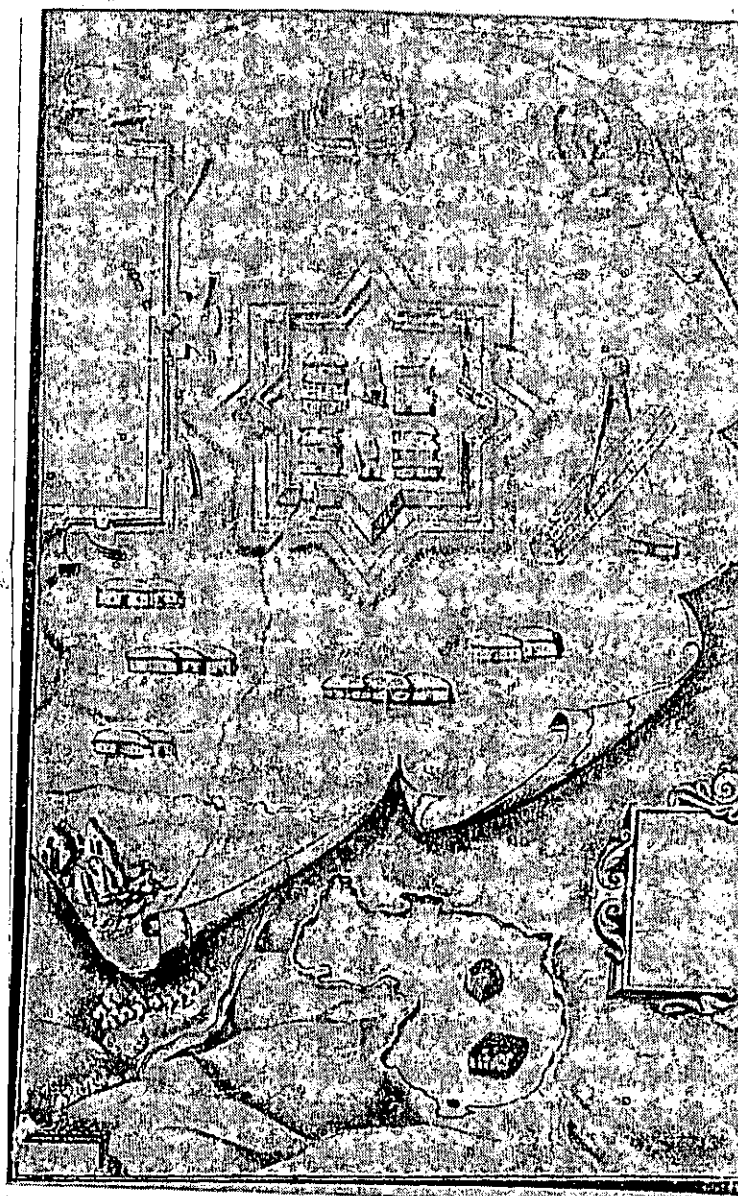# COUNTY MONAGHAN



# URBAN ARCHAEOLOGY
# SURVEY

URBAN ARCHAEOLOGY SURVEY

PART XXV

COUNTY MONAGHAN

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AND

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A REPORT COMMISSIONED BY THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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 desireable, 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, religous 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 deposts 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
(1981) 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. MONAGHAN

Towns came to the county relatively late in the history of Ireland. The Vikings never settled here, the Anglo-Normans made a partly successful attempt, and apart from the possibility of Clones, there were no centres which could have developed into monastic towns. Effectively it was not until the plantation period that towns were built in Monaghan and then it was as part of a policy of colonization.

The Anglo-Normans attempted to penetrate the county in the years after 1200 and succeeded in established motte and bailey castles at Clones, Donaghmoyne and Inishkeen. No settlement followed in the wake of this attempted conquest, however, and no towns or boroughs were established. Towns only arrived in Monaghan in the wake of the English plantation and even then it was only one town of any consequence that was established: Monaghan itself. The lack of towns in the county may be due in part to the fact that Monaghan was the only Ulster county which was not systematically planted but was left instead to private individuals to attempt small-scale colonizations.

