 29-31). After the union of the dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough (c.1213) Moone became part of Dublin (McNeill 1950, 38; Sheehy 1962, 171-2). In 1220 William Marshall, lord of Leinster, resigned the church to the archbishop of Dublin (White 1957, 18-19). The archbishop granted the church to St. Patrick's cathedral, Dublin, between 1220 and 1223 (McNeill 1950, 52; White 1957, 20-1). The church is listed in a taxation of St. Patrick's in 1306 (Lawlor 1908, 68) and there was a theft of silver from a chest within the church in 1310 (Wood, Langman and Griffith 1956, 158). It was a church of importance and in 1533 the Repertorium Viride described it as a mother-church with three annexed churches at Ardscurr, 'le Barton' and 'Kilgelane' (White 1941, 211). The Royal Visitation of the diocese of Dublin in 1615 noted that the church was in good repair (Ronan 1941a, 51) but it was ruinous by 1630 (Ronan 1941b, 124). The belfry fell in the early nineteenth century and the Lady Chapel and north wall were demolished in the 1830s (F. M. Carroll 1891-5, 293).

Many writers, including Lewis (1837, ii, 391), Killanin and Duignan (1967, 90) and Harbison (1970, 124), repeat the tradition that a Franciscan friary was founded at Moone in 1258, but as Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 280) have pointed out, there is no contemporary evidence for the existence of such a

foundation.

Description (Figs. 146-7)

The remains consist of a long rectangular building. The masonry consists of uncoursed rubble limestone. There is no dressed stone except for some granite quoins at either corner of the W end. There was a parapet around the church.

The E gable stands to a height of between 7 and 8m, and had steps over the gable connecting the parapets. The N and S walls of the church project as buttresses beyond the E wall and it is unlikely that these are antae as Harbison (1970, 124) has suggested. The pointed splayed window is a modern insertion although it may reflect the style of the original. The middle section of the wall below the window is also modern blocking. The N wall stands to a height of 5m at its junction with the east gable and has a single splay, corresponding to the lancet in the south wall. The wall is broken W of this and is represented by footings for 4 m. The next 2m of wall is modern blocking and incorporate two very large limestone boulders. The W end of the wall is featureless except for some putlog holes and one splay and two stones from a window arch at the E end. The W gable stands to a height of 8m. Much of the inner face of the wall is missing from around the flat-arched single-light rectangular splayed window with flat lintelled rear-arch. High in the gable there is a similar smaller window. The wall is covered by ivy externally but it appears to have had steps

over the top. The S wall stands to a height of 6.5m at the E end and 5.5m at the W end. The E end is built of long slabs of limestone while the W end is built of limestone rubble and occasional blocks of dressed and undressed granite. There is a pointed lancet with pointed rear arch at the E end of the wall. W of this is a hole at the base of the wall. Part of the next section of wall to the W is rebuilt with a short section of an internal crossing wall, probably marking the site of the tower shown by Austin Cooper. Further W is a flat-arched door with internal splay, and a partly rebuilt pointed doorway with flat rear-arch. At the W end of the wall is a small round arched recess with slightly splayed sides.

The LADY CHAPEL is shown by Cooper in a drawing of 1784 (F.M. Carroll 1891-5, 286) which shows it with two lancets in the N wall.

Cooper depicts the TOWER near the SE corner. It was four floored with narrow slits in the first and second floors on the N wall and large rectangular windows in the N and W walls at third floor level. There was a drainage course over the 3rd floor with battlements above.

A small rectangular structure of uncertain date was built onto the W wall.

#### Monuments

The crosses are probably not in their original positions. The S cross was only erected in its present position after

1835 (F. M. Carroll 1891-5, 293).

South Cross (Figs. 148-51). 8th cent.

Granite ringed cross in three sections on the S side of the medieval church. Decoration consists of panels with scriptural scenes carved in false relief. The base is a tall rectangular block of stone with a truncated pyramid on top.

#### Base

S face (Fig. 148) Lr panel: Daniel in the Lions Den. Mid panel: sacrifice of Isaac. Upr panel: Adam and Eve

W face. Lr panel: Loaves and fishes. Mid panel: Flight into Egypt. Upr panel: Three children in the fiery furnace.

N face (Figs. 149-50) Lr panel: twelve apostles. Mid panel: crucifixion.

E face (Fig. 151) Lr panel: two animals with scrolls on their backs, the ends of which interlace and have heads as terminals. Mid panel: man between two beasts. Upr panel ?Paul and Anthony in the desert.

#### Shaft

S face (Fig. 148) Cross-head: Christ in Majesty. Shaft panels are filled with interlace, animal and abstract motifs.

W face. Panels decorated with animals and figures; every second panel is undecorated.

N face (Fig. 149) Cross-head: large spiral with small panels in the arms. Shaft panels are filled with animals among which are a cow, a deer, two dogs. The panel below the ring has a diamond shaped design on a background of small bosses. The upper panel has a six spiral pattern.



E face. Every second panel on the shaft and ring have animals or interlace while every other panel is blank.

Dims: H. of tapering base 1.33 W. at base 90 X 83

W at top, 72 by 68

Shaft W 40 by 38

East Cross (Fig. 152). Prob. pre-1200.

Granite base deeply buried in the ground in the graveyard, NE of the church.

Dims: W. at top 72 x 48

Mortice: Depth 14 W. 30 by 22 cm

North cross (Fig. 153). Pre-1200.

Undecorated pyramidal shaped granite base in the wooded field to the N of the medieval church.

Dims: H. 56 W at base 74 by 54

W at top 54 by 43

Mortice: Depth: 14 W. 24.5 by 13 cm

West Cross (Fig. 154). Pre-1200.

Cross base immediately N of the S cross. Two stepped undecorated pyramidal-shaped granite base with small mortice. There is a rebate around the mortice and one side of the base has three steps.

Dims: H. 70 W. 58-35 by 46-27

Mortice Depth 17 W. 12 by 12 cm.

Fragmentary cross.

Built into a cement surround in the nave of the church are

fragments of a large ringed cross with part of the shaft, decorated with panels of animal and figure sculpture.

W face. The shaft has an interlaced foliage panel and the lower panel of the ring has two animals while there are two affronted animals on the panel in the arm.

E face. Three panels with animals. The panel in the arm has a human head and a second head rests on the back of a horse. The shaft panels have one animal each.

Dims: Shaft H.72 W.41 T.17

Arm H.37 W.52 T.17

Cross-slab (Fig. 155). 13th-14th cents.

Tapering limestone slab lying on the ground close to the S cross. Decorated with a fleur-de-lys cross in false relief. The head of the cross has a smaller fleur-de-lys within the main design. The foot of the cross is missing.

Dims: L.111 W.43-41 T.21

Brine slab. 1624

Limestone slab in three pieces within the chancel. Inscription in false relief Roman capitals:

EDMOND Brine/ D IOHANNY .../ N HIS WIFE CAUSE/ D THIS  
MONVMen/ TE TO BE MADE in r/ EMRANCE. Of hi/ S PARENTS  
DIERmot./ O BRINE AND .IOR CVLLON WhO DEC/ EASED A dni  
1624/ FOR whose sovles/ YEE IN C/ harity iE FOR AS/  
you ArE sOE HA/ VE THEY BEEN/ AND as THEY ARE/ YOU  
SHALL BE S/ ENE A DNI 1635 PATRICH BRINE

Below the inscription is an incised cross on a calvary with IHS in the centre. There are crossed bones and a marigold within a circle (?sun) on the right side and some lines on the left.

Dims: L.157 W.62 T.9 cm

J. Assoc. Preservation Memorials Dead 1 (1888-91), 192, 416;  
ibid. 2 (1892-4), 326

Archbold tomb. 17th cent.

This tomb, in nine fragments, is gathered together on the ground within the chancel. It consists of the table of an altar tomb and one side and one end panel decorated in very low false relief. The table carries the inscription in Roman capitals:

ORATE PRO ANIMA/ GUALTERI ARCH/ BOLO QUI HOC MONUMENTUM/  
FIERI FECIT IN ME/ moriam UXORIS . E IOR TUI/ ENI T EAD  
IUDITI/ S IUDEX IUST

The four corners of the slab had depictions of the evangelists; St Mark (.ARCUS), top left and St Matthew, top right. Between them is a shield with the Archbold arms (ermine a saltire and a chief gules - chief not shown). At the bottom of the slab is a depiction of St. Michael labelled .ICHAEL and John the Evangelist labelled IOHANNES. Upside down at the base of the slab is the name of the sculptor 'MATHUE MOL/ AUNXE MASONE.

The side panel is decorated with empty ogee-headed niches separated by pilasters carved with foliage. The upper border

has bead and reel mouldings and the lower has a running foliage design. The end panel has a crucifixion with one narrow panel of foliage and one panel with a geometric design. The narrow return of the panel also has a panel of foliage. Christ is shown nailed to a Latin cross with INRI above.

Dims: Cover            L. 163 (min) W. 61 T. 18  
         Side Panel L. 177            W. 61 T. 11  
         End Panel L. 86            W. 61 T. 17 cm.

FitzGerald 1891-5c, 206

#### 5. OTHER FEATURES

St. Columbkille's well.

Situated in low lying ground NE of the church. Surrounded by a bee-hive structure. Overgrown and neglected.

Moone rath.

Situated on top of a hill SW of the churchyard, which affords extensive views. The top of the hill is flat and the feature was made by digging a ditch and counter scarp bank 3m below the top of the hill. There is a square limestone grave slab in the centre of the rath with a foliage design in relief and an incised 18th century inscription to Thomas Ashe.

J. Assoc. Preservation Memorials Dead Ireland 1 (1888-91), 192.

#### 6. LIST OF STRAY FINDS.

#### Flints.

In laying a Gas Pipeline, a flint blade and end scraper made from a water rolled pebble were found in Moone Td. O.S. 6" Sheet 38, 38cm from W and 2.2cm from S.

#### Human remains

Human remains together with a flat piece of iron and three iron handles are in the National Museum of Ireland. NMI 1945: 32-6.

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Moone is a particularly good example of a deserted medieval borough. The documentary sources indicate that it was a pre-Norman church site of importance and this was probably what attracted the Anglo-Normans there in the later twelfth century. There are indications that the borough was a substantial settlement in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and its abandonment probably occurred in the fifteenth as a result of attacks from the MacMurroughs. The castle, however, continued as a strongpoint and some form of settlement survived here until the seventeenth century. The exact extent of the borough is unknown, however, at any time in its history and we lack information on the form of its houses and streets.


There is little evidence for interference with the archaeological deposits, and, in common with other medieval

sites it is to be expected that archaeological remains survive below ground, particularly in the form of house foundations, pits and debris scatters. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of the medieval settlement, and the nature of its houses, streets, and defences, if any.

In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough, which began as a settlement during the Early Christian period, was occupied throughout the Middle Ages. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough is under no immediate threat.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 156) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Moone. This is based essentially on the area formed by the known monuments, and because there is a lack of information at present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.





Page 11. 375-2078 and 375-2079 are 100% redacted. 375-2078 is the reference to the 375-2079 in 375-2078. 375-2079 is the 375-2078 in 375-2078.

## NAAS

Naas is the county town of Kildare and was also the county's principal town during the Middle Ages. Situated in fertile low-lying ground on the eastern fringe of the Liffey valley in the north-east of the county, 32Klm south-west of Dublin and 18 Klm north-east of Kildare. The placename Nas means 'place of assembly' (de hOir 1974-7, 103).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Two Early Bronze Age axeheads and a multiple burial found in an esker at Gallow's Glen indicate human activity in the vicinity of Naas during the Early Bronze Age but nothing else is known of settlement in the area during prehistoric times. Even in the first centuries of the Early Historic period the nature of activity in the area, which may have given rise to the name Nas, remains obscure. From at least the eighth until the tenth centuries, however, Naas was a seat of the Kings of Leinster (T. J. de Burgh 1891-5, 184-6; JRSAL 34 (1904), 326). The fort (dun) of Naas is first referred to in 705 (AFM). This was the royal residence and was probably incorporated into the later Anglo-Norman motte. Traditionally Cearbhall (d.904) was the last King of Leinster to reside at Naas (AFM ii, 572, note o), although Naas is again described as the residence of the Kings of Leinster in 936 (A. Clon. 153; AFM i, 496, note z).



Naas was also the site of an Early Christian monastery, known as Cill Corbhain or Cill Nais, where nine Kings of Leinster were buried (Radner 1978, 230). Radner (1978, 167), who edited the eleventh century source containing this information identified Cill Corbain as Kill but this is incorrect. Kill was dedicated to Brigid (see elsewhere this volume), and in view of the alternative name Cill Nais for Cill Corbain together with the placename Corban's Lane within Naas, there can be little doubt but that Cill Corbain was at Naas. The Vita Tripartita, written 895-901, mentions Naas and 'the green of the fort, to the east of the road' and also a well, north of the fort (Stokes 1887, 184). In the Life of Feichin of Fore it is stated that the King of Leinster granted Feichin 'Tulach Fobhair' which, according to Colgan (1645, 137, 143) was located near Naas. Comerford (1880-83, 107) and O'Hanlon (1869, 140) suggest that a monastery was established at Tulach Fobhair and locate it at Millbrook, immediately east of the town. Despite these suggestions, however, the precise location of Tulach Fobhair cannot be established (O.S. Letters, Co. Kildare, ii, 191-4).

After the coming of the Normans Naas was granted by Strongbow to Maurice FitzGerald (Orpen 1892, 1.3088; Mills and McEnery 1916, 145). In a document of c.1186 Prince John confirmed the grant of the cantred in which Naas was situated to William, son of Maurice FitzGerald, and also granted him a weekly market in his burgh of Naas (Mills and McEnery 1916, 145; Ir. Rec. Comm. 1829, 5). The Augustinian priory was established before the end of the twelfth century and the

parish church, dedicated to St. David, was in existence by the early thirteenth century.

Information on Naas in the Later Middle Ages is scanty. The town was apparently burned and plundered by Edmund Bruce in 1316 (Orpen 1911-20, iv, 190) but it clearly recovered and its importance in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries may be gauged from the fact that at least nine parliaments and thirteen councils were held there between 1355 and 1484 (Moody, Martin and Byrne 1982). In 1467-8, Naas was described as the 'Key of the county of Kildare in resistance of their Irish enemies' (Berry 1914, 607-9). The same document, however, described the town as being in danger of destruction unless it was walled. A number of fifteenth century murage grants point to conditions of increasing insecurity. In 1415, for instance, it was claimed that the town was 'surrounded by Irish enemies and by English rebels' by whom the townsmen were despoiled and impoverished (Trasham 1828, 206: no. 103).

Naas was incorporated by charter of Elizabeth in 1568 (Morrin 1861, 526-8; Morrin 1862, 368-72) and a new charter was granted by James I in 1609 (Erck 1846-52, ii, 533-9). In 1577 the town was attacked at night and burned by Rory O' More and Cormac MacCormac O'Connor (Hamilton 1867, 107). T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 183-90) quoted a report by Sir Henry Sidney to the effect that a total of between seven and eight hundred houses were burned, and estimating the male population of Naas as about five hundred at the time. Another contemporary record put the number of burned houses at one hundred and

fifty (Brewer and Bullen 1868, 110) and the fact that a population of 303 was recorded in 1659 suggests that Sidney's figures may have been exaggerated (Pendar 1933, 396). Large garrisons of crown forces were stationed at Naas from the late sixteenth century, particularly during the period c.1598-1601 and during the wars of the 1640s, when the town changed hands on a number of occasions, and was burned by the Confederate leader, Preston, in 1647 (T. J. de Burgh 1891-5, 190, 194-8; Kerrigan 1980-1, 139). The town maintained its status in the seventeenth century, being described in 1606 as 'the chief corporate town in the county of Kildare' (Russell and Prendergast 1872, 467).

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

##### 1. STREETS & STREET PATTERN

##### 2. MARKET PLACES

THOLSEL

##### 3. DOMESTIC HOUSES

BLACK CASTLE

EUSTACE CASTLE

LATTIN'S CASTLE

ROSE AND CROWN

ST. DAVID'S CASTLE

WATERGATE

WHEATLEY'S CASTLE

WHITE CASTLE

##### 4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

5. CASTLE
6. TOWN DEFENCES
7. PRE-NORMAN MONASTIC SITE
8. ST. DAVID'S PARISH CHURCH
9. AUGUSTINIAN FRIARY
10. AUGUSTINIAN PRIORY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
11. DOMINICAN FRIARY
12. HOSPITAL
13. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

#### 1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN

The street pattern of Naas is essentially linear and is formed from one street, Main Street divided into north and south sections, on to which a number of small lanes are aligned at right angles. North Main Street is noticeably narrower than South Main Street, whose form with its broad Market Place is reminiscent of seventeenth century town layout. Main Street forks at its northern end, leading NE to Dublin and N to Sallins and Trim. The curving course of Corban's Lane, on the south side of the town, may preserve the line of the pre-Norman monastery.

#### 2. MARKET PLACES

Naas was granted a weekly market as early as c.1186 (Mills and McEnery 1916, 145). The main market place was presumably the triangular expansion at the north end of South Main Street. By at least the late sixteenth century, however,

fairs and markets were being held on the 'green of Naas'. In 1582-3, for instance, a reference occurs to 'cattle sold on the green of the town of the Naas' (13 RDKPRI, 202: no. 4127) and the 'fair or market at the green of the Naas' is mentioned in 1597 (17 RDKPRI, 67: no. 6132). These presumably refer to the Fair Green still marked at the south end of the town, although the 'upper green of Naas', referred to in 1609 (Morrin 1862, 370) may have been located elsewhere, perhaps at Poplar Square, formerly known as 'Horse Fair' (T. J. de Burgh 1891-5, 319).

A stone cross stood in the market place in the seventeenth century, according to Colgan (1645, 142) who quotes the tradition in the life of Feichin that it was erected on the occasion of Fechin's visit to Naas. In the Civil Survey of 1654-5 mention is made of a house 'over against the Crosse in Naas' (Simington 1952, 68).

#### THOLSEL

This stood in the Market Place and T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 326) notes several references to the Tholsel of Naas between 1664 and 1681, when it was apparently replaced by a new Sessions House. These references reveal that the Tholsel contained assembly rooms with garrets above and cellars below. The assembly rooms were approached by an external flight of steps on the south side of the building, beneath which was a cellar measuring 9 by 7 feet and over which a 'dial' was hung in 1682. A bell was hung here in 1676.

### 3. DOMESTIC HOUSES

The earliest reference to housing is the mention of a stone house in a charter of c.1250 (Mills and McEnery 1916, 159-60) but it is not until the sixteenth century that references occur to houses with any frequency. In 1563 a 'great stone house covered with tiles, and a castle' were leased to William Florence (11 RDKPRI, 214: no. 1430), and were leased to Anthony Power in 1575 (12 RDKPRI 151: no. 2611). In 1609 the corporation of Naas held a "small castle in the town" (Erck 1846-52, ii, 533), while in the same year James I granted the earl of Kildare the moiety of a 'stone house slated' and of a castle (Erck 1846-52, ii, 543), quite possibly the properties mentioned in 1563. The Civil Survey of 1654-6 recorded at least eight castles in Naas, as well as five stone houses, including one called 'Sherlock's Court', and another called the 'Rose and Crowne' (Simington 1952, 66-8). Unfortunately, no information is given on the location of these castles and houses. Fortified town houses were probably the exception rather than the rule in the streetscape of sixteenth century Naas. More common were the humbler dwellings, described as 'lowe thatched housies' burned in the attack on Naas in 1577 (T. J. de Burgh 1891-5, 189-90; Brewer and Bullen 1868, 110).

The burgage plot pattern survives well on both sides of South Main Street and clearly shows that this street had a frontage of domestic houses. None of the present houses, however, provide any visible indication of being older than 1700. Many of the buildings on both North and South Main

Street have cellars, some being of stone such as no. 21 (Marums public house) and King's Court Drapery.

Despite the absence of clear locational indicators in contemporary documentation for Naas' fortified houses, attempts have been made by T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 320-2) and Murtagh (1983-4) to locate them. St. David's castle is still extant and part of a wall of Eustace castle survives. Of the others, however, only Black castle and White castle can be located with any degree of probability.

#### BLACK CASTLE

Situated on the west side of North Main Street (Murtagh 1983-4, 359: Naas E). T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 321-2) states that this was situated on Main Street "at the back of the dwelling-house opposite Mr. Eagleton's shop". It may well be the 'great castle opposite church gate' mentioned in a document of 1735, which T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 321) called Lyard's castle (see Murtagh 1983-4, 359: Naas F). In 1979 an archaeological excavation was conducted on the site where it is marked on the O.S. maps (Nos. 14, 15 16 North Main St.). A circular stone lined pit dated to the 13/14th century was found at the NW end of the site, and a 14th century wall and cess pit at the rear of No. 14 but no evidence for medieval habitation was found close to the street. Murtagh (1983-4, 356) interpreted this absence of evidence as indicating that Black Castle was on the street frontage.

#### EUSTACE CASTLE

Situated on the E side of Friary Rd (Murtagh 1983-4, 357: Naas B). Demolished in 1973. One wall is still attached to the S of a modern wooden framed house. According to T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 321) it had a barrell-vault over the ground floor. Prior to 1973 it was a modernised two storey structure with gabled roof (JKAS 15 (1974), 278 and pl. 5). Width of extant wall: 65cm.

#### LATTIN'S CASTLE

The suggested identification of a fortified house that stood on the west side of North Main Street (Murtagh 1983-4, 357-9: Naas D). The main evidence for its existence comes from Austin Cooper's account of Naas in 1782:

'near the entrance from Dublin stands a small square castle of very ancient appearance [Lattin's castle]; a small distance further on, and in a line with the street and with this castle, is another much larger and of very modern appearance [White's castle], between both of those is another [Black castle] much the same as the first mentioned' (Price 1942, 28).

The castle is mentioned in 1654 as belonging to John Latten of Morristown (Simington 1952, 68) and again in 1673 when it was held by William Lattin (T. J. de Burgh 1895, 321).

#### ROSE & CROWN



Mentioned as a slated house in the Civil Survey of 1654 (Simington 1952, 66-7). Costello (1985) has suggested that it may have been on the E side of N Main St, No. 25 opposite the Town Hall in the premises now run as a dry cleaners. The N wall of the building is stone-built and has a rounded corner protruding into the street. Its thick stone walls may retain a medieval core. It is possible that this may also be Wheatley's castle (T. J. de Burgh 1891-5, 321)

#### ST. DAVID'S CASTLE (Figs. 160-2)

This is the only surviving fortified town house and it has been considerably modernised. It is almost certainly to be identified with the 'vicarage-castle' referred to in 1655 as belonging to the minister of Naas, but occupied at the time by the military governor, Captain Sands (J. Kildare Archaeol. Soc. 1 (1891-5), 147). It is situated on high ground SE of St David's Church. The building is a three storied tower house with modern roof and wall walk, now modernised and inhabited. The masonry is intact and it has a projecting stair turret in the SE which gives access to the upper floors. The ground floor has a pointed barrel vault.

#### WATERGATE CASTLE

Although both Murtagh (1983-4, 357: Naas C) and T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 320) regard this as being a domestic house, it is almost certainly the gatehouse at Water Gate itself.

#### WHEATLEY'S CASTLE

According to T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 321) this was described in 1788 as standing "on the south side of Main Street which was next Geoghegans". Murtagh (1983-4, 359: Naas H) shows it immediately east of the old tholsel, on the corner of Church Lane, a suggestion based on De Burgh. De Burgh himself merely guessed at the location, however, and if he is right in saying that 'south' frequently meant 'east' in Naas leases, it seems at least equally possible that this should be identified with the Rose and Crown above.

#### WHITE CASTLE

Situated on the site of the Town Hall, on the west side of North Main Street (Murtagh 1983-4, 359: Naas G). Its frontage stretched for 19m along Main St. and it was 9m wide with a back premises and walled garden (Murtagh 1983-4, 359; T. J. de Burgh 1891-5, 321). Some of the walls at the rear of the Town Hall may date to before 1700 but it is impossible to determine this from the masonry alone.

#### 4. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

The Civil Survey entries suggest that there were at least four mills at Naas in 1654 (Simington 1952, 66-8). One of these may be the Watergate Mill, mentioned by T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 320). This was probably situated beside the Watergate but its exact location is unknown. Friar's Mill, on

the north side of the town, is said to have belonged to the Dominicans (C. Costello, pers. comm.). At the time of the Dissolution the Augustinians also held a mill at Naas. No trace of these survives.

#### 5. CASTLE

No record exists of the construction of the motte often regarded as occupying the site of the pre-Norman dun (M. de Burgh 1891-5, 9). It was presumably erected by Maurice Fitzgerald, shortly after the Anglo-Norman conquest. Nothing more is known of its history, however, and there are no direct references to a castle at Naas, prior to the sixteenth century. In 1562, William Florence, described as constable of the castle of Naas, was pardoned for the escape of prisoners (11 RDKPRI, 77: no. 426). Other recorded constables are Thomas Myagh in 1575 (12 RDKPRI, 159: no. 2679), Pater Carewe in 1581 (13 RDKPRI, 136: no. 3696), Walter Larence in 1586 (15 RDKPRI, 150: no. 4846), and John Eustace in 1601 (18 RDKPRI, 34: no. 6568). The castle seems to have functioned primarily as a prison at this time (Morrin 1862, 65: 15 RDKPRI, 150: no. 4846; Russell 1880, 354). The history of this castle remains unclear, however, and it might possibly have been a fortified town house. No direct evidence survives for its location but it, or its successor, may be the gaol mentioned by Austin Cooper in 1782 (Price 1942, 28-9), T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 327-8) and Murtagh (1983-4, 356) as having stood on the west side of North Main Street, opposite the

entrance to Poplar Square, and on the site of the present FitzGerald, O'Reilly & Co. Ltd.

#### Description (Fig. 163)

The MOTTE is situated on the highest point of the gravel ridge on the west side of Main St. Round conical mound, sharply scarped on the NE, E and S. It tapers from its basal measurements of 70m (N-S) by 58m (E-W) to a flat summit, measuring 27m (N-S) by 29m (E-W). The summit is occupied by a twentieth century cottage and garden with steps leading E down the side of the mound. About 3m below the top is a lip, 1m wide, encircling the summit. West of the motte are two narrow crescentic platforms, 34 m in length, which may be the remains of the BAILEY.

#### 6. TOWN DEFENCES

Although earlier writers such as T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 319) have suggested that Naas was fortified, there are no references to any kind of town defences there before 1415 when the King granted the provosts and burgesses the customs of the town for twenty years in order to fortify it (Tresham 1828, 206: no. 103). Further murage grants were made by parliament in 1451-2 (Berry 1910, 292), 1462 (Berry 1914, 25) and 1467-8 when a grant for ten years was ordered to pay for the immediate walling of the town which was "like to be destroyed or burned, unless it is walled" (Berry 1914, 607-9). This seems to imply that the town was unenclosed by

walls until the fifteenth century. The town's charters of 1568 (Morrin 1861, 526-8) and 1609 (Erck 1846-52, ii, 533-9) both grant tolls and customs to the Corporation to pay for the walling of the town, and a further grant was made by Charles I in 1629 "towards the repairing of their buildings and walls" (Morrin 1863, 459). One gets the impression that Naas was open and undefended when it was burned in 1577, and during the Confederate wars, although the mention of "Jokaston Gate" [Iago's Gate], "Corbanesgate" and "Omegate"[?] in 1540 (White 1943, 155) indicates that gatehouses were constructed. The defences may have consisted of earthen ramparts rather than stone and this may partly explain why there is so little trace of the defences today.

#### Description (Fig. 159)

Very little evidence survives to indicate the course of Naas' defences but the line of an enclosing feature can be suggested based on the topography, the position of the motte and some boundary walls. It is difficult to determine the course of the walls of Naas. Murtagh's (1983-4, 358) proposal shows a wall with a large number of angles and is unsatisfactory because it also leaves three gates outside the wall. Healy's (1984) suggestion also includes a large number of angles and cuts across burgage plots, excluding land which of necessity would have had to have been enclosed. It is difficult to come up with any clear alternative to their proposals, however, and the outline advanced here is based on the topography, major property boundaries, and the likely

position of the gates. The differences between this outline and that proposed by Murtagh and Healy indicate the necessity for archaeological excavation to determine the actual course of the defences.

The most dominant boundary feature in Naas is a broken arc of three segments consisting of Corban's Lane, a curving boundary east of the Eustace castle site, and another curving boundary south of the site of the Augustinian priory of St. John. Between them, these arcs delimit a semi-circle which almost certainly preserves the outline of the pre-Norman monastic enclosure of Cill Nais. In the absence of any clear evidence for an alternative course by the medieval walls it is reasonable to suggest that this boundary was adopted by the Anglo-Normans and delimited the town.

On the north side, the site of both IAGO'S GATE and NORTH GATE are on this enclosure. On the east the site of WATER GATE may be placed at the point where the line of this arc cuts Friary Street, a location which is closer to the Friary river than that suggested by T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 319) or Murtagh (1983-4, 358). There may have been a gate at the intersection of Church Lane with this arc but this is unknown. On the south side of this semi-circular enclosure was an extension, made in order to incorporate houses in Loughbwee and The Green. CORBAN'S GATE may have been at the junction of Corban's Lane with this extension.

On the south side of the town GREEN GATE was probably located at the narrowest part of The Green where the angle of

a house on the east side still juts out onto the footpath. WEST GATE was located in New Row but the exact position of the gate is unknown. The natural drop between New Row and the motte probably formed the boundary on the west side of the town. The NE angle of the defences was probably formed by a curving arc linking the motte with Iago's Gate.

#### The Barrier

T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 319) refers to a feature called "The Barrier, or North Barrier", which was mentioned in leases which he had in his possession. The position of the barrier was unknown but he suggested that it may have been in the vicinity of St. David's Castle. Murtagh (1983-4, 356) suggests that this may have formed an inner line of defence while Healy (1984, 5) regarded it as the original north boundary of the town. It is doubtful if either suggestion is correct. The context of the references to the barrier is unstated and it may have been nothing more than a substantial boundary between two properties. The apparent drop in ground level on the north side of St. David's churchyard, regarded as the position of the barrier, is most likely due to the build-up of burials within the graveyard.

#### Old wall on Church Lane

There is no evidence on the ground for any of these suggestions apart from a battered wall, with a basal width of 1m, incorporated into the base of the present wall on the E side of the car-park on Church lane, opposite St. David's castle.

## 7. PRE-NORMAN MONASTIC SITE

It has been suggested above that the mention of Naas in the Vita Tripartita, written 895-901, together with the notice in 909 of Cill Nais, where nine Kings of Leinster were buried (Radner 1978, 230) indicates that Naas was a pre-Norman church site. The outline of its enclosure is detailed above under Town Defences (Fig. 159). St. David's parish church is placed fairly centrally within this enclosure and it must have been re-dedicated to the patron of Wales by the Anglo-Normans (M. de Burgh 1891-5, 9; Comerford 1880-3, 111-12). The original dedication may have been to Corban, whose name survived in Corban's Lane and Corban's Gate. The fact that this re-dedication occurred may indicate that the church site was in decline by the late twelfth century.

## 8. ST. DAVID'S PARISH CHURCH

The first direct reference to the church of St. David occurs in 1212 when it was listed among the possessions of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in Ireland, as confirmed by Innocent III (McNeill 1932, 140). The church remained the property of the Hospitallers throughout the Middle Ages (e.g. Sweetman 1875-86, v, p. 245) and the rectory is listed among the possessions of the Order in the extent of 1540 (White 1943, 94). The Hospitallers held considerable possessions in Naas (McNeill 1932, 39; Tresham 1828, 53: no. 86a) and McNeill (1932, 149) suggests that



their house in the town, held by James Tyrell in 1540 (White 1943, 94) is to be identified with the frank-house held by Walter Hope on lease from the Order in 1578 (13 RDKPRI, 78-9: nos. 3318, 3323).

In 1539 the rectory of St. John, in Naas, was leased to Thomas Alen (7 RDKPRI, 40: no. 80). This presumably was the rectory of St. David's, the reference to St. John being to the Hospital of St. John, its previous proprietors. An inquisition of 1606 noted that the church of St. David contained three chantries, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, St. Mary and St. Katherine, whose priests formed a corporate body with rich endowments (Archdall 1873, ii, 288; Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 361). M. de Burgh (1891-5, 11) suggested that the chantry of the Holy Trinity was located in the present chancel of the church, the chantry of St. Mary in the south aisle of the nave, and the chantry of St. Katherine in the present nave. By this time the Corporation of Naas held the advowson of the church, and were confirmed in possession of the chantry lands of St. David's, for which they paid £9 yearly "towardses the reparation of the church of St. Davides", in the town's charter of 1609 (Erck 1846-52, ii, 537-9).

#### Description (Figs. 164-5)

Single aisled building 29.95m by 9.2m internally consisting of a nave and chancel with an unfinished eighteenth century tower at the W end. There are traces of an

original south aisle. The masonry consists of green slaty limestone with tufa and granite used as quoins and jambs. The chancel is a short low addition with a roof line lower than the nave and with a roof set transversely over the organ on the N. The S aisle has almost completely vanished apart from its built-up arches, a projecting corbel in the S wall, and the footings of the aisle's S wall in the graveyard. The style of the church indicates that it is of thirteenth century date. The tower was added in 1781 and the chancel was probably a later addition.

The east wall of the chancel is lit by three graded lancets, built in 13th century style as is the pointed chancel arch. The north wall of the NAVE has two pointed twin-light windows at its E end and one at the W end. The external jambs of all the windows are modern but the internal pointed rear-arches of the eastern two have some of their original mouldings. The rear-arch nearest the chancel is decorated with nail head as are the capitals from which the arch springs. The rounded shafts are almost completely original but the bases are modern. The second window from the E has dog tooth ornament on the rear-arch and on its western capital; the eastern capital and the shafts and bases are modern. Externally, on either side of the second window from the E, is a vertical line of tufa stones about 1m away from the jambs of the modern window, almost certainly indicating an earlier larger window. In the centre of the wall there is a blocked round arched opening which had tufa jambs and close to the W end there is a similar blocked opening with granite

jamb.

The west wall is concealed by wooden panelling. The south wall is lit by four modern twin-light windows set into the pointed arches which opened into the S aisle. Some fragments of the tufa jamb are present externally. The SOUTH AISLE measured 20.6 by 5.9m but only the footings of its south wall survive.

#### Architectural Fragments

On the S side of the church there are six small rectangular window mouldings of sandstone decorated with bands of dog-tooth decoration. The average dims. are W.24 D. 12 H. 25-30. Also against the S wall of the church a limestone chamfered arch with hollow spandrels for a twin light window. Dims: H.36 W: 76 D.13

Coleborn 1964-70.

Font. Late 13th/ early 14th cent. (Fig. 166).

Four-sided square font set on a modern five-legged pedestal at the W end of the church. Straight-sided basin of black fossiliferous limestone (?Kilkenny) is circular with a plugged central drainage hole. The four corners of the lip are decorated in false relief with differing leafy sprays. The sides are also decorated in false relief with formalised arrangements of foliage. One side has a grape vine, another has a circular pattern; the third side has a heart shaped design while the fourth has two matching sprays of foliage.