It is primarily then with Monaghan that the urban archaeologist is especially concerned but that is not to say that sites such as Castleblaney are unimportant. It was not an incorporated town in the seventeenth century and so it simply falls outside our brief.

This report provides an account of the archaeological remains in Monaghan town, and it provides an assessment of its importance to archaeological research. It outlines the areas where archaeological deposits are likely to survive and highlights the town´s potential to increase our knowledge of the development of urban life in Ireland. Finally, recommendations are made as to how this potential can be best realized. In the map outlining the zone of archaeological potential the following colour code is used:

Pink: the zone of archaeological potential.

Red: extant archaeological monuments.

Purple: sites of known monuments.

Uncontrolled redevelopment can destroy a town´s fragile archaeological heritage 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.

## MONAGHAN

The county town of Monaghan is situated in the centre-north of the county, astride the main roads from Dublin to Derry and from Belfast to the midlands. The name is an anglicization of Muineachan "hilly place".

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Monaghan's rise to prominence is due to the fact that shortly after the shiring of the county in 1585 it was selected as the county town. The reason for this seems to be based in part on military strategy and in part on the presence of an existing settlement. The Dublin government required a garrison in north Monaghan, set roughly midway between Newry and Enniskillen, if it was to contain the power of the northern chiefs, especially O'Neill. The reason why this garrison was posted at Monaghan rather than Glaslough or Clones is more difficult to fathom. It is clear, however, that in the sixteenth century Monaghan was the site of a MacMahon castle and of a Franciscan friary and it is possible that there was a small settlment in the vicinity.

Livingstone (1980, 475) suggests that the crannog in Convent Lake had become a MacMahon stronghold by 1335 but on

what evidence is unstated. From the late fifteenth century, however, it is clear that the MacMahon's had a castle at Monaghan. It is first referred to in 1492 when it is described as "caislen" (AFM, AU) but in 1496 when Glaisne MacMathghamhna was slain there it is described as his "house (teach) at Monaghan" (AU). It is referred to again in 1501 (AU).

The Franciscan friary was founded in 1462 and together with the castle it may have formed a settlement nucleus. It may well be the "baile" of MacMathghamhna which was burnt in 1496 shortly after the slaying of Glaisne MacMathghamhna (AU). The presence of some form of small settlement might explain the 1531 reference to the "abandonment" of Monaghan on the approach of government forces, under the earl of Kildare (AFM), en route to Tir Eoghain. The effect of this particular governement campaign was evidenced the following year when MacMathghamhna accompanied the government forces under Sir William Skeffington into Tir Eogain which resulted in the sack of Dungannon. In 1540, according to the Annals of the Four Masters, Monaghan was captured and destroyed by the Lord Leonard Grey. This annalistic entry is suspicious, however, because it seems to duplicate the entry for 1589, and is probably an interpolation in the annals (see Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 255). The possibility of a 1540 sack should not be dismissed, however, since it is known that Grey was campaigning in the area against O'Neill and O'Donnell who were harbouring Gerald FitzGerald, the younger brother of the executed Silken Thomas.

The first English attempts at encroachment in Monaghan began in 1576 when the earl of Essex, who had been campaigning in east Ulster, was granted the barony of Farney. Farney was one of the most important routeways from the Pale into central Ulster and it had been claimed for some time that it was crown land. The ostensible reason for granting it to Essex, however, was that it had been forfeited through the rebellion of Shane O'Neill. Essex died in December of 1576 and so his attempts at colonization came to nothing. Longford had been shired in 1571 and in 1579 "O'Reilly's Country" was shired as County Cavan. This shiring was fairly nominal but it did admit English jurisdiction, a sherrif and English courts. In 1585 Monaghan was shired and four years later the lord deputy, Sir William FitzWilliam, took advantage of a succession feud among the MacMahons. Aodh Ruadh the successor to the MacMahonship as king of Oirghialla, was captured, tried before a packed jury and executed at Monaghan in September/ October 1590 (MacDuinnshleibhe 1955). FitzWilliam sacked the Franciscan friary, killed the guardian and five friars, and imposed the pliant Patrick MacMahon on Oirghialla. He followed this up by the instalation of a garrison and, in 1591, by the abolition of the MacMahonship and the redefinition of the landholding structure within Monaghan in accordance with English law. It was as a consequence of these actions that Monaghan was excluded from the Ulster plantation and was the only Ulster county which was not systematically planted in the early seventeenth century. Instead it was to experience a gradual colonial

infiltration of small-scale private plantations in the years before 1650 (Duffy 1981, 2).

The English garrison remained in the friary at Monaghan until 1595 when Patrick MacMahon defected to O´Neill after Bagenal´s defeat at Clontibret. Seven years later, however, in 1602 Monaghan was recaptured by Sir John Berkley and MacMahon returned to the English side. In 1604 Sir Edward Blayney was appointed seneschal and two years later in 1606 he was granted extensive lands around Monaghan and what subsequently became Castle Blayney (Duffy 1981, 14 and fig. 5). Blayney stationed a company of foot soldiers at Monaghan and built a small fort. The infant settlement was visited in 1606 by Sir John Davies, the attorney general, who left the following account of it:

> "We come to the town of Monaghan which doth not deserve the name of a good village, consisting of divers, scattered cabins or cottages, whereof the most part was possessed by the cast soldiers of that garrison. In the northmost part thereof, there is a little fort, which is kept by the foot company of Sir Edward Blayney, who is seneschal or governor of the county by patent. In the midst of this village there is a foundation of a new castle, which being raised ten or twelve feet from the ground, and so left and neglected for the space of two years, is now ready to fall into ruin again" (quoted in Livingstone 1980, 98)

By 1611, however, Monaghan had obviously grown because it

was included on the proposed list of towns for incorporation. In 1613 it duly received its charter. The corporation was to consist of a provost, 12 free burgesses, an indefinite number of freemen, a recorder and two sergeants at mace. By 1640 the town had up to 100 houses (Livingstone 1980, 477) and, in the census of c.1659, it had an adult population of 32 English and Scots and 101 Irish giving it a total of 133.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY

1.  STREETS AND STREET PATTERN

2.  MARKET PLACE

    MARKET CROSS

3.  DOMESTIC HOUSES

4.  SCHOOLHOUSE

5.  TOWN DEFENCES

6.  CASTLE

7.  FORT

8.  PARISH CHURCH

9.  FRANCISCAN FRIARY

10. MISCELLANEOUS

11. SITES IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY

12. LIST OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRAY FINDS

## 1. STREETS AND STREET PATTERN

One early seventeenth century map of Monaghan is of particular relevance to any discussion of the street pattern. This is a plan of the "towne and castel of Monaghan" prepared for Sir Edward Blaney and now in Trinity College Dublin (Ms. 1209 (32), a rendering of which is illustrated in fig. 4. No date is given on the map but the likelihood is that it dates to c.1611-13. Although no orientation is given the map appears to be oriented N-S, and is so regarded in the following description. The map shows a rectangular area enclosed by a ditched rampart with a castle at its centre. The castle dominates a rectangular market place from which streets run to the west, north and east. Half-way along the western street, a street runs to the south parallel to the long axis of the castle. The castle itself is set within a bawn and behind are show elaborately arranged gardens with fishponds behind. The whole presents the impression of a classic Renaissance town design.

The reality, however, is quite different. The plan of Monaghan today shows none of this Renaissance regularlity and is so different from the map that one must propose three explantions. Firstly, that the town portrayed is not Monaghan. Secondly, that the map shows the layout of a proposed town rather than what was actually built. Thirdly, that the cartographer tidied up the layout of the town on the ground in order to make it look more regular than it actually was. Regarding the first and second propositions one may note

that there are sufficient similarities with the real town to accept that it is a plan of Monaghan. In particular, the size and shape of the Diamond, the position of the castle (see below), the alignment of Mill St to the west, Dublin St to the east, and Glaslough St (or perhaps the lane running from the NW corner of the Diamond) on the north. The real problem arises in identifying the long N-S street and the outline of the town defences (see below).