Dims: H.50 W. 72 by 74 D.of basin 20

M. de Burgh 1891-5, 11

Font. Date uncertain.

Undecorated circular granite basin. Placed against the N wall close to the pulpit. Shallow basin, lacking a drainage hole.

Dims: H.32 W.68 by 62 cm.

#### Bell

A seventeenth century bell hangs in the tower. Inscribed 'OS MEVM LAVDABIT DOMINVM IN ECCLA SCTI DAVIDIS DE NAAS RP WC 1674.

M. de Burgh 1891-5, 12; FitzGerald 1895-7c, 47B

#### Altar stone.

Inscribed J.M.1647. Missing. Comerford 1880-83, 104

A chalice inscribed PETER JOANNES MAC SIHI ME FIERI FECIT ANNO DOM 1685 could not be traced (Comerford 1880-83, 104).

#### Memorials

Lattin and Luttrell slab. 1600.

This slab reused in 1719 by P. Latton is now missing (Comerford 1880-3, 115).

Peter Walsh. 1606.

Limestone and panel on a table tomb set externally on the S side of the church. It has two empty recessed panels and a third raised panel with an inscription in false relief Roman

lettering:

PETRVS/ WAILSH/ ME FECIT/ AND DNI/ 1606.

Dims: H.91 W.66 T.11 cm

FitzGerald 1888-91b, 190; Coleborn 1964-70, 151.

Joshua Carpenter. 1655.

Rectangular slab, of red marble, in two pieces, set into the floor of the centre aisle. It is decorated in low false relief with a marginal inscription in Roman capitals and an achievement of arms. The lower end of the slab has a further inscription in incised Roman lettering. Part of the arms and the marginal inscription are worn away and the lower left corner is damaged. The arms are dexter : Paly of six argent and gules, on a chevron sable, three bezants each, charged with a cross crosslet of the second for Carpenter. Sinister: Argent, on a bend azure three birds of paradise of the field for Vinegor. The motto underneath is 'DEUS EXTEMIS MIHI CLIPEVM'. The inscription is:

HERE LIETH THE/ BODY OF IOSHVA CARPENTER ESQ BORNE/ AT  
LYME IN DEVON/ SHIRE THE 12TH OF DEC 1585 AND DECEASED  
AT/ ELSINOWRE/ THE 20 OF MARCH /1655

HE MARIED VRSVLA Daughter/ TO RICHARD VINEGOR OF SACK/  
FIELD HALL IN SUFFULKE ESQ &/ HAD ISSUE BY HER IOHN THO/  
MAS IOSHUA PHILLIPP CISSILIA/ ANN ARABELLA VRSVLA AND/  
MARY.

Dims: L. 210 W. 98 cm

FitzGerald 1899-1902a, 51-56

Edward Fisher. 1659.

Built into the external S wall of the church are two parts of a wall memorial. Both are limestone tablets in a moulded frame. The upper is decorated in false relief with a heater shaped shield carrying the Fisher coat of arms: Argent on a chevron between three demi lions rampant gules as many roundels of the first. The lower panel in four pieces carries the following incised inscription in a mixture of Roman and Gothic lettering:

THE BURIALL PLACE ... EATE OF CAPTN/ EDWARD FISHER ESQR  
who DIED THE 9TH DAY/ OF DESEMBER 1659 HE WAS MARRIED TO  
MAWOLE/ N MERCER BY WHOME HE HAD 2 DAUGHTERS KA/ THARINE  
AND ELIZABETH WHOS HEERE INTERR/ ED HE GAVE AN 100L OR  
ELS 10L PR ANUM FOR THE/ REPAYRING OF THIS CHURCH &...

Dims: Upr. tablet: H.60 W.57

Lr. tablet: H.54 W.86cm

Fitzgerald 1888-91b, 418-9

Susanna Heale. 1680x89.

Black shaly rectangular slab set into the centre aisle of the nave. Incised in Roman capitals:

HEAR LIETH THE TA/ B... OF MISTRIS/ SUSANNA HEALE W/ IFE  
TO MISTER AN/ THONY HEALE of Na/ SS WHO DIED THE FIRST  
DAY OF MAR/ CH ...168.

Dims: L.171 W.63

Fitzgerald 1888-91b, 191.

Elizabeth Brereton. 1694.

Churchyard, E end of the church. Rectangular sandstone slab with incised Roman lettered inscription within a narrow border:

ELIZABETH YE WIFE/ OF IOHN BRERET/ ON VICAR OF NAAS/  
DEPARTED THIS LI/ FE OCTOBER YE 23 AN/ DO 1694/ SHEE WAS  
A GOOD/ WIFE MDHER/ FRIEND/ AND CH/ RISTIAN.

Dims: L. 146 W. 60cm

FitzGerald 1888-91b.

Thomas Moore. 1699.

Square limestone slab set against the S wall of the church with an inscription in false relief Roman lettering:

HERE LIETH/ THE BODY/ OF MR THOM/ AS MOORE DE/ SES THE  
16 SEP/ TEMBER 1699

Dims: H.61 W.61 T.9 cm

Comerford 1880-83, 115; FitzGerald 1888-91b, 190.

#### 9. AUGUSTINIAN FRIARY

This friary was apparently founded in the second half of the fourteenth century, the patron being either a Cullen, a White or a Eustace (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 301; Clarke 1964-70, 336). Nothing is known of its dedication or, indeed, of its history, for the most part, and the only real information is derived from post-dissolution documents. The extent of 1540 (White 1943, 165) noted merely that the sellas of the dormitory and certain glazed windows had been thrown



down recently and carried away, but that all the other buildings were still standing. The friary was then occupied by John Sutton. It was leased to Thomas Appowel in 1567 (11 RDKPRI, 171: no. 1154) and to Nicholas Ailmer in 1584 (15 RDKPRI, 43: no. 4425).

The friary has been located beside the motte since the late eighteenth century but this is incorrect, because it is in fact the site of the Dominican friary (see below). It is possible that it may have been in the vicinity of Friary river, whose name suggests that there was a religious house nearby.

#### 10. AUGUSTINIAN PRIORY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 189) place the foundation of this priory in the late twelfth century and note that a hospital was added at a later date. References to the priory are scarce before the fourteenth century. The prior of the house of St. John of Naas is mentioned in 1307 (Mills and McEnery 1916, 155) while it is recorded that the endowments of the priory were increased in 1317, 1326, when it was described as a "very poor house", and 1344 (Archdall 1873, ii, 285; Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 189). By the late Middle Ages, the hospital had largely superceded the priory, and the extent of 1540 noted that the precincts contained "an old house, formerly the priory church", then being used as a barn, a hall with chambers and rooms, an old tower tiled, a



barn, a thatched stable; a dovecot, an orchard, two small gardens, and a watermill (White 1943, 154-5). The hospital was leased to Thomas Alen in 1539 (7 RDKPRI, 40: no. 80), to Roger Grene in 1560 (18 RDKPRI, 142: no. 6785), to Roger Finglas in 1569 (11 RDKPRI, 203: no. 1354), to George Greame in 1590 (16 RDKPRI, 116: no. 5417), to William Brounckar in 1608 (Erck 1946-52, ii, 469) and to Sir William Parsons in 1626 (Morrin 1863, 132).

O'Connor (O.S. Letters, Co. Kildare, i, 151) located this priory on the site of the parochial house, known in 1837 as 'John's Abbey', to the north of Poplar Square. No remains were visible when he visited in 1837. In the late 1950s, work at Smith's garage revealed a long section of a stone wall which may have been part of the abbey buildings (Costello, 1961-3, 488). Healy (1984 9) notes that it was about 10m long and ran parallel to the road.

#### 11. DOMINICAN FRIARY

This friary is thought to have been founded by the FitzEustace family, c.1335-56, and dedicated to St. Eustace (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 228), but otherwise practically nothing is known of its history. The Dissolution extent noted that the church and chancel had been sold to Richard Ailmer, but that all the other buildings were still standing (White 1943, 166); it also refers to a watermill held by the priory. An inquisition taken in 1540 noted that the priory contained a church and belfry, a chapter house, a hall, etc. (Gwynn and

Hadcock 1970, 228). In that year, also, the priory, described as being "by the Mote of Naas" was leased to Thomas Alen (7 RDKPRI, 44: no. 119), and in 1542 it was granted to Robert Eustace and others, for the use of Thomas Luttrell (7 RDKPRI, 63: no. 313).

The location of this friary has been disputed. Ware (1654, 148) placed it at the foot of the motte but De Burgo (1762, 294), writing a century later, disagreed and said that this was the position of the Augustinian friary. The ruins beside the motte were drawn in 1782 by Austin Cooper who regarded it as the Dominican friary (Price 1942, 26: pl. 4). In 1786, Archdall (1873, ii, 286-7), following De Burgo described the ruins as those of the Augustinian friary and they were similarly described by Grose (1791, ii, 27: pl. 30). In 1837 O'Connor (O.S. Letters, Co. Kildare, i, 156), following Archdall, identified the ruins beside the motte as those of the Augustinian friary and this identification was placed on the O.S. maps. O'Connor (ibid. 154-5) also noted a tradition of the existence of a friary in Bakehouse, or Back Lane (now Abbey Street) on the west side of the town, and identified this as the site of the Dominican house because Archdall described it as being in the centre of the town.

The Dominican friary, however, was located beside the motte. When leased to Thomas Alen in 1540 it was described as being "by the Mote of Nase" (7 RDKPRI, 44: no. 119). An inquisition of 1582-3 found that James Eustace, the attainted Vicount Baltinglass, was seized of "the land called 'the

Abbey of the Mote', of the land called 'the late Abbey of St. Augusten's in Naas', and of the late Abbey of St. John's (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Kildare, Eliz.: no. 4; Moran in Archdall 1873, ii, 286, n. 49; Comerford 1880-3, 111), a differentiation which shows that the abbey by the motte was the Dominican friary. The reason why the 'abbey of the motte' has continued to be regarded as the Augustinian house is perhaps due to T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 325) who possessed an estate map which showed 'St. Dominie's abbey' in Abbey Lane. In view of the sixteenth century documentation, however, this must be regarded as the post-Dissolution site of the friary. Burials are said to have been found in Abbey Street during construction work (Healy 1934, 9).

In 1781 Cooper described the ruins as 'a small square steeple supported on an arch & adjoining on the N: side, are the side walls; of what part I cannot say; but a more ruinous pile, I never yet have seen (Price 1942, 26). Grose (1791, ii, 27) adds that 'the belfry is entered by a Gothic arch, on each side of which is a staircase leading up to the rooms, in number three'. These remains were demolished c.1835 (O.S. Letters, Co. Kildare, i, 156).

#### Description

The site is marked by a graveyard in low-lying ground west of the motte. There are no pre-1700 memorials nor is there any trace of buildings. The topography, however, suggests that a better position for an abbey would be

slightly to the NE of the graveyard in the convent field. A map of 1883 in the Town Hall indicates the site of the abbey in the present tennis ground.

## 12. HOSPITAL

Lee (1964-70, 141) suggested the existence of a leper hospital in Maudlins townland, north-east of Naas. The Augustinian friary of Naas held twenty acres in 'Le Maudelins' until its dissolution in 1540 (Archdall 1873, ii, 288). These lands then passed to the chantries of St. David's church as recorded in an inquisition of 1574 (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Kildare, Eliz.: no. 2). T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 322) noted the existence of a 'castle of Maudlins' in this position.

## 13. OTHER FEATURES

### Fort?

This structure, known as the 'south moat', stood on the Fair Green until c.1900. In 1837 it was described by O'Connor as 'a very large hillock of earth, broken down and encroached upon in different ways'; he noted that it 'does not present the form of a dun' and he considered it to be modern (O.S. Letters, Kildare, i, 161). T. J. de Burgh (1891-5, 323) described it as an 'old rath', however, and noted a reference to it in 1681 as a 'square fort'. The area is now landscaped

and there is no trace of any earthwork.

#### 17th Cent. Bridewells

Three of these are mentioned by Healy (1984, 13) but only the site of one, in North Main Street, near Lattins castle, is known (T. J. De Burgh 1891-5).

#### Toll House

This stood in the centre of the road at the southern end of Main St. It was demolished in 1787 (Healy 1984, 13).

#### Alms House

Established for widows in 1590 by William Lattin and Anne Luttrell. Demolished in 1787 it was located in Main St. at the ESB offices. The inscribed dedication stones are now built into an old peoples' Home beside Abbey Electrical on the Dublin Rd. They are all post 1700 although one is a modern copy of the original dedication and is inscribed: GUL: LATTON DE/ MORRISTOWN ANNA/ LUTTREL DE LUT/ TRELSTOWN ME/ FIERI FECERUNT/ ANNO MDXC. (JKAS 1 (1891-5), 38; 2 (1896-8), 270).

#### Sunday's Well

The field in which the well was situated, on the E side of the town, has recently been landscaped in preparation for a housing estate and the well is no longer visible (T. J. de Burgh 1891-5, 185).

#### St. Patrick's Well.



Mentioned by Stokes (1887, 184) as being 'to the N of the fort'. It is still in use in Alder Grove, off the Sallins Rd, to the N of the town. It has a modern stone surround.

Millbrook. Possible Early Christian site.

According to Comerford (1880-3, 107) and O'Hanlon (1869, 140) this was the site of Tulach Fobhair, a church site dedicated to St. Feichin of Fore. O'Connor pointed out, however, that there is no evidence for the location of Tulach Fobhair (O.S. Letters, Kildare, ii, 191-4).

#### 14. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. Flat bronze axehead of Killaha type. Found on a farm at King's Furze, Naas, Co. Kildare. NMI 1945: 293. Harbison 1969a, 28: no. 606).

2. Bronze flanged axehead. Said to have been found "in the ditch of a square earthen fort", near Naas. NMI 1899: 38. Harbison 1969a, 57: no. 1721.

3. Bronze pin. Found about 1m deep in a garden at Naas (West). NMI 1969: 75.

4. Clay 'marble'. From "garden wall on summit of Norman motte, Naas". NMI 1955: 135.

5. Pottery vessel. Found in a field at Naas (East). NMI 1970: 221.

6. Human remains of four individuals. Found in a pit in an

esker called Gallow's Glen, at Naas East. NMI 1972: 85-8.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

##### The Problems

Naas, like Kildare, is important to archaeological research because it was an important ecclesiastical and royal centre in the tenth and eleventh centuries, although it appears to have declined during the twelfth century. Nonetheless this church site was probably the feature which attracted the initial Anglo-Normans. The borough was established very early and we know that it was in existence by c.1186. Information on the town's growth is slight, however, but the holding of parliaments and councils there in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries indicates that Naas retained its importance into the later Middle Ages. It experienced a revitalisation in the second half of the sixteenth century and it seems to have recovered from the sack of 1577 by the mid-seventeenth century when it had the largest population of any Kildare town. In summary, the town has been occupied continuously since Early Historic times and the problem for archaeology is to ensure that Naas' archaeological heritage is properly protected from interference by modern developments and recorded in advance of destruction.

Documentary sources for Naas are few before 1700 and further information on the early growth of the town is most

likely to come from archaeological excavation. The topography of the town poses a number of specific problems which require solving.

The extent of the early monastic enclosure suggested above needs to be checked by excavation. The postulated extent encloses a large area and is coterminous with the boundaries of the medieval town. There is a possibility that South Main Street was replanned in the late seventeenth century and investigation of the street in advance of new pipe laying is accordingly important. Only St. David's castle survives to provide any indication of the form of housing within the town before 1700. Many 'castle' are known from documentary evidence but it is difficult to pin-point them on the ground with exactitude. Nonetheless, excavation should uncover the foundations of these structures, particularly near the street front where they are to be expected. The excavation of houses is important not only for the information which it sheds on the form and typology of the houses but also because it enables comparisons to be drawn with houses known from other parts of Ireland and Britain, permitting a better knowledge of the quality of life in Naas before 1700.

The motte survives on the west side of Main Street but it is likely that archaeological deposits on its summit have been destroyed by the construction of the modern dwelling. The ditch should survive intact with its fill, however.

The course of the town defences is very speculative and



the outline suggested above needs to be tested by excavation in order to determine whether it is correct or not. There is a good possibility that mural towers were present and gatehouses are also to be expected. Although all trace of the walls has vanished above ground it is likely that excavation will reveal their course because the ditch should survive intact.

Work in the vicinity of the parish church is likely to reveal traces of the Early Christian foundation which would be quite significant to our knowledge of Naas' growth. The site of the Anglo-Norman Dominican friary is known and, as has been explained above, it appears to have moved location in the seventeenth century. The site of the Augustinian friary is unknown although it is likely that it was in the vicinity of Friary Road. The Augustinian priory of St. John the Baptist was located on the Dublin road and work in Smiths Garage appears to have uncovered part of the precinct wall in the 1960s. It is important to remember that these monasteries were large building complexes, having not only a church and cloister, but ranges of domestic buildings as well. Excavation in these areas is significant not only for the architectural information it will yield on how the form of the buildings changed through time but also because the excavation of a medieval cemetery, such as at St. Helen's, York, can provide otherwise unobtainable information about health, diet, mortality rates and disease among the inhabitants of medieval Naas.

The southward extension onto the Green suggests that the town may have expanded in this direction during the sixteenth or seventeenth century. The status of the so-called 'South motte' is difficult to gauge. It was possibly the residence of the pre-Norman Kings of Leinster, when at Naas; it could equally have been a raised mound of the sort found at Denach sites, such as Teltown, Co. Meath. All superficial trace of this monument has gone, however, but pits and ditches are likely to survive below ground and the area would merit investigation.

#### Archaeological Potential

Archaeology does not consist solely of excavation nor does it stop at ground level. The archaeological evidence for Naas' past comprises all the physical remains of man's activities on the site of the town, from its beginnings in Early Historic times until the present day. The surviving street pattern, property boundaries and standing buildings constitute the uppermost levels of the archaeological stratigraphy, and all are relevant to the study of the town's past. Documentary evidence also plays a role in reconstructing the history of early Naas, but for the wide range of human activity omitted from the written accounts and for the early periods when documentation is slight, archaeology is our only source of information. The evidence of archaeology and topography, of architecture and of documents, is complementary; each gains from the existence of the others and the unrecorded destruction of one form of

evidence not only removes part of a town's archive but also diminishes the usefulness of those which are preserved.

The survey of its archaeology indicates that the town is a fine example of a medieval town. The only standing buildings of pre-1700 date are the motte, St. David's church and St. David's castle. With these exceptions the destruction of buildings above ground has been total. Archaeological layers have been destroyed by the construction of cellars and substantial houses on the street frontages, but it is likely that deposits survive intact behind the frontages. At no. 46 South Main Street (The Forge Bar), for instance bones were noted in digging the basement, showing that archaeological deposits survive here. At the eastern foot of the motte bulldozing has revealed that the depth of archaeological stratigraphy is no more than 1.5m above boulder clay. Campbell's excavation on the site of the alleged 'Black Castle' uncovered pits and other features of thirteenth and fourteenth century date, but portion of this site was destroyed before excavation could take place. The junction of New Row with the suggested site of Naas' west wall has just recently been redeveloped as an office complex and unfortunately no archaeological investigation occurred. Elsewhere, however, archaeological deposits are likely to survive and there is the strong likelihood of recovering house foundations, refuse pits, industrial areas, and workshops of medieval and seventeenth century date within the town.

## ARCHAEOLOGY, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

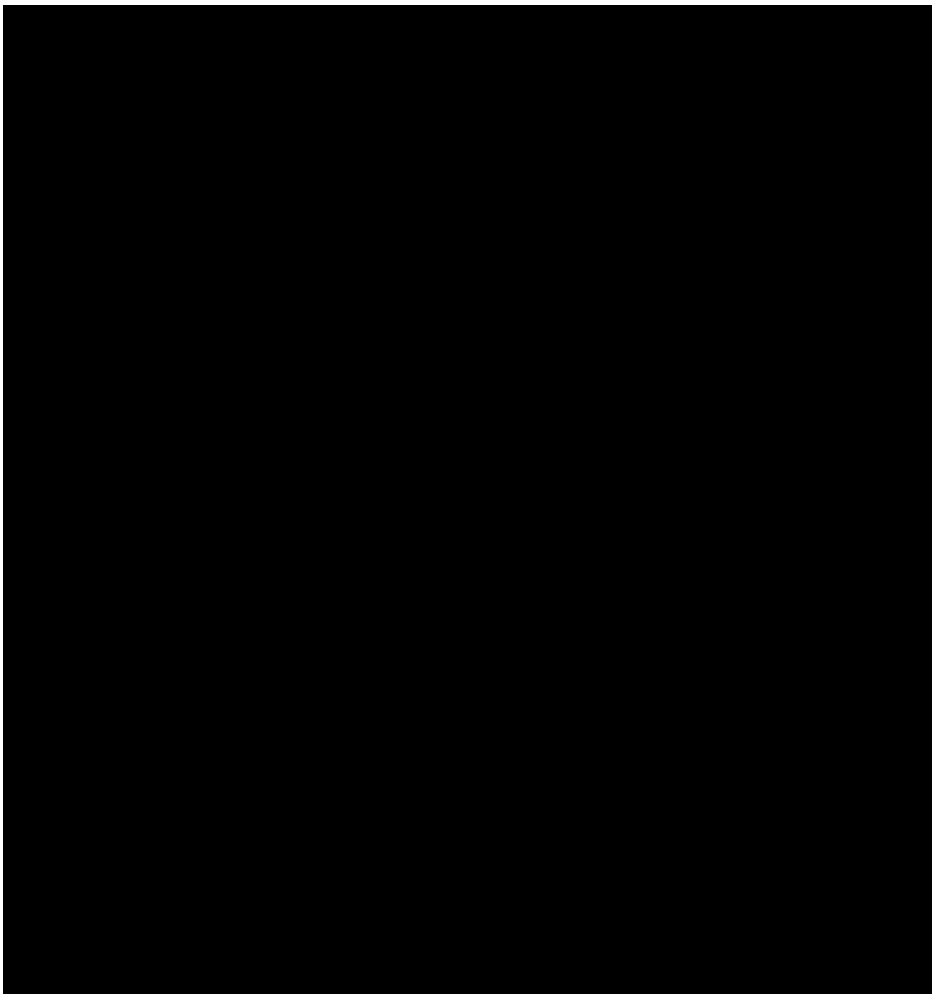
It is evident from the foregoing that archaeology is an important means of learning about Naas' past and of understanding the character and detailed form of the town today. This is more than just an academic pursuit because without an appreciation of the factors which have shaped Naas' present character, steps taken to conserve that character will not be wholly effective, or worse, features basic to its unique identity may be unwittingly destroyed.

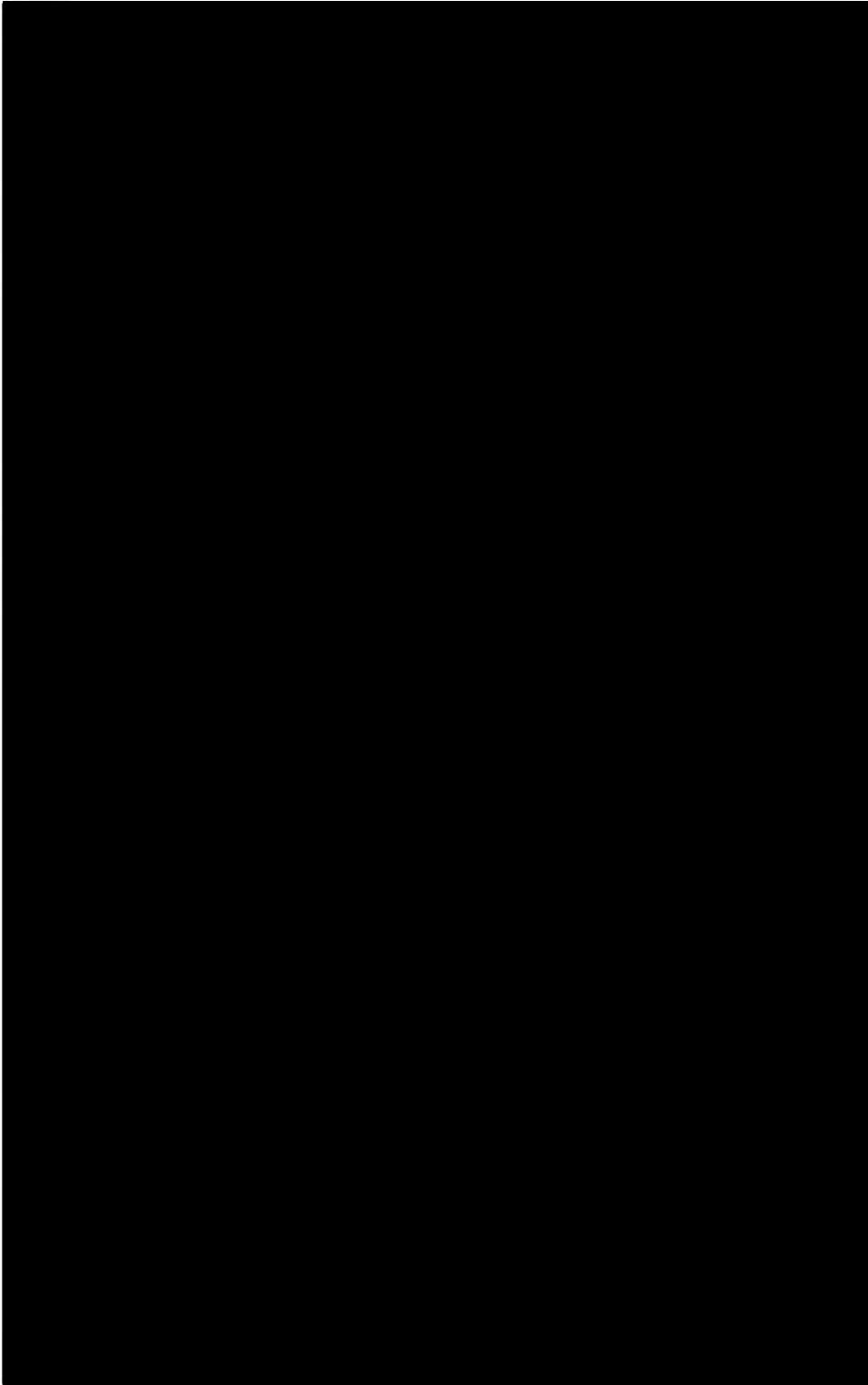
The protection of buried archaeological evidence presents serious problems for not only is there the pressure of redevelopment and the high value of urban properties with which to contend, but the sites themselves are often difficult to define or evaluate; their full archaeological potential may only become apparent when an excavation is undertaken in advance of development or by observations made while development is in progress. It is crucial, therefore, that a concerted effort should be made to safeguard its archaeological heritage and that adequate provision is made for investigation in advance of any redevelopment. This is best achieved by making the realisation of Naas' archaeological potential one of the objectives of its development plan. The objective may then be achieved by judicious use of planning constraints and by conditions attached to planning consents.

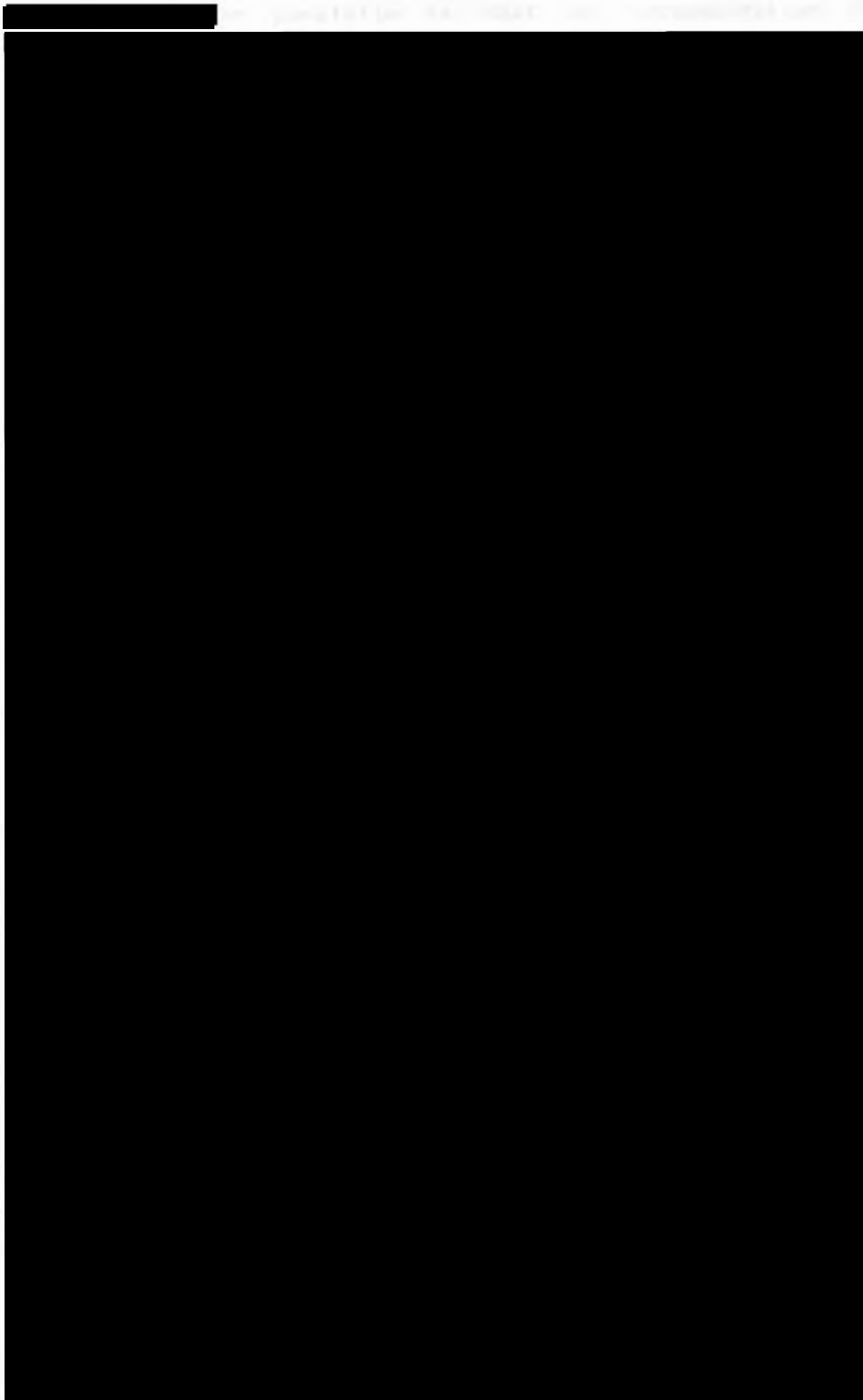
Area of Archaeological Potential

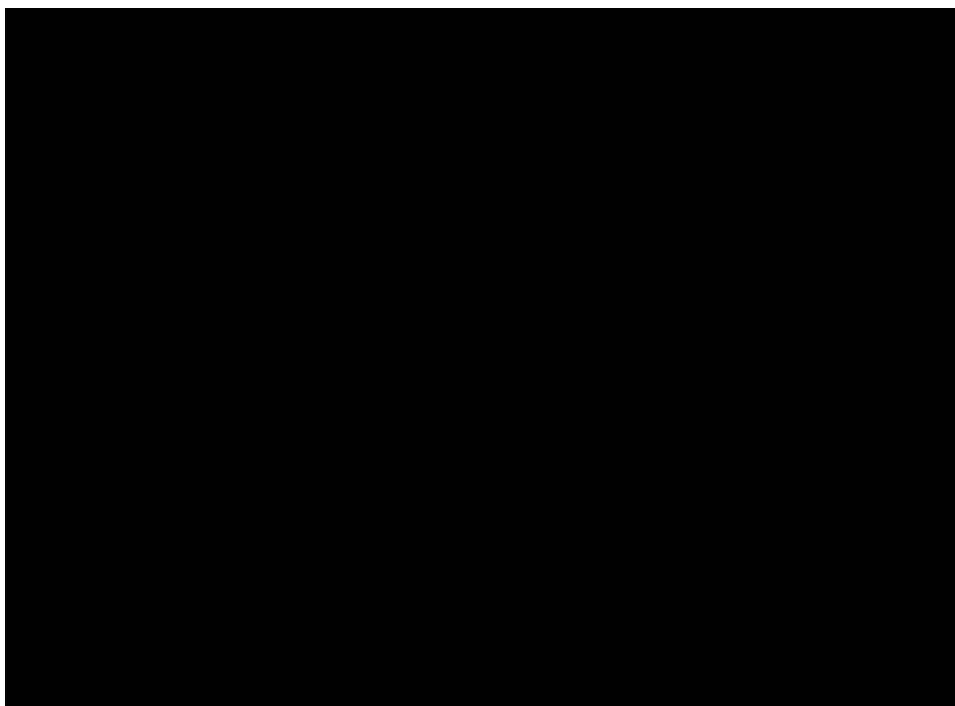
The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 167) delimits the area of archaeological potential within modern Naas. This comprises the suggested walled area of the medieval town, with extensions on the south, to incorporate the 'south motte', on the west to include the Dominican friary (labelled 'Augustinian' on O.S. maps), and the priory of St. John the Baptist on the north.

[REDACTED]











## OLD KILCULLEN

Old Kilcullen is a deserted borough located on a low hill 3Klm south of the modern village of Kilcullen. The placename is derived from Cill Chuilinn, "church of the steep slope" (de hOir 1974-7, 100-1).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first settlement of importance at Old Kilcullen was an early church site, traditionally connected with Iserninus (d. 468, AI) and MacTail (d.548, AFM, AU s.a. 549). Its location beside the Late Bronze Age/ Iron Age ritual centre of Dun Ailinne almost certainly indicates that the church was established at an early date in the christianization of Ireland. The deaths of its abbots are recorded from the later eighth century and a number of bishops are noted in the tenth and eleventh centuries (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 42-3). The plundering of Kilcullen by Amhlaibh, son of Godfrey, and the foreigners (Norse) of Dublin is recorded by AU in 937-8 and a thousand prisoners are said to have been captured (Chron. Scot. 937; AFM 936). Another raid is recorded in 944 (AFM). The 'damhliag' is mentioned in 1037, and this together with the surviving archaeological remains suggests that it was a church of considerable wealth and prominence during the tenth and eleventh centuries. It was burned in 1114 (AFM) but its proximity to Kildare meant that it did not achieve episcopal

status during the twelfth century.

Details of the coming of the Normans to Kilcullen are obscure. A deed of c. 1190 refers to Raymond le Gros as patron of Kilcullen (20 RDKPRI, 37: no. 7) but it is difficult to understand how this came about because all of the available evidence indicates that Kilcullen was retained by the lords of Leinster as part of their seigneurial demenses. C.1207, for instance, William Marshall was proposing to grant land at Kilcullen (Gilbert 1897, 71), while in 1232, his son, Richard Marshall offered the vill of Kilcullen as dower to the countess of Pembroke. No records survive of the activities of the Anglo-Normans at Kilcullen during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and even the descent of the manor is unclear. In 1315-16 the tenant of the barony of Kilcullen was David le Low (39 RDKPRI, 66-7) and in 1331, David le Wolf (MacNiocaill 1964a, 117), probably the same person. By the mid-fifteenth century Kilcullen had passed into the hands of the FitzEustace family.