Before discussing this point further it should be pointed out that clear intrusions are known to have occurred to the seventeenth century plan. Church Square, for instance, was carved out of the open plots behind Mill St in the second half of the eighteenth century (Livingstone 1980, 480). The obvious candidate then for the N-S street of the TCD map in the modern town is Dawson St. There is a problem here, however, in that Dawson Street appears to have been built in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries. The TCD map shows a string of houses, which presumably had long plots behind them like their counterparts in Mill Street and Dublin Street, running down both sides of the street. One look at the modern map, or indeed the O.S. 1st edition, will show that there is no such plot pattern along Dawson Street. There is such a plot pattern, however, along Park Street and one can only conclude that this is the N-S street of the TCD map. If this is the case, and it seems to be so, then it can be seen that Sir Edward Blaney's cartographer took considerable liberties with the layout of the town and it can only be presumed that this map was prepared for presentation rather

than for record.

It would appear then, from the above discussion, that the original seventeenth century streets of Monaghan are Dublin St, the Diamond, Mill St, Park St, Market St, and probably Glaslough St.


## 2. MARKET PLACE

In 1611 Sir Edward Blayney obtained the grant of a market and fair (Livingstone 1980, 476). The market place was the Diamond around which the town was laid out. A secondary market was evidently established on the west of the town, where the Market House stands. This is probably of late eighteenth century date as is Old Cross Sq, where the shambles were placed.


Market Cross

This is now located in Old Cross Square but it was originally in the Diamond. The monument consists of a stepped base, a square chamfered stem and a polygonal head. The head contains four cupped, sun dial faces, each of which contains a socket for a metal gnomon. In the existing reconstruction, however, the head was placed upside down. The original working of the dial is explained by McMahon and Walsh (1982, 16). It is an early example of a sundial cross and is probably of seventeenth century date. MI: p. x.

## 3. DOMESTIC HOUSES

Sir John Davies' account of 1606 describes Monaghan as "consisting of divers, scattered cabins or cottages, whereof the most part was possessed by the cast soldiers of that garrison" (quoted in Livingstone 1980, 98). This is precisely the depiction which is shown on the map of Monaghan fort by Richard Barthelet, prepared c.1602-3 (fig. 3), where scattered cabins are shown on the slope below the fort. The TCD map of c.1611-13 (fig. 4) shows an assortment of rectangular houses some aligned with their long axis parallel to the street, others with it aligned perpendicularly. No trace of any of these structures survives.

## 4. SCHOOL

Lewis (1837, ii, 384) states that the diocesan school for Raphoe, Kilmore and Clogher was erected in Monaghan during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. While it is technically possible that a school was founded between the recapture of Monaghan in 1602 and the queen's death in 1603, it seems unlikely, particularly when one recalls that the actual foundation of the town does not really seem to have commenced until after 1606. Lewis is probably referring to the Elizabethan act which permitted the setting up of diocesan schools throughout the country. The succesor of this school was moved to St Mary's Hill in 1827 (Livingstone 1980, 482).

## 5. TOWN DEFENCES

The only source for the outline of the town defences is the Jacobean map in Trinity College Dublin (fig. 4), discussed above in relation to the street pattern. As explained it is difficult to reconcile this map with the real layout of the town and the cartographer evidently took considerable liberties in preparing his diagram. The town defences are shown as a regular rectangle with angle bastions, a gate in each wall and pentangular bastions in the centre of the north and west walls. Outside this the map shows a fosse which was at least partly water filled because it connects with a lake on the south side. In the absence of surviving traces it is impossible to translate the information on the TCD map onto the modern town plan. One point may be noted, however, and that is the long boundary forming the end of the burgage plots on the east side of Dublin Street, a similar boundary on the north of Mill Street, another on the east and south-east side of Park Street and Market Street, and finally the townland boundary south of the Court House, running west from Dawson St. These are all major boundary features and may preserve, in some areas, the former outline of the wall. The only way of determining this is by archaeological excavation. MI:1220.