Any account of Kilcullen in the later Middle Ages is hampered by the documentary confusion arising from the formation of a new settlement beside the stone bridge built across the Liffey in 1319 on the site occupied by the present village of Kilcullen. This was generally distinguished from the older settlement by being termed Kilcullen Bridge. In contrast with Archdall's (1873, ii, 269) view which dated the abandonment of Old Kilcullen to 1319, it is clear that Old Kilcullen remained a sizeable settlement into the seventeenth

century and references to 'Kilcullen' throughout the Middle Ages actually relate to today's Old Kilcullen.

The earliest evidence for a borough occurs in 1403 when the provost and burgesses received a royal charter granting them a weekly market and the customs thereof (Tresham 1828, 170: no. 76). This was granted as part of an attempt to revive the failing fortunes of the borough, which is described in the charter as having been recently burned. In 1456 it was again "burned, laid waste and destroyed" by the native Irish and parliament authorised a levy of £10 on the county of Kildare to enable Roland FitzEustace to build a fortified tower or tower-house there (Berry 1910, 457). The preamble to this statute described Kilcullen as lying 'in the frontiers of the march .... [and] the key and safety of that part of the said country, if it be able to stand in prosperity'. In 1467-8 another levy was imposed on the county to build a similar castle at Kilcullen-bridge (Berry 1914, 609-11). In 1478 Sir Roland FitzEustace obtained a murage grant for Kilcullen (Morrissey 1939, 615).

The scarcity of references to Kilcullen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries suggests that the borough declined at this time. An inquisition of the lands forfeited by James Eustace, viscount Baltinglass, in 1581 refers to the 'old walls and close within the walls called the old manor house of Kilcullen' (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Kildare, Elizabeth: no. 4). In 1588 the manor and town of Kilcullen were leased to Brian FitzWilliams (16 ROKPRI, 85: no. 5257) but the lands

was returned to William Eustace in 1592 (16 ROKPRI, 212: no. 5761). The Civil Survey of 1654 records 'severall ruined Castles and Stone houses' (Simington 1952, 77). The settlement was not totally abandoned in the seventeenth century, however. In 1609 William Eustace received a grant to hold a weekly market, yearly fair and court there (Erck 1946-52, ii, 551) while the census of Ireland in 1659 recorded a population of 115, which when compared to the figure of 43 for Kilcullen Bridge, shows that Old Kilcullen remained the larger of the two centres (Pender 1939, 000).

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. SITE OF BOROUGH
2. DOMESTIC HOUSES
3. CASTLE
4. TOWN DEFENCES
5. ST. MACTAIL'S CHURCH & EARLY MONASTIC SETTLEMENT
6. OTHER FEATURES
7. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

##### 1. SITE OF BOROUGH

The borough was located on a hilltop and, according to old accounts, was supplied with water by means of wells. The hill was the focus for a number of routes and while the precise extent of the borough is unclear but it focused on

the intersection of these roads, immediately west of the church site.

## 2. DOMESTIC HOUSES

The Civil Survey of 1654 records the presence at Kilcullen of "severall ruined Castles and Stone houses" (Simington 1952, 77), suggesting that there were a number of fortified houses of late medieval type in the borough. There are documentary references to two of these.

### CASTLE OF HOLY TRINITY, DUBLIN

In a document dating either to 1477-8 or 1480-92, Gerald, earl of Kildare, ordered that the castle at Kilcullen, belonging to the prior and convent of Holy Trinity, Dublin, should be free of coign and livery (Lawlor 1908, 19). This castle is again mentioned among the priory's possessions in 1504 (20 RDKPRI, 107-8: no. 379) and is probably to be identified with the manse house, listed along with eighty acres of glebe land, in the Civil Survey of 1654 (Simington 1952, 224).

### CASTLE OF GREAT CONNELL

The 1540 extent of Great Connell includes a 'fortilage' at Kilcullen (White 1943, 159). This was granted to William Parsons and Nicholas Kenney in 1607 when it was described as 'a castle or fort, almost demolished' (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1830,

92).

N of the road leading to Whitehall cross-roads is a cottage which incorporates one long wall heavily battered at the base and another with a large open fireplace. The date of these features is uncertain. A rectangular house site is visible on Fig. 169, NW of the church site. It measures 12.5 by 9m and is enclosed by banks 2m wide and 1m high. There is a low bank running N-S in the middle of the enclosure and the internal ground level is lower than outside. A circular ditched enclosure is visible beside it.

### 3. CASTLE

It is somewhat surprising that there is no evidence for any motte or other early Norman castle at Kilcullen and there is no evidence for any form of castle there prior to the second half of the fifteenth century. In 1456 parliament ordered that a "peel or tower forty Paul's feet in height below the entablement, twenty feet in length and sixteen feet in breadth" be constructed to defend Kilcullen (Berry 1910, 457). There is no evidence, however, to indicate whether this tower was built or not.

### 4. TOWN DEFENCES

In 1478 parliament imposed a levy to pay for the walling of Kilcullen and also released the townspeople from all

levies in order to enable them to strengthen their town (Morrissey 1939, 615). Archdall visited Kilcullen in 1781 and recorded a tradition that it had been 'a large walled town with seven gates'. One gate was still standing which he described as 'about 10 feet wide, with a handsome Roman arch, under which the present turnpike road runs' and he added that traces of a second gate were to be seen "to the south-west" (Archdall 1873, ii, 269; Price 1942, 92). In 1795 Seward also noted that Kilcullen was entered by "an arch at the turnpike" (Keyes and Landers 1978, 23). This gate had been removed by 1837 (O.S. Letters, Co. Kildare, i, 197) but its location was described as "where a small slated house is now near the turn-pike gate on that road". Keyes and Landers (1978, 23) suggest that it stood "on the west side spanning the road which approaches from the 'green of Old Kilcullen'". Healy (1983, map 2) places it on the south side of Kilcullen, however, on the north side of the road junction leading to Castlefish.

No trace of the gates survives, but it may be suggested that the defences enclosed the summit of the hill. The outline shown in Fig. 177 is a guess based on the curving line formed by the churchyard on the south, the townland boundary on the east, and the roadway on the north. It almost certainly preserves part of the early ecclesiastical enclosure but in eastern Ireland it is unusual to have the church sited at the edge of the enclosure during the Early Historic period.



##### 5. ST. MACTAIL'S CHURCH & EARLY MONASTIC SITE

The present graveyard is a sub-rectangular enclosure but the line of a circular enclosure is visible in aerial views (Figs. 168-9) to the N and E of the church site and it is continued by the semi-circular line of the road north of the green. The eastern line is marked by a field boundary which is now ploughed out. The radiating pattern of fields N of the church site possibly indicates a larger enclosure extending to Whitehall cross roads on the W and the Kilculllen road on the E. It will require excavation, however, to determine the exact extent of the enclosure.

##### ST. MACTAIL'S CHURCH

Throughout the Middle Ages this church retained its dedication to MacTail, suggesting that there was a direct continuity between the pre-Norman and Anglo-Norman site (20 RDKPRI, 73: no. 206; McNeill 1950, 15). It was one of the churches confirmed to Glendalough in 1173 by Pope Alexander III (Sheehy 1962, i, 29). The Augustinian canons of Holy Trinity, Dublin, were instituted to the church about 1190 (20 RDKPRI, 37: no. 7), and between 1200 and 1210, Isabel, wife of William Marshall, granted the church to Holy Trinity (20 RDKPRI, 38: nos. 12-15; Lawlor 1908, 18, 54) and it remained in their possession throughout the Middle Ages. It was evidently a church of some importance and had the status of a mother-church from at least 1219 (20 RDKPRI, 40: no. 28). In 1504 it had five annexed chapels (20 RDKPRI, 107-8: no. 379).



The theft of ten marks from the church is recorded in 1298 (Mills 1905, 205). In 1327, after a dispute with Holy Trinity over possession of the church, Thomas FitzJohn, earl of Kildare, founded a chantry at Kilcullen, which was given to Holy Trinity (20 RDKPRI, 75-6: nos. 221-2; MacNiocaill 1964a, 148-50). With the dissolution of Holy Trinity, Dublin, in 1539, Kilcullen was erected into a prebendal church of Christ Church cathedral there (20 RDKPRI, 115: no. 431). An episcopal visitation of 1615 noted that the chancel was in ruins, although the nave was sound (Ronan 1941a, 52) and in 1630 both were in "reasonable reparation" (Ronan 1941b, 97).

#### Description (Fig. 170)

The ruins of the nave and chancel church are denoted by wall footings 80cm high. The remains were excavated by O hIcheadha (1941). The masonry consisted of roughly coursed limestone. Grose (1791) shows the building roofed with an additional building attached on the N. The S walls were buttressed and had rectangular windows with wooden shutters, in eighteenth century style. Only curtailed lengths of the N and S walls of the chancel remain with evidence for a modern E crossing wall. The returns of the chancel arch survive on both sides but the N walls of the chancel and nave are missing. The S wall has two small recesses close to the ground on either side of an 18th century fireplace. The W door is represented by two splays.

Romanesque arch.

A Romanesque chancel arch was present here until the nineteenth century. In 1782 Austin Cooper noted that the "capitals of the side pillasters are the very same as at Timahoe" (Price 1942, 92).

#### Architectural fragments

SE of the church is a chamfered granite window mullion with glazing bar hole used as a gravemarker.

Dims: L.52 W.18 T.18

#### Round Tower (Fig. 171)

In the SW end of the graveyard, SW of the church ruins. It is 10m high, 4.5m in diameter and is built of roughly coursed limestone/slate with pinnings. There is evidence for three floors. The round headed door, 1.86m above the ground, is slightly battered. There is a rectangular flat lintelled window in the S side at second floor level with granite jambs and a limestone lintel. One section of the wall rises to a H of 11m.

Barrow 1979, 116-7

#### North Cross (Figs. 172-5). 8th-9th cents.

Granite base and shaft, N of the church. The base is deeply buried in the ground and appears to be pyramidal in shape. The shaft is decorated on all faces with panels of figure sculpture.

W face (Fig. 172). Lower part of a triangular panel at the top, with the lower part of two legs (?crucifixion). The panel below has a rider on horseback blowing a trumpet with a

small animal perched on the rump of the horse. The middle panel depicts a man holding an animal by the horns with a sword in his right hand. The lower panel is the Flight into Egypt/ Entry into Jerusalem. Below this is a row of five heads, which appear to have been cut down in order that the shaft would fit the mortice.

N face (Fig. 173). The upper panel has a standing figure holding a crozier with a bell and an axe beside him. There is a small figure lying horizontally below the bell and crozier. Middle panel: interlace pattern. Lr. panel: a figure and animal wrestling and a smaller animal underneath, ?David rescuing the lamb from the lion.

E face (Fig. 174). Three panels with four apostles in each panel.

S face (Fig. 175). Worn. It appears to have had three panels of interlace.

Dims: Base: H.35 (min) W.93 X 87

Shaft: H.160 W.45 X 45

East Cross (Fig. 176)

Shaft and base of granite, E of the church. The base is deeply buried in the ground but is pyramidal in shape. The tall shaft is rectangular and has undecorated panels outlined by low rounded mouldings.

Dims: Base. H.32 (min) W.102 X 99

Shaft. H.300 W.55 X 43

West Cross

Undecorated granite base and shaft carved from a single block

of granite at the W end of the church. The base is rectangular and the short shaft tapers with a tenon and mortice.

Dims: Overall H. 110

Base. H.45 W.54 X 46

Shaft H.50 W. 40-35 X 35-28

Tenon H. 15 W. 27 X 24

Grave-slab.

A tapering slab with a hole at either end, and measuring 6' by 2'2" is mentioned in the Dublin Penny Journal IV, no. 185, Jan. 1836, 229. It is now missing.

Effigy

The effigy described under Ballymore Eustace came from this church.

## 6. OTHER FEATURES

Ditched enclosure.

W of the footings for the rectangular house, NW of the E.C. site. Healy (1983, 3) suggests that it is a house site. It appears to be built up against an enclosing bank. It is circular and measures 10m in diameter. The ditch is 1.5m wide and has a max. depth of 40cm. There is a hint of a counterscarp bank.

Tumulus

Situated on top of the hill SW of the church site beside the now disused road leading to Hacklow Cross roads. It is 596'

above sea level and affords extensive views in all directions. The mound is 2m high, 2m wide on top and 9.5m wide at the base. There are traces of a low berm surrounding the mound.

#### 7. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. Hoard of Hiberno-Norse coins, deposited c. 1103. Found at Kilcullen in 1305. Dolley 1966, 43, 76-7.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Old Kilcullen is a good example of a deserted medieval borough. The documentary sources indicate that it was a pre-Norman church site of importance and the borough was established during the thirteenth century. Despite the construction of the bridge at present day Kilcullen in the fourteenth century the older settlement appears to have continued into the seventeenth century, when it began to decline. The decline was so complete that its original street plan and the extent of the borough is now uncertain. The area proposed on Fig. 177 is a guess which requires to be checked by excavation.

There is little evidence for disturbance within the suggested borough site, and in common with other medieval boroughs it is to be expected that archaeological remains survive below ground, particularly in the form of house

foundations, pits and debris scatters. In preparing a site for a new bungalow in the triangular field NW of the cross roads, on top of the hill, the ground was so full of stone that the workmen considered that there had been an earlier structure there. Keyes and Landers note that when pipe laying for the Old Kilcullen reservoir was in progress house foundations were uncovered. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of the medieval settlement, and the nature of its houses, streets, and defences.

In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough, which began as a settlement during the Early Christian period, was occupied throughout the Middle Ages. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough is not under any immediate pressure of development.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 177) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Old Kilcullen. This is based essentially on the area formed by the known monuments and the hints provided by topography. Because there is a lack of information at present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.

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## DOUGHTERARD

Dughterard is a townland situated on a spur of raised ground at the north-western edge of the Wicklow mountains' foothills, about 10 Klm north-east of Naas. The name is an anglicization of Uachtar Ard, "the upper height".

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest evidence for settlement at Dughterard occurs in Early Historic times when it was the site of a monastery. The foundation date of the monastery remains unknown, however. Gwynn and Hadcock (1970, 400) suggest that it was the site of a community of nuns founded by St. Brigid. Apart from a reference to a raid on the monastery in 1094 (AFM), however, nothing is known of it.

After the coming of the Normans Dughterard was granted to Adam de Hereford (Gilbert 1889, 102-3; Curtis 1933-43, i, 13-14, 19). Little is known of the activities of the de Herefords or their successors, the Pippards, in Dughterard during the thirteenth century. A borough was established before 1276, however, because Ralph Pippard entered into an agreement with six burgesses of 'le Outrard' in that year (Curtis 1933-43, i, 81). In 1318 the bailiffs and men of the town of Dughterard recieved a royal charter granting them a weekly market and a fair there (Tresham 1828, 21: no. 27).

This grant indicates that the settlement was then an autonomous community but its subsequent history is obscure. An undated extant, probably belonging to the first quarter of the fourteenth century, refers to fifty-eight burgesses holding 132 acres at a rent of £5 0s. 5d (PRO London S.C. 12/20/48, courtesy Brian Eager). In 1608, William Browne is mentioned as provost of the town of 'Woghterard' (Brewer and Bullen 1873, 24; Russel and Prendergast 1874, 577), which may indicate that the borough continued to function into the seventeenth century.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. SITE OF BOROUGH
2. CASTLE
3. PARISH CHURCH
4. OTHER FEATURES

##### 1. SITE OF BOROUGH

Only one road passes through Oughterard but previously there were three others. The L shaped junction running up the hill to Oughterard from the SE was formerly a T-junction, the road to the left going along the top of the hill to Bishopscourt Upper, passing Oughterard Castle which was below the ridge on the S. The present laneway to the church of Oughterard forked beside the church, one road running NW and

the other NE along the line of present field boundaries.

Evidence for medieval furlong boundaries was recognised N and S of Oughterard Church parallel with the contour lines on the ridge (Hall et al 1985), although there is almost no trace of burgage plots. Hall et al suggest that the site of the borough was on the raised platform of ground, SE of the church on the S side of the crossroads. This platform is a natural feature and would have provided a level area for houses. They recorded high levels of phosphate on this platform. A smaller area on the N side of the road to the W of the laneway leading to the church is also suggested. This was not tested for phosphate but it does have a number of low earthworks. There are also some low earthworks in the second field, S of the cross roads, on the E side of the road on low-lying ground.

## 2. CASTLE

Although Oughterard was the site of an important Anglo-Norman manor, there are no early references to a castle. The manor descended from the de Hereford's to the Pippards, and in 1374 it was taken into the King's hands (Tresham 1828, 87: no. 56). In 1410 the reversion of the manor was granted to William Scryvener of Lancaster, from the death of John Leche of Chester, who then held it (Tresham 1828, 195: no. 22), but in 1412 the manor was granted to James Butler, earl of Ormond (Tresham 1828, 198: no. 26c), and it was to remain in Butler hands until at least the

seventeenth century. In 1435 the earl of Ormond received permission to grant the manor to Nicholas White for his lifetime (Tresham 1828, 257: no. 42). In 1509 Thomas, earl of Ormond, granted it to Sir Piers Butler (Curtis 1933-43, iii, 315; iv, 178), and in 1629 the earl leased the manor to George and James Aylemer (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Co. Kildare, Car. I, 68). The only reference to a castle occurs in 1636 when John Alen died holding a castle, ten messuages and 109 acres of land there (Ir. Rec. Comm. 1826, Co. Kildare, Car. I: 68).

#### Description (Figs. 178-9)

Rectangular four floored tower house with three rounded corners, situated on the SE side of the ridge which affords a clear view to the Wicklow mountains. It is built of uncoursed rubble limestone, plastered externally, with no dressed stone. It is in poor condition with large cracks in each wall. The W wall projects 2.5m to the N and probably enclosed an external stairs to the second and third floors although there is no evidence for either a wall return, a roof or a stairs. There is, however, an opening in the N wall at second floor level. There is a narrow string course with drainage course at wall walk level and the incomplete parapets are about 1m high. There is a shallow machicolation supported on three corbels on the E wall at second floor level.

The rectangular ground floor is entered through a segmentally arched door, lacking its jambs, in the N end of

the E wall. There is a fireplace in the centre of the wall and the flue exits about 1.5m above ground level through a brick opening. There is a rectangular double splayed loop, blocked externally, in the S end of the wall. The W wall has a broken rectangular recess in the S end and a flat lintelled double splayed loop in the centre of the wall. At the N end of the wall is a flat lintelled splayed slit, blocked externally. Stones were removed from the splays of this window possibly to create small wall cupboards in the thickness of the wall. The north wall has a segmentally arched recess, now blocked, which may have been a door leading to the stair turret. Corbels in the E and W walls of the ground floor supported a wooden floor with a loft above. Access to this must have been by means of an internal wooden stairs. It has round barrel vaulting with some traces of wicker work centering. The S wall has two flat lintelled recesses at either end of the wall and a flat lintelled double splayed slit in the center with no dressed jambs. The N wall has a blocked flat lintelled double splayed slit in the E end of the wall.

Access to the second floor was by means of an external stair turret of which no trace now survives. The S wall has one large wooden lintelled splayed window (blocked) with no dressed jambs. The W wall has a large flat lintelled window with shallow splay and no dressed jambs towards the S end. The N wall has a rectangular doorway in the W end. The jambs and lintel are missing. The third floor was partly converted as a dovecote and most of the masonry is not visible.

### 3. PARISH CHURCH

The parish church of Oughterard was granted by Adam de Hereford to St. Thomas' Abbey, Dublin, before 1189 (Gilbert 1889, 75). The church remained a possession of St. Thomas' throughout the Middle Ages and is listed in the extent of 1540 (White 1943, 41). In the ecclesiastical taxation of 1302-6, the church of Oughterard was valued at £12, and the vicarage at 30s. (Sweetman 1875-86, v, 245). Otherwise, however, little information is available on the church, apart from notices of the presentation of clergy in 1386, 1387, 1406 (Tresham 1928, 126: no. 157; p. 130, no. 12; p. 181: no. 3), 1565 (11 RDKPRI, 114: no. 757) and 1599 (17 RDKPRI, 112: no. 6330). The 1540 extent noted that the chancel of Oughterard was in need of repair (White 1943, 41). In 1576, the rectory was leased to Sir Henry Ratcliff (Morrin 1862, 4) and later to Anthony Power (13 RDKPRI, 18: no. 2946). In 1596, it was granted to Richard Hardinge (Morrin 1862, 378).

#### Description (Figs. 180-1)

The church consists of an unroofed nave and a barrel vaulted chancel with spiral stairs in an external southern turret. The nave, in which there is evidence of much rebuilding, was originally built of large blocks of roughly coursed limestone masonry while the chancel is built of split slabs of uncoursed limestone. Neither building has dressed quoins.

The CHANCEL has a pointed barrell vault with some wicker work centering and it originally had a floor above with access via the spiral stairs at the W end of the S wall. The top of the barrell vault is now the max height of the chancel and the roof has been cemented over. The E wall has a triple light rectangular window of sixteenth century style; it is double splayed internally and has a flat rear arch. The chamfered mullions and jambs are of red sandstone and grey limestone. The lights are cusped with rectangular heads. There are three small holes (? drainage) which slope to the outside in the lower frame of the window and V shaped masons marks on some of the mullions and jambs. The N wall has a rectangular splayed window at either end of the wall with pointed rear-arches, both of which are partly blocked with brick. The western one has a pointed external arch and chamfered jambs of sandstone. No cut stones survive of the eastern window. There is a third window, partly blocked, high up in the centre of the wall under the vault. It is rectangular, splayed, and the rear-arch is lintelled. Externally it has one splayed sandstone jamb with glazing bar holes. There are four put-log holes about 1m above ground internally. The S wall has two windows, one at either end of the wall. The eastern splayed rectangular window is flat lintelled with sloping sill and is partially blocked with brick. It has no cut stone. The western one has a pointed rear-arch with splays and sloping sill but it is completely blocked. Externally the concave chamfered sandstone jambs remain. There is a wall cupboard under this window. W of the



E window is a blocked squint. Internally this is marked by a break in the wall with a chamfered jamb on the E side. Externally there is an angled splay and sandstone jambs on the W. To the W of this is another break in the wall where there was a second squint. This has no dressed stone internally but the sandstone jambs of the W splay survive externally. E of the W window is an opening to the stair turret with pointed arch and concave chamfered limestone jambs. Within the doorway on the W side there is a wall recess.

The STAIR TURRET is on the S side of the chancel. It is 6m high externally and about 1.5m above the roof of the chancel. It is out of the vertical and is now supported by concrete buttresses. The spiral stairs is lit by small rectangular slit windows on the W, S and E and a broken rectangular opening provides access onto the roof of the chancel on the N.

The NAVE is the older structure, and measures 11 by 5m. Its E wall stands to a height of 5.3m. An inserted round chancel arch of tufa was later blocked and a rectangular granite door inserted. This now provides an entrance to the chancel. The N wall stands to a max height of 4m. Externally there is a round arched doorway with flat lintelled rear arch in the centre of the wall. This is blocked internally by an eighteenth century grave slab. The W wall survives to a height of 6.5m and has a rectangular projection for a ball-cote. The west window was a narrow round-headed splayed



window with a granite chamfered arch and a flat lintelled rear arch, but this is now a gaping hole and only part of the N splay survives. The S wall survives to a max. height of 3m at the E end, although the ground level externally is at the top of the wall, and about 2m at the W end. The centre of the wall is 1.5m high and largely rebuilt. There is one window splay at the E end with some tufa jambs and a possible opening in the centre of the wall, now blocked. A S porch at the W end of the wall is shown in a drawing by Austin Cooper (Price 1942) but is now collapsed. Inserted into the modern doorway is the Guinness memorial slab while above the slab there are some upright voussoirs of the original arch on the E side of the doorway. Among the re-set stones above the slab is one of orange sandstone which is the head of a pointed chamfered arch.

#### Architectural fragments

Two granite window jamb fragments lie on the ground in the chancel. One is granite and the other limestone.

Dims: A) L.43 W.24 T.21

B) L.35 W.18 T.16

#### Round Tower (Fig. 182)

The lower part of a round tower stands to a height of 10 m in the SW corner of the graveyard. It is built of uncoursed limestone masonry. The round headed battered door with granite surrounds is on the E side 2.5m above ground level. There is one small window on the S side with a round granite

arch. There is a floor level about 1m below the base of the door and another 1m above the top of the door and a third below the present top of the tower. Ext. diam. 4.8m. Av. T. of walls 1.1m.

Barrow 1979, 123-4.

#### 4. OTHER FEATURES

##### Earthworks.

A rock cut ditch, 1.5 wide and 2m deep, runs from the S wall of the graveyard in a SW direction towards Oughterard castle. It veers SE before reaching the castle along the edge of the forest plantation and continues as a shallow ditch and bank to the cross roads on the S.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Oughterard is an example of a deserted medieval borough. The documentary sources indicate that it was a pre-Norman church site and the borough was established during the thirteenth century. Little is known of the subsequent history of the borough, however, but it continued to function as an incorporated entity into the seventeenth century. The date of its desertion is unclear but it is likely that its decline began in the fourteenth century and continued until the seventeenth when it was probably abandoned completely. The exact location of the borough is unknown. The summit of the

ridge, near the churchyard is one possibility, but the medieval sources would suggest an area to the south-east, in more marshy ground. Because of the uncertainty surrounding the location a large area has been delimited within the townland of Oughterard, and it is only through patient observation when opportunities arise that the exact extent and nature of the borough can be measured.

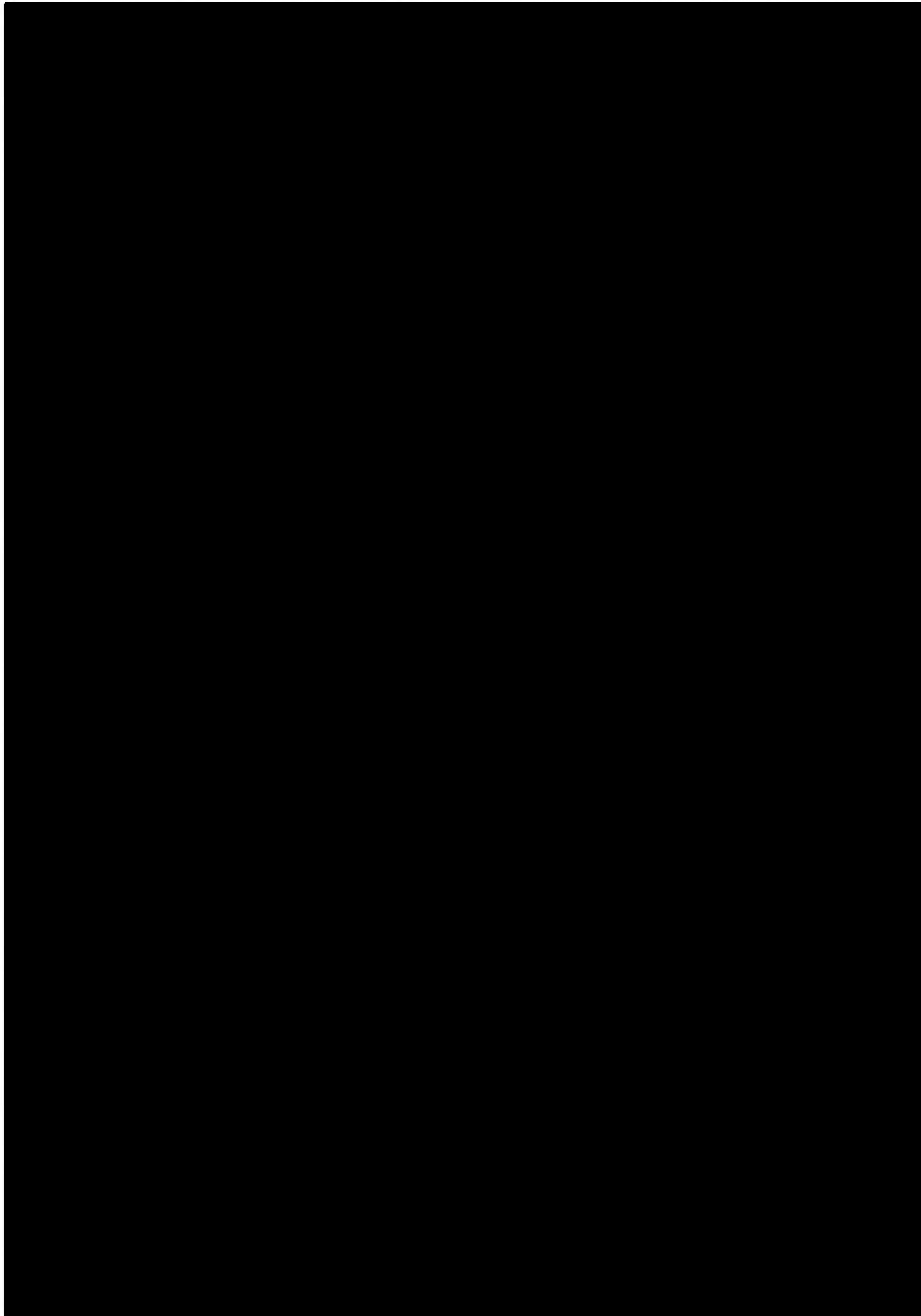
There is little evidence for disturbance within the suggested borough site, and in common with other medieval boroughs it is to be expected that archaeological remains survive below ground, particularly in the form of house foundations, pits and debris scatters. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of the medieval settlement, and the nature of its houses, streets, and defences.

In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough, which began as a settlement during the Early Christian period, was occupied throughout the Middle Ages. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough is not under any immediate pressure of development.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 183) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Oughterard. Because there is a lack of information at present

on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all  
works within the shaded area be monitored.





## RATHANGAN

Rathangan is a small town in the extreme west of county Kildare, about 10 Klm north-west of Kildare town. It is situated on a gravel ridge overlooking the river Slate, a tributary of the Barrow, while a branch of the Grand Canal also passes through the town. It is surrounded on the north, west, and south by extensive areas of bogland, and to the east by a ridge of low hills, which isolate it somewhat from the fertile plains of Kildare, further to the east (Aalen et al. 1970, ii, 86). The placename is a corruption of Rath Iomghain, the fort immediately west of the town.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Little is known of the site in pre-Norman times and the only early reference is to the death of Flaithnia, son of Cinaedh, King of the Ui Failghe, at Rath-Iomgain in 806 (AU-805; A. Clon-803; AFM-801). The early history of Rathangan under the Normans is also unclear. FitzGerald (1906-8, 137, 158) suggests that it was granted by Strongbow to Maurice FitzGerald, ancestor of the FitzGerald lords of Offaly, but it may well have been granted to Robert de Bermingham, as part of his cantred of Offaly (Orpen 1911-20, i, 381). There is no doubt, however, that Rathangan was held by the FitzGerald family in the mid-thirteenth century. The manor of Rathangan is one of the properties named in a document of

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1270 listing the lands of Maurice FitzGerald, who was drowned in 1268 (Sweetman 1875-86, ii, no. 867). An assize of 1308 records that Maurice's heir, Gerald, later held his court at Rathangan, indicating that it was a manor of some importance (Wood, Langman and Griffith 1956, 82).

Rathangan was situated in a frontier position, on the borders of the Ui Conchobhair territory of Ui Failghe. In 1300, the vill of Rathangan was burned by the Irish (Sweetman 1875-86, v, no. 48; Mills 1905, 230). An extent of the lands of Richard FitzThomas, earl of Kildare, prepared on the latter's death in 1331 (MacNiocaill 1964a, 102) records the burgage rent of Rathangan as £6 3s. 2d. indicating that there were 120 burgages. During the fifteenth century Rathangan passed into the hands of the Ui Conchobair Failghe. In 1433 Mairghreag, wife of O Conchobair Failghe, hosted a great assembly of learned men and poets at Rathangan (AFM), while in 1437 her husband, Calbhach Mor, was described as the ancient patron of the vicarage of Rathangan (Twemlow 1909, 666).

By the 1530s Rathangan had reverted to FitzGerald control and the castle of Rathangan was described as one of the strongholds of Silken Thomas during his rebellion in 1535 (Fitzgerald 1906-8, 144). Most of the sixteenth and seventeenth century references to Rathangan concern the castle but an extent of the manor drawn up in 1540 states that there were eight messuages and ten cottages in the village of Rathangan, as well as a water-mill, lately built

by Stephan Apharry, and leased to Walter Brabazon (FitzGerald 1906-8, 162-3). In 1551 Redmond Oge FitzGerald received a lease of ten cottages in Rathangan (ibid. 151) suggesting that this was the full complement of the village at the time. Rathangan was plundered and burned in the FitzGerald revolt of 1546 (AFM). In 1672 the earl of Kildare received a grant of a weekly market at Rathangan (FitzGerald 1906-8b, 157) and in 1659 it had a population of 107 (Pender 1939, 395). As late as 1760, Rocque's map shows the village as containing only seventeen houses, indicating a population of no more than one hundred (Aalen et al. 1970, ii, 86).

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. STREETS & STREET PATTERN
2. INDUSTRIAL AREAS
3. THE CASTLE
4. PARISH CHURCH
5. OTHER FEATURES
6. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

##### 1. STREETS & STREET PATTERN

The street pattern is essentially linear, composed of Main Street, which forks at the Market Sq into Chapel Street and Bridge Street. The plots on Main Street preserve a clear burgage plot pattern, but the layout of the settlement suggests that this is no older than the seventeenth century.



## 2. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

The mill situated E of the village on the river Slate may be on the site of the medieval mill.

## 3. CASTLE

After the burning of Rathangan in 1300, John FitzThomas petitioned the King for help in rebuilding a "fortalice" there (Sweetman 1875-86, v, no. 48; Mills 1905, 230), and this is probably the castle referred to in the 1331 extent (MacNiocaill 1964a, 102). Since it was to be rebuilt in 1300, the "fortalice" was clearly in existence during the thirteenth century and perhaps as early as the late twelfth century but the date of its construction is unknown. Nothing further is known of the castle until 1535 when, after changing hands on a number of occasions during the revolt of 1534, and another reference occurs in 1535 (MacNiocaill 1964a, 102). In the 1535 extent it is mentioned as a base for the Lord Deputy in his expeditions against Brian O Conchobhair, chief of Ui Failghe, in 1535 and 1537 (FitzGerald 1906-8b, 144-8). In the 1540 extent it is described as a "castle surrounded by stone walls sufficiently repaired ... very necessary for the protection and defence of the subjects of the lord the King in these parts" (ibid. 162). In 1551 Redmond Oge FitzGerald received a lease of "the castell of Rathangan with the houses and offyces belonging to the same" (ibid., 151). During the later sixteenth century Rathangan castle was frequently used as a residence by the earls of Kildare but it played no role in the wars of the

1640s and was demolished about 1756, the materials being used to build Rathangan Lodge close by (FitzGerald 1906-8, 152-7).

There is now no trace of the castle which is marked on Noble and Keenan's map of 1752 and Rocque's map of 1760, which show it in the field SW of Rathangan Lodge. FitzGerald (1906-8b, 157; map opp p.139) notes that the Lodge was built from the material of the castle which stood nearby. The present owner of Rathangan Lodge recalls wall foundations SW of the house, near the river where a number of irregular earthworks are present in the field.