## 6. CASTLE

The MacMahon Castle

As outlined in the introductory background above, there

is evidence for a MacMahon castle at Monaghan from 1492 and it is normally believed that this was constructed on the crannog in Convent Lake. This is largely because of the depictions on the Barthelet map of c.1602-3 (fig. 3) and a sixteenth century map in the Public Record Office, London (MPF 81), illustrated in JRSAI lxxxvii (1957) opp. p. 122. See below : Mullaghmonaghan Td. Crannog 1.

## Sir Edward Blayney's Castle

Shortly after his arrival in Monaghan Sir Edward Blayney commenced building a fortified house using stone materials derived from the Franciscan friary (Anal. Hib. vi, 35-6). Davies, in 1606, described it as the:

> "foundation of a new castle, which being raised ten or twelve feet from the ground, and so left and neglected for the space of two years, is now ready to fall into ruin again" (quoted in Livingstone 1980, 98)t

An account of 1611 describes it as:

> "a fayre castle buylte at Monaghan on the king's charge wherein Sr. Edward Blanye nowe dwells, who for makinge of it more convenient for himselfe for his owne tyme hath layde out good somes of money of his owne" (Hunter 1975, 81)

In fact Blayney is recorded as having spent £1200 on the castle, a very considerable sum at the time. These accounts presumably describe the fortified house shown on the TCD map

of Monaghan of c.1611-13. In that map the castle is shown as a rectangular structure with bastion like corner towers and is very similar in plan to the fortified palace built by Bishop John Lesley at Raphoe, Co. Donegal (Lacy et al. 1983). The TCD map (fig. 4) shows that the castle was situated within a rectangular bawn with a gate at the north and turrets at the NW and SE angles. South of the castle the map also shows carefully laid out gardens and fish ponds.

The site of this castle was pointed out in 1815 as being on the Diamond opposite Glasslough Street (O.S. Letters, 52), a position which fits in precisely with shown on the TCD map of c.1611-13. The last visible remains were taken down around 1853 (McMahon and Walsh 1982, 7). MI:1219.


## 7. FORT

Monaghan was the site of a fort built c.1602-3 (Hayes McCoy 1960, 16). On Barthelet's map this is depicted as a regular eight-pointed star-shaped fort (fig. 3). Within it are shown fourteen thatched houses, regularly arranged. The defences all appear to have been of earth. According to local tradition it was located near the site of the County Hospital on top of the ridge known as Mullaghmonaghan (OS Letters, 53). An account of 1815 states that all that was left of it then was a small mound (ibid.). The modern O.S. maps show a mound near the reputed position. MI:1217.

8. PARISH CHURCH

The original parish church of Monaghan appears to have been at Rackwallace, about 4km SE of the town (O.S. Letters, 49). The church here was rebuilt in 1622. The parish church does not appear to have moved into the town until the eighteenth century. The present church was erected in 1836 beside the former building which is shown on the O.S. 1st edition.

9. FRANCISCAN FRIARY

This was begun in 1462 while Feidhlimidh MacMathgamna was king of Airghialla. The convent adopted the observant reform in 1567 and the friars continued here until 1589 when it was plundered by an English force under Sir William FitzWilliam. During this sack the gurardian and five friars were killed. The materials of the friary were used by Sir Edward Blayney to build his castle in the town (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 255). MI:1173.

The remains of the ruined friary are shown on Barthelet's map of c.1602-3 (fig. 3) where they can be seen to occupy the ridge across from the fort, with a stream in between, probably that linking Peter's Lake with Convent Lake, now culverted. This position would place it roughly in the spot where Sir Edward Blayney later built his castle. This location is supported by a description of 1815 which recounted that what was said to be "the remains of the old

abbey" stood to the rear of the castle site (O.S. Letters, 52). In addition burials have been found on at least two occasions, once before 1815 (O.S. Letters, 52; Lewis 1837, ii, 384) and a second time in the 1940s (MI: 1198) in Church Square. This position would be correct in relation to the firary site since it was normal to positin the monastic burial ground to the north of the church.

The friary is shown on a sixteenth century sketch as a long aisleless building with a slender tower (JRSAI lxxxvii (1957), pl. opp. p. 122) and Mooney (1955, 141) has attempted an analysis of this drawing.