#### 4. PARISH CHURCH

The earliest reference to the church of Rathangan occurs in 1297 when its vicar, Richard, is mentioned (Mills 1905, 173), and another reference occurs in 1299 (Sweetman 1875-86, iv, no. 659). In the ecclesiastical taxation of 1302-6, Rathangan is noted as a prebend of the diocese of Kildare, valued at 40 marks, while the vicarage was valued at 30s. (Sweetman 1875-86, v, 244). References to clergy indicate that the church continued to function throughout the Middle Ages but it had fallen into disrepair by 1744 when Robert, earl of Kildare left £200 in his will for rebuilding the church (FitzGerald 1906-8b, 158).

The present church is a nineteenth century structure and there are no pre-1700 memorials or monuments. The ground

immediately E of the church is higher than elsewhere in the graveyard.

## 5. OTHER FEATURES

Ringfort. ?Motte.

Situated at the NW end of the village on high ground with extensive views in all directions. Described by O'Connor in 1837 as "this mound is at present planted, and is .... about one hundred and eighty feet in diameter, and measures from its base to its summit, slantwise, about forty two feet, which would probably make about twenty eight feet in perpendicular height. It is encircled with a large ditch which is about seven hundred and thirty eight feet in circumference; and a foss, which is partly destroyed, mostly on the south and east side" (O.S. Letters, Co. Kildare, ii, 129-30). It is a very large raised platform surrounded by a deep ditch and counter-scarp bank. The interior diameter is 60m E-W by 58m N-S. There is an internal bank, 2m wide, with a maximum height of 2m on the NE. The bank is eroded on the N and SW sides. There are a few raised areas in the centre but no coherent pattern can be discerned. It is surrounded by a ditch 6.5m in width and 4-5m in depth below the top of the internal bank. There are traces of a counter-scarp bank particularly on the E and S sides. There is a causeway over the ditch on the E.

## 6. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. Bronze dirk. Found in 1865, partially included in the trunk of an alder tree in a bog at Rathangan, at a depth of 6 feet. NMI 1877: 58. Burgess and Gerloff 1981, 35: no. 235.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Rathangan is an example of a shrunken medieval borough. The documentary sources indicate that its origins lie in pre-Norman times and the borough was probably established there during the thirteenth century. The borough seems to have faded during the later Middle Ages but its fortunes rose in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and it is likely that most of its archaeological deposits belong to that time.

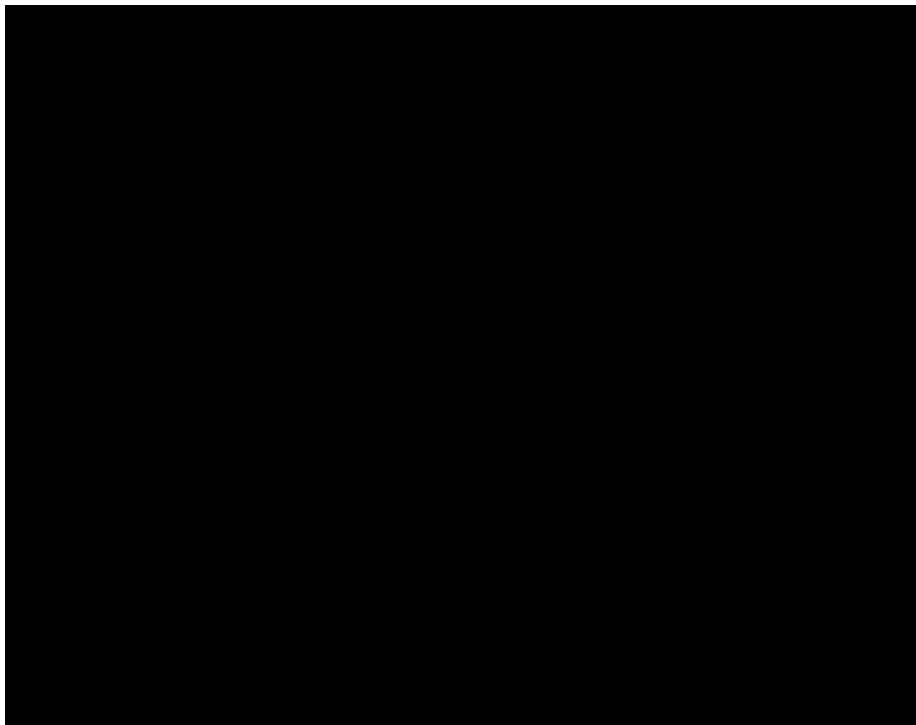
It is likely that archaeological deposits have been disturbed along the street frontages but elsewhere there is little evidence for disturbance, and in common with other boroughs it is to be expected that archaeological remains survive below ground, particularly in the form of house foundations, pits and debris scatters. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of the medieval settlement, and the nature of its houses and streets.

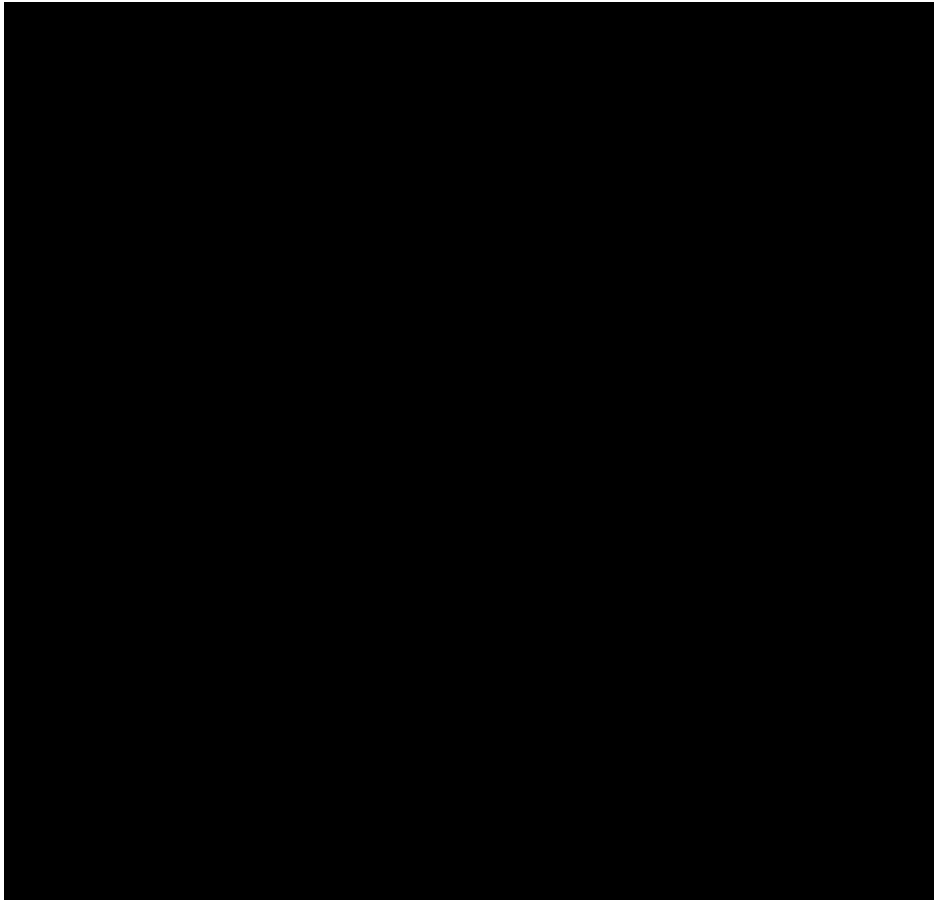
In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough, which began as a settlement during the Early Christian period, was occupied throughout the Middle Ages. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means

by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough is not under any immediate pressure of development.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 185) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Rathangan. This is based essentially on the area formed by the known monuments and the hints provided by topography, together with an area around the suggested castle site, on the south-west. Because there is a lack of information at present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.





## RATHMORE

Rathmore is a small village located about 6 km east of Naas in eastern Kildare on the western fringes of the Wicklow mountains. The Hartwell river, a small tributary of the river Liffey, flows through the village. The placename is derived from Rath Mhor, "the big fort", although as De hOir (1974-7, 104-6) points out, it is unclear whether this refers to the surviving Anglo-Norman motte or to an earlier ringfort.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORIC BACKGROUND

There is no documentary evidence to indicate any significant pre-Norman settlement at Rathmore, which is surprising because it is clearly of importance shortly after the Anglo-Norman invasion. The motte may well be constructed over an earlier monument, however, because the bronze bracelet, found in the enclosing bank in 1905, is probably of Early Historic date (JKAS 4 (1903-5), 498).

Shortly after the Anglo-Norman conquest, Rathmore and other lands were granted by William, son of Maurice Fitzgerald, second baron of Naas, to his brother Gerald, the ancestor of the FitzGerald barons of Offaly and earls of Kildare. This grant was confirmed in a document of 1185-9 by Prince John, who also granted Gerald a weekly market at Rathmore (MacNiocaill 1964a, 14). Before his death in 1203

Gerald FitzMaurice granted a charter establishing a borough at Rathmore. This charter does not survive but its existence is demonstrated by a reference to it in another charter granted to Rathmore by Gerald's son, Maurice Fitzgerald, c.1220. In this charter Maurice granted the burgesses the liberties of Breteuil and ninety-six burgages with their appurtenances at an annual rent of 12d. (MacNiocaill 1964b, 294-5). The borough continued to function into the first half of the fourteenth century. An extent of the possessions of Richard FitzThomas, earl of Kildare, drawn up in 1331, included £19 in rents from the burgesses and tenants of Rathmore (MacNiocaill 1964a, 103) while in 1334 a reference occurs to "a field called the 'Mocheburgage' in the burgage of Rathmore" (23 RDKPRI, 100: no. 590). It was in a frontier situation, however, and in 1355-6 Maurice FitzThomas, earl of Kildare, was ordered by the King, on pain of forfeiting the manor, to go to Rathmore in person, accompanied by five men-at-arms with armoured horses, twelve well armed hobelars, forty archers and other footmen well equipped, in order to resist the incursions of the O Broin and their allies (Tresham 1828, 60: no. 41). The absence of references after the fourteenth century suggests that the borough went into decline but Tirlagh Doyne was listed as its provost in 1608 showing that it was not completely abandoned (Brewer and Bullen 1873, 24; Russell and Prendergast 1874, 577). Rathmore is said to have been burned by Rory Og O'More, who died in 1577 (Hendrick-Aylmer 1893-1902, 377-9), and was partly burned by the O'Byrnes in 1580 (Hamilton 1867, 253). The



Civil Survey of 1654 noted the presence at Rathmore of the "Mannor House or Castle", three other castles, and a mill, all of which were described as waste (Simington 1952, 43).

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. SITE OF BOROUGH
2. DOMESTIC HOUSES
- SEGRAVE'S CASTLE
3. INDUSTRIAL AREAS
4. CASTLE
5. ST. COLUMBA'S PARISH CHURCH
6. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

#### 1. SITE OF BOROUGH

The borough was probably located in the area between Segrave's castle and the motte. There are traces of an old roadway bounded by banks running along the S side of the Hartwell river between the spring and a ruined farmhouse to the NW. Its S bank is indicated by hacheurs on the O.S. map.

#### 2. DOMESTIC HOUSES

Maurice FitzGerald's charter of c.1220 preserves some details of the size of burgage plots at Rathmore, which are lacking for most Irish boroughs. Of the ninety-six boroughs

specified, eighty-five were to contain seven acres and a frontage each, while the other eleven had half an acre and a frontage (MacNiocaill 1964b, 43). An inquisition of the reign of Elizabeth noted ninety-eight messuages at Rathmore (Hendrick-Aylmer 1899-1902, 374), corresponding remarkably closely to the ninety-six burgages of c.1220.

No trace of burgage plots survives on the ground but some irregular earthworks are present in the field marked 0.950 acres, on the W side of the Rathcoole road, between Rathmore and Segrave's Castle. Rectangular features are visible in the aerial photograph in the field immediately SW of this, ie. the field marked 1.410 acres (Figs. 186, 191).

Seven castles were noted at Rathmore in an inquisition of Elizabeth (Hendrick-Aylmer 1899-1902, 374) but in 1654 the Civil Survey listed three castles in addition to the "Mannor House or Castle" (Simington 1952, 43). Apart from Segrave's castle, however, none of these survive.

#### SEGRAVE'S CASTLE

This may be the castle recorded in 1654 as belonging to Sagry of Cabragh (Simington 1952, 43).

#### Description (Figs. 188-9)

The two remaining floors of this gstehouse are incorporated into Mr P. Brady's farmhouse on the Rathcoole Rd. where the ground floor serves as a garage and the first floor is used for storage. It is attached to the S side of

the farmhouse and the W and S sides are pebble-dashed but the original stonework is exposed on the E. It was originally three-floored but the present owner's father removed the third floor about 50 years ago (JKAS 10 (1922-8), 304). The adjoining house itself may be a late 17th century structure but it is impossible to be certain. It is stone built and rectangular in plan with two rooms on each floor, a central staircase, splayed windows and both gables had stacks. There are blocked doors opening from the gatehouse to both floors of the house.

The masonry consists of uncoursed limestone with some dressed granite and limestone quoins. Internal dimensions at ground floor level are 3.5 by 2.5m and the centre of the barrel vault is 2.8m above ground. There is a round arched opening, almost the width of the building, on the W side while the E side had a similar opening. The jambs of the arch on the W are dressed but there are no jambs on the E and the entire wall is inserted. At the E end of the N wall is a rectangular flat lintelled opening to the stairs, now very damaged, contained in the thickness of the N wall. There is a blocked rectangular opening to the house in the N half of the wall. The stairs were lit from the N at first floor level by a small rectangular splayed slit which is also blocked by the adjoining house. There was a small loft (max. height 1m) over the ground floor which had a wooden floor supported on two stone corbels in the N wall and three on the S wall. It may have been inserted and was taken down about 50 years ago.

The walls of the first floor stand to a height of 3.15m at the gables and 1.9m along the N and S walls. There is a small blocked splayed window in the N end of the W wall. The S wall has a rectangular flat lintelled window in the centre of the wall which is partly blocked with a modern rectangular window. The E wall had a splayed lintelled window in the centre of the wall which is broken down to floor level. There is also a small blocked splayed slit to the S of this opening. The N. wall has a rectangular lintelled doorway with roughly dressed limestone jambs at the E end of the wall, leading to the stairs. The wall at this level is not as wide as on the first floor. Opposite the opening in the N half of the wall is a blocked rectangular opening to the house with one roughly dressed limestone jamb. See Hendrick-Aylmer 1899-1902, 381.

### 3. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

The extent of the possessions of Richard FitzThomas, earl of Kildare, in 1331 noted that he received the tolls of a mill at Rathmore (MacNiocaill 1964a, 103). This, or its successor, is presumably the same mill as that granted to John Travers, with the castle and manor of Rathmore, in 1546 (Morrin 1861, 116), and the mill, then waste, belonging to the 'Mannor House' in 1654 (Simington 1952, 43).

The location of the mill may have been on the river, N of the motte. There are some old farm buildings close to the river and there is collapsed masonry in the river. The



surrounding land which belongs to the house immediately E of the motte is known as the Mill Farm. To the E of the Spring on the river there is a wide depression, bounded by banks, running along the S side of the river to the Rathcoole Rd., which may be the remains of a mill race.

#### 4. CASTLE

##### Motte

The first direct references to a castle at Rathmore occur in the sixteenth century but there can be little doubt that the motte was constructed in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. The motte was the centre of a manor which generally remained in Fitzgerald hands throughout the Middle Ages. Its ownership was disputed on occasion, however. Between 1287 and 1293 John FitzThomas, later first earl of Kildare, was given all rights to Rathmore by the daughters of Maurice FitzMaurice (MacNiocaill 1964a, 31, 67, 77) but in 1305 Agnes de Valence, Maurice's widow, claimed that John FitzThomas had forcibly entered the manor of Rathmore, taken livestock and corn, and destroyed equipment and buildings (Mills 1914, 75-8, 240-1). In a rather enigmatic document of 1397, the bishop of Leighlin granted the manor of Rathmore to Gerald FitzMaurice, earl of Kildare (MacNiocaill 1964a, 146-8) and in the 1460s the ownership of the manor was disputed between the Kildares and the earls of Wiltshire (Otway-Ruthven 1968, 385-6). Rathmore, with its castle, was forfeited by the Fitzgeralds after the rebellion of Silken

Thomas in 1535. In 1538, John Kelway was appointed constable of the castle which was described as "one of the chief keys of defence" against the O'Toolas (Hendrick-Aylmer 1899-1902, 375, 377). The manor was leased to Walter Trott, vicar of Rathmore in 1541 (7 RDKPRI, 50: no. 184) and granted to John Travers in 1546 (Morrin 1861, 116). Most of the possessions forfeited in 1535 were returned to Gerald, the eleventh earl in 1554, but Rathmore was apparently not included. Instead it passed to the Chevers family who still held it in 1654 when it was referred to as the "Mannor House or Castle" (Hendrick-Aylmer 1899-1902, 374, 377; Simington 1952, 42-3).

At the beginning of this century, the motte was described as being twenty-five yards in diameter at the summit (Hendrick-Aylmer 1899-1902, 381). Gravel quarrying at the motte in the late nineteenth century resulted in a number of interesting discoveries recorded by the earl of Mayo (1896-8, 113-14). In 1893 a number of human skeletons were discovered "buried inside a ring of roundish undressed limestones", near the base of the bank. In 1894 a long stone cist, five feet long, eighteen inches wide and eighteen inches deep, was discovered "exactly 20 feet below the present grass-grown surface of the rath [sic]"; it contained a single inhumation. A layer of black ash was observed in profile at the same level as the cist; "a bluish sort of clay", containing antler, cattle, sheep and pig bones, and a little above this, another layer containing ash and bones were observed at an unstated depth.