## 10. MISCELLANEOUS

### Ruined structure

Barthelet´s drawing of c.1602-3 (fig. 3) shows a circular ruined structure to the rear of the star-shaped fort. Since the view would appear to be taken from the east, this would place the ruined structure in Mullaghadun Td. It may have been a ringfort.


### Alleged Early Monastic Site

According to Archdall (1786), who derived his information from unpublished manuscripts of Sir James Ware, the Franciscan Friary was established on the site of an ancient abbey. These references in fact relate to Muckno, Co. Monaghan (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 398).

11. SITES IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY

Killydrutan. Megalithic tomb. MI:23. SMR:13:7.

Killydrutan. Ringfort. MI:879. SMR:9:50.

Kilnacloy Td. Possible ringfort.
Only half of this feature is shown on the O.S. map, the
northern half having been destroyed by the construction of
the North Road and railway. Not in SMR.

Cornecassa Demense. Ringfort.
Univallate. Indicated by a ring of hachures on the O.S. map.
Located in marshy ground. Not in SMR.

Mullaghmonaghan Td. Crannog 1. MI:134.
This site now consits of an overgrown island in a drumlin
lake, located in the grounds of the St Louis Convent.
Barthelet´s map of c.1602-3 shows the island to have been
palisaded with a large cruciform structure placed within it
(fig. 3). The crannog is also illustrated in a sixteenth
century map, where it is called "Macmahounes house" (JRSAI
lxxxvii (1957), pl. opp. p. 122).

Mullaghmonaghan Td. Crannog 2.
An early seventeenth century illustration of Convent Lake
shows a second crannog, consisting of a palisaded enclosure
with a single thatched cottage placed within it (fig. 3). It
is now submerged. Not in SMR.

Roosky. ?Barrow.
Site indicated by a ring of hachures on the O.S. map. Not

12. LIST OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRAY FINDS

According to a report of 1815 several silver coins were found at the site of the fort, among which was one of James I (1603-25). This report also adds that "some years ago there was dug up in the meadows near the river an antique brass spur, similar to those in Trinity College Museum" (O.S. Letters, Lewis 1837, ii, 384). the whereabouts of these objects is unknown.

In the National Museum of Ireland is a bronze flat axehead "highly decoratd on both faces and with a cable pattern at the edges". From Monaghan, Co. Monaghan. NMI: P.333.


ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL

Monaghan is important to archaeological research because it is a fine example of an average sized seventeenth century plantation town. More particularly its importance lies in the fact that the settler community was small and town appears to have had an "Irish" character, as the depiction of its thatched houses and the composition of its population implies. It would be interesting to determine if this Irish character continued through the seventeenth century and to compare the built form of the towm with that of the more deliberately planted centres, such as Derry and Coleraine.

There seem to have been at least two plantation forts at

Monaghan, albeit successively. The first of these, if we can
go by the documentary evidence, was located on the site of
the medieval Franciscan Friary and was garrisoned from
1590-95. The second was built on the ridge of Mullaghmonaghan
in 1602-3 and parts of it survived, if only as earthen
mounds, until the beginning of the last century. Nothing is
known about the layout of the first fort but the plan of the
second survives in a drawing made by Richard Barthelet not
long after it was built (fig. 3). The archaeological
excavation of these forts would reveal important information
about their form and construction and allow them to be
compared more fully with the other evidence known from Ulster
(see Gowen 1980).

Much of the street pattern of the seventeenth century
town appears to survive. We emphasize "appears" because of
the difficulties of reconciling the modern street pattern
with that shown on the oldest map of the town (fig. 4), as
discussed above. Dublin Street, The Diamond, Glaslough
Street, Mill Street, Park Street and Market Street, all apear
to be of seventeenth century origin. If Monaghan is to retain
its image as a historic town, it is important that these
streets should be retained and their pattern interfered with
as little as possible.

The course of the town defences of Monaghan in plantation
times remains a complete puzzle. The early seventeenth
century TCD map (fig. 4) leaves one in no doubt but that
Monaghan was defended by ditched ramparts with angle bastions

and pentangular bastions on two of the long sides. No trace of these considerable earthworks survives today. Some modern long boundaries have been mentioned above which may preserve the course of these defences, but ultimately this is something which can only be determined by archaeological excavation.