Description (Fig. 187)

Round conical mound situated on ground which slopes downwards from S to N. It commands excellent views on all sides with the exception of the SE where Cupidstownhill blocks the view. The motte is enclosed by an inner ditch, a bank and an outer ditch. There is no evidence for a bailey but this may have been removed by quarrying on the N (Fig. 186). The steep-sided motte is 15m high from the bottom of the ditch and the basal dimension NS is 46m. The summit slopes from N to S and measures 13m N-S and 17m E-W. The inner ditch is 6.5m wide at base on the W and 7.5m wide on the E. The bank rises from 3m on the W to 7m on the E above the bottom of the ditch. It is 12m wide on the W and 18m wide on the E. The outer ditch is 17.5m wide on the W and 6m below the top of the bank. It is replaced on the S by a laneway running along the N side of the churchyard, by the road on the E, and it has been quarried away on the N. There are traces of a counter-scarp bank on the E and W sides.

5. ST. COLUMBA'S PARISH CHURCH

The earliest reference to the church of Rathmore occurs in a list of the deaneries of the diocese of Dublin, dating to the 1270s (Gilbert 1897, 141). It is clear, however, that Rathmore was already a rectory and a mother church with annexed chapels by this date (Gilbert 1897, 141-2). In 1533 the Reportorium Viride noted that there were four chapels at Rathmore, dedicated to SS. Katherine, Locham, Brigit and

Patrick (White 1941, 200). The dedication to St. Columba is first recorded in 1577 (13 RDKPRI, 53: no. 3146). In 1318, Thomas FitzJohn, earl of Kildare, granted the advowson of the church to the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, along with a messuage and fifteen acres of land in the town (Tresham 1828, 23: no. 115; McNeill 1932, 151). The Hospitallers held the church for the remainder of the medieval period, and the rectory of Rathmore is listed in the Dissolution extent of the Order's possessions (White 1943, 94). The Order leased the rectory to Thomas Alen in 1540, and on the termination of that lease it was leased to Anthony Lowe in 1571-2 (12 RDKPRI, 72: no. 2091). The tithes of the rectory were leased to Thomas Lambyn in 1589 and 1596 (16 RDKPRI, 108: no. 5381; 17 RDKPRI, 40: no. 6026). The church and chancel were in repair at the time of the royal visitation of 1615 (Ronan 1941a, 37) but were in disrepair by 1630 (Ronan 1941b, 79).

The present church and tower appear to date to the mid-eighteenth century (Lewis 1837, ii, 504-5)

Walsh/ Malon cross. 1686-9 (Fig. 190).

Latin cross of green grit with an anchor-shaped base standing at the head of a grave SE of the church. Incised inscription in Roman capitals:

I K/ HERE LIES THE BODY/ OF PEIRCE WALSH W/ HO OYED THE  
16 DAY/ OF IVNE AND IN TH/ E YEARE 1686 AND/ IOAN MALON  
HIS W/ IFE WHO/ DYED TH/ E 22 DAY AVGVST/ ANNO/ 168[9]



Dims: H. 98 W. 52 T. 7 cm

Cross. Date uncertain.

Close to the S wall of the church. Roughly shaped undecorated granite cross with vestigial arms. Date uncertain.

Dims: H.74 (min) W.35 T.25 cm.

Cross. Now missing.

Hendrick-Aylmer (1899-1902, 381) mentions the existence of a cross with a crucifixion.

Cross shaft?

E of the church, a tapering octagonal shaft of limestone lying on the ground. The base and top are broken.

Dims. H. 102 W. 24-20 Chamfers 11-9 cm

## 6. LIST OF STRAY FINDS

1. Long stone cist containing skeleton. Discovered in 'mote' at Rathmore, 1894. JKAS 2 (1896-8), 112; JRSAL 34 (1904), 321.

2. Bronze bracelet. Found in 1905 "in the rampart which encircles the base of the great pagan tumulus, or moat, at Rathmore, Co. Kildare". JKAS 4 (1903-5), 498.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Rathmore is a good example of a deserted medieval

borough. The placename evidence and the dedication of the church to St. Columba indicate that it was a pre-Norman settlement and it is likely that this is what attracted the Anglo-Normans to settle here. The borough was established at an early stage in the Anglo-Norman invasion, probably before 1200 and it appears to have been a sizeable settlement in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It may have started to decline before 1400 but the documentary evidence indicates that it was only completely abandoned after its burnings in the late sixteenth century.

The motte is one of the finest in the country but it is unfortunate that its immediate environment is scarred by the quarry to the north. The precise extent of the settlement is unknown but it can be suggested that it focussed on the motte and church, and may have stretched northwards as far as Segrave's castle. This suggestion needs to be tested by excavation, however.

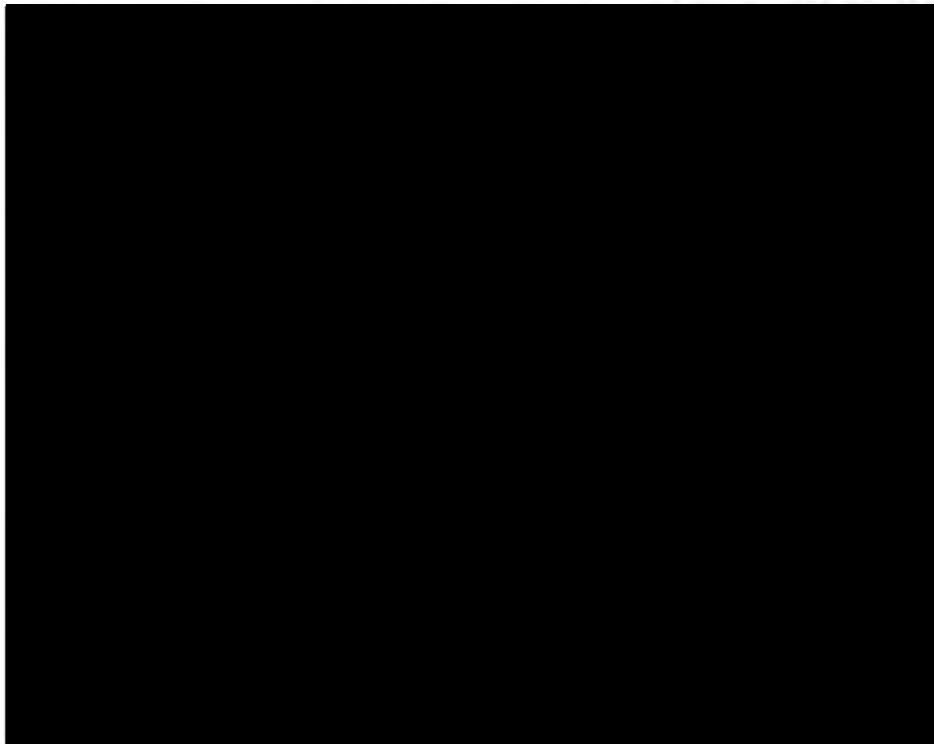
Apart from the quarry and the houses near the cross-roads, there is little evidence for disturbance within the suggested borough site, and, in common with other medieval boroughs, it is to be expected that archaeological remains survive below ground, particularly in the form of house foundations, pits and debris scatters. Accordingly there is the potential to discover the extent of the medieval settlement, and the nature of its houses and streets.

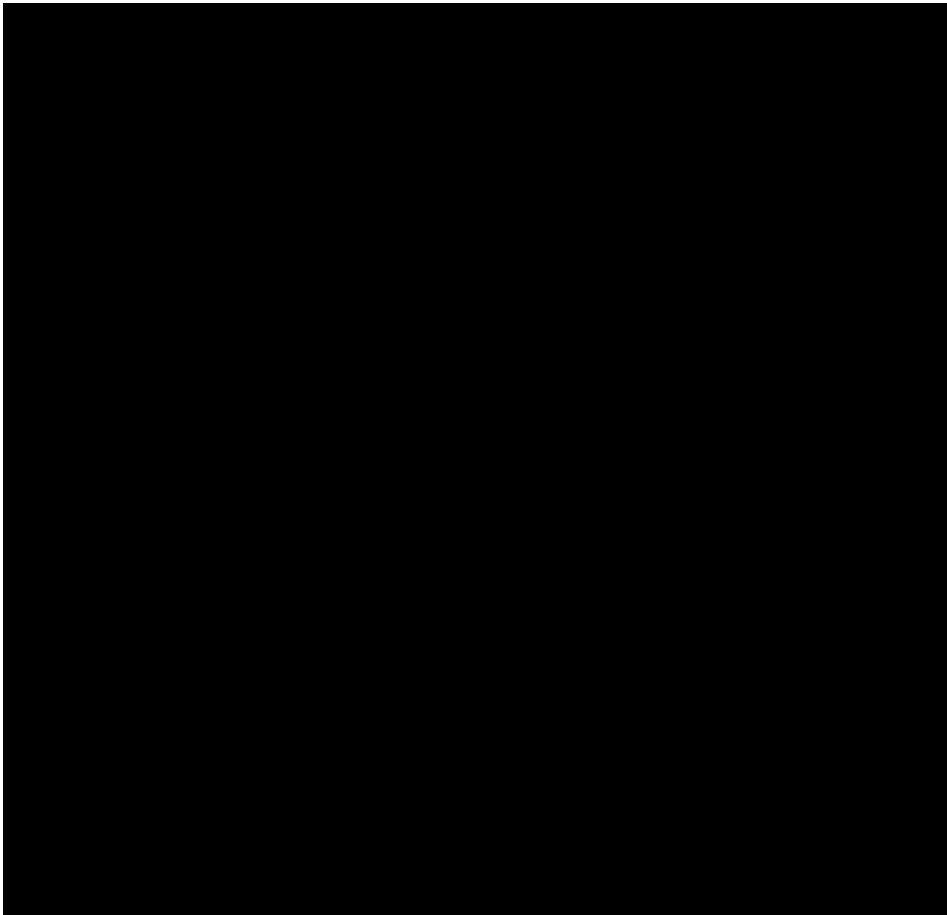
In summary, the archaeological data indicates that the borough, which began as a settlement during the Early

Christian period, was occupied throughout the Middle Ages. Documentary records of the site are few and in the future archaeological excavation is likely to be the principal means by which additional knowledge can be obtained. The borough is not under any immediate pressure of development.

#### Area of Archaeological Potential

The shaded portion of the accompanying map (Fig. 191) delimits the area of archaeological potential within Rathmore. Because there is a lack of information at present on the precise extent of the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.





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## SILLIOTHILL

Silliothill is a townland about 2Klm south of Kildare town and is the site of a thirteenth century borough.

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The royal escheator's accounts for the bishopric of Kildare, during a vacancy in the see from 1272-76, include an account of £11 10s. 3d. for burgage rents in 'Selyok', identified by Devitt (1918-21, 417) as Silliothill. There is a second townland named Silliothill in county Kildare but it is located near Harristown, about eight miles to the east, and is unlikely to be the site of medieval 'Selyok', which was clearly close to Kildare. Selyok formed part of the bishop's manor of Kildare (36 RDKPRI, 60) but the archbishop of Dublin had possessions there valued at 20s. yearly in 1302-6 (Sweetman 1875-86, v, 238). The fate of the borough is unknown but the absence of documentary references suggests that it was abandoned in the fourteenth century.

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1. SITE OF BOROUGH
2. CASTLE
3. OTHER FEATURES

### 1. SITE OF BOROUGH

There is neither archaeological, cartographic or documentary evidence for the exact site of the borough. The only archaeological site is a D-shaped enclosure on top of a low hill in the adjacent townland of Grey Abbey. One may hazard the guess that the borough was situated in its vicinity.

### 2. CASTLE

In 1537 Thomas Burke of Castlecurrey granted "the castle or messuage of Silliat" to James Butler, later the earl of Ormond (Curtis 1933-43, iv, 172). The earl bequeathed "the towne of Sellat" to his son Edmond in 1546 (Curtis 1933-43, iv, 293). The castle was ruinous by 1588 when it was leased to Eustace Harte (16 RDKPRI, 85: no. 5258), and in 1602, when leased to Patrick Sarsfeilde of Tully, it was again described as "ruinous". The exact site of the castle is unknown but it may have been located within the enclosure described below

### 3. OTHER FEATURES

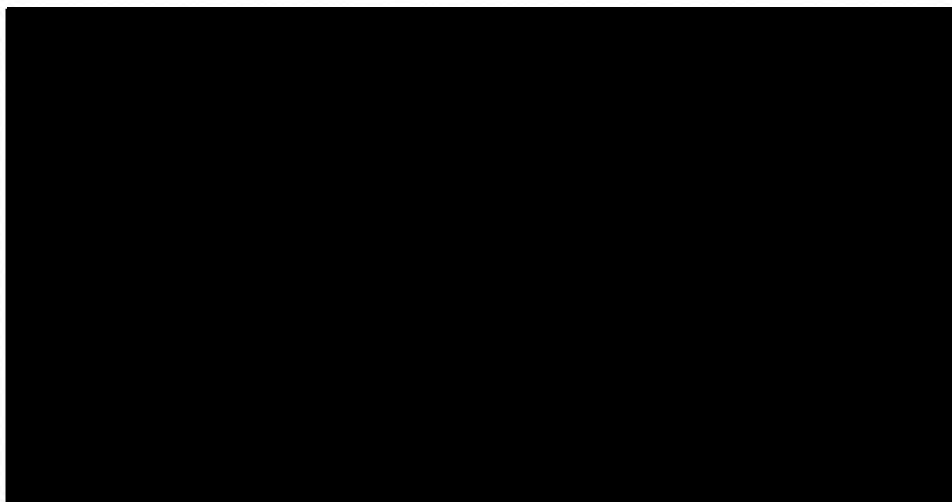
#### Enclosure.

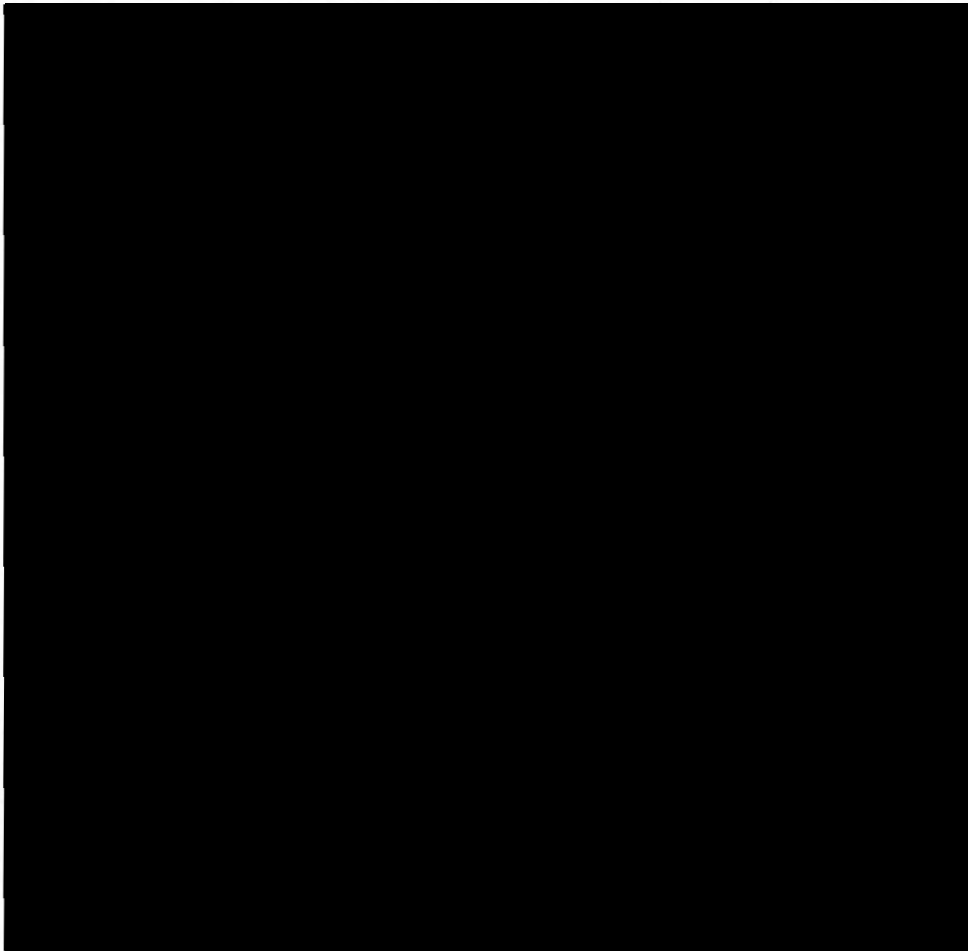
Situated on top of Silliothill with excellent views of Kildare town. Roughly D-shaped in plan, but densely overgrown. Enclosed by a bank, 2m wide, which rises to a height of about 1.5m above the interior. The external ditch averages 6m in width, and has a depth of 4.5m below the top

of the bank. There are slight traces of a counterscarp bank on the NE, N, NW and SW. The SE side may have been removed.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Silliothill is perhaps the most enigmatic of Kildare's medieval boroughs. Known from only a single reference, its origins, founder and location remain obscure. Examination of Silliothill townland revealed only one feature which might have acted as the focus for the borough and an area of archaeological potential has been delimited around this on the accompanying map (Fig. 192). It is unclear what one should expect to find associated with this borough, and because there is such a lack of information at present on the borough it is suggested that all works within the shaded area be monitored.





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3. Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine, 1911, 4, 1, 1-10.
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9. Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine, 1911, 4, 1, 1-10.
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PR1A - Proceedings of BIBLIOGRAPHY

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JRSAI Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of  
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PRIA Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy.

RDKPRI Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records,  
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