It is important to remember also that the actual plantation town itself was developed on an already occupied site which possessed a castle, probably on the island in Convent Lake, and the Franciscan Friary on the ridge overlooking it. It is quite likely that there was some form of Gaelic settlement in its vicinity.

No house remains of pre-1700 date survive within the town but something can be said of their form from an examination of seventeenth century maps. Almost certainly, however, the foundations of some of these houses survive below ground level today. In particular one would expect that the foundations of the large fortified house, or castle, which Sir Edward Blayney built for himself, must survive in the area just to the south of the Diamond.

In summary then it can be said that the documentary records relating to Monaghan prior to 1700 are limited and in the future archaeology is likely to be the most important means of learning about the town's past and of understanding the character and detailed form of the town today. The protection of buried archaeological evidence is accordingly of importance and this is best 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. 2) delimits the area of archaeological potential within modern Monaghan. This comprises the area of the seventeenth century town, together with an area around the site of Mullaghmonaghan Fort, and a penumbra zone (or catchment area) just outside the seventeenth century town to allow for the possibility of extra-mural development. Within this area the main disturbance to archaeological deposits has occurred along the street frontage as a result of the rebuilding of houses here in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Elsewhere, however, deposits are likely to survive and there is the strong likelihood of recovering house foundations, refuse pits, industrial areas, and workshops of seventeenth century date. Outside of the town those monuments listed in section 7 above, which fall within the area of this map, are also outlined and should be protected. Further information on these sites is available on the files of the Sites and Monuments Record and the Archaeological Survey, at the Office of Public Works, Dublin.
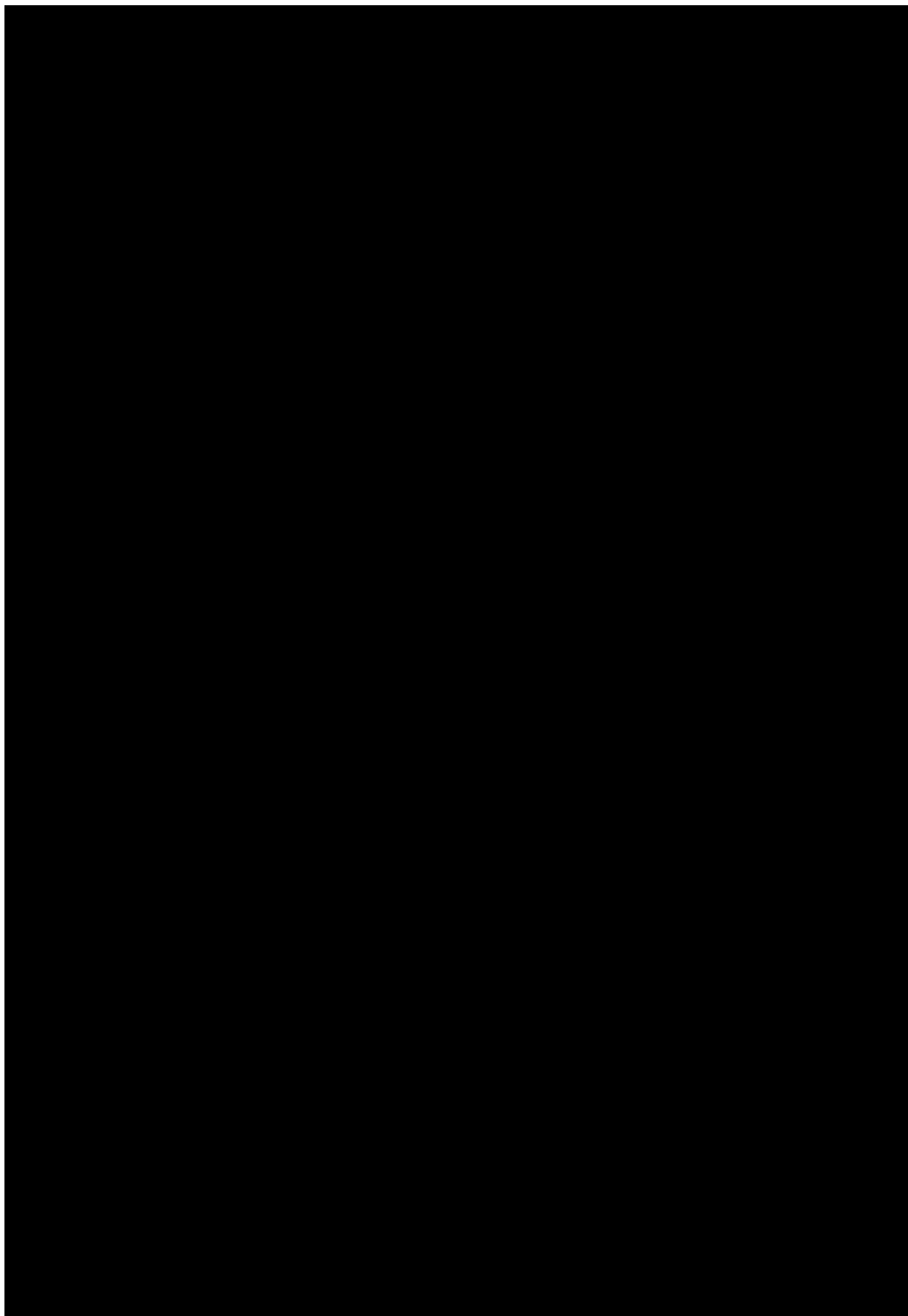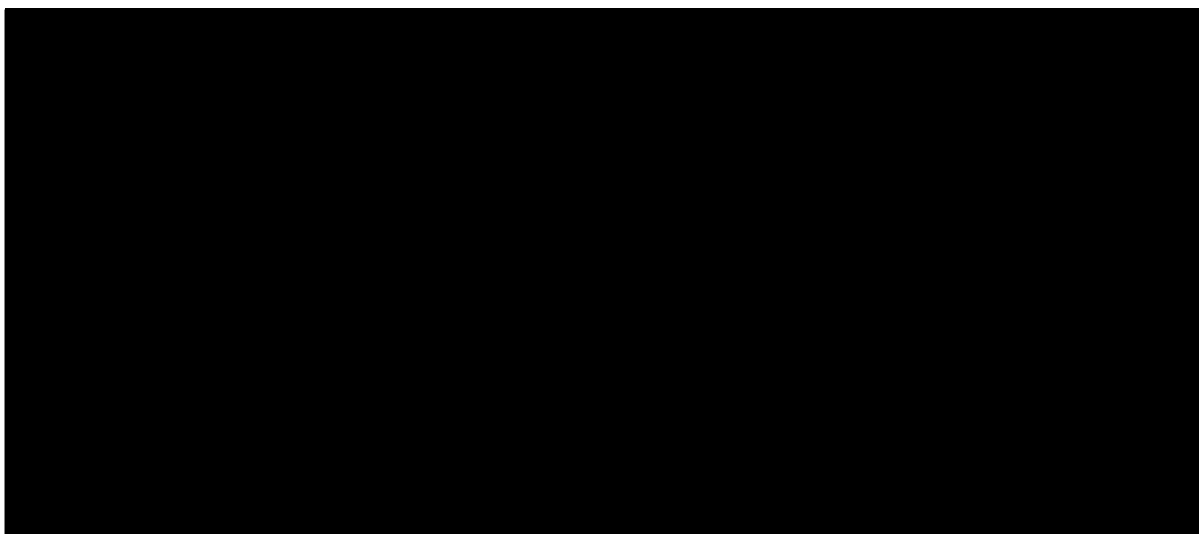
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## Abbreviations

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AFM: Annals of the Four Masters, ed. J. O´Donovan, 7 vols. Dublin 1851.

AU: Annals of Ulster, ed. W. M. Hennessy and B. MacCarthy, 4 vols. Dublin 1887-1901.

Journals

JRSAI Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.

Other Abbreviations

MI  : Monaghan Inventory (see Brindley 1986, below)

NLI : National Library of Ireland

OS  : Ordnance Survey

TCD : Trinity College Dublin.

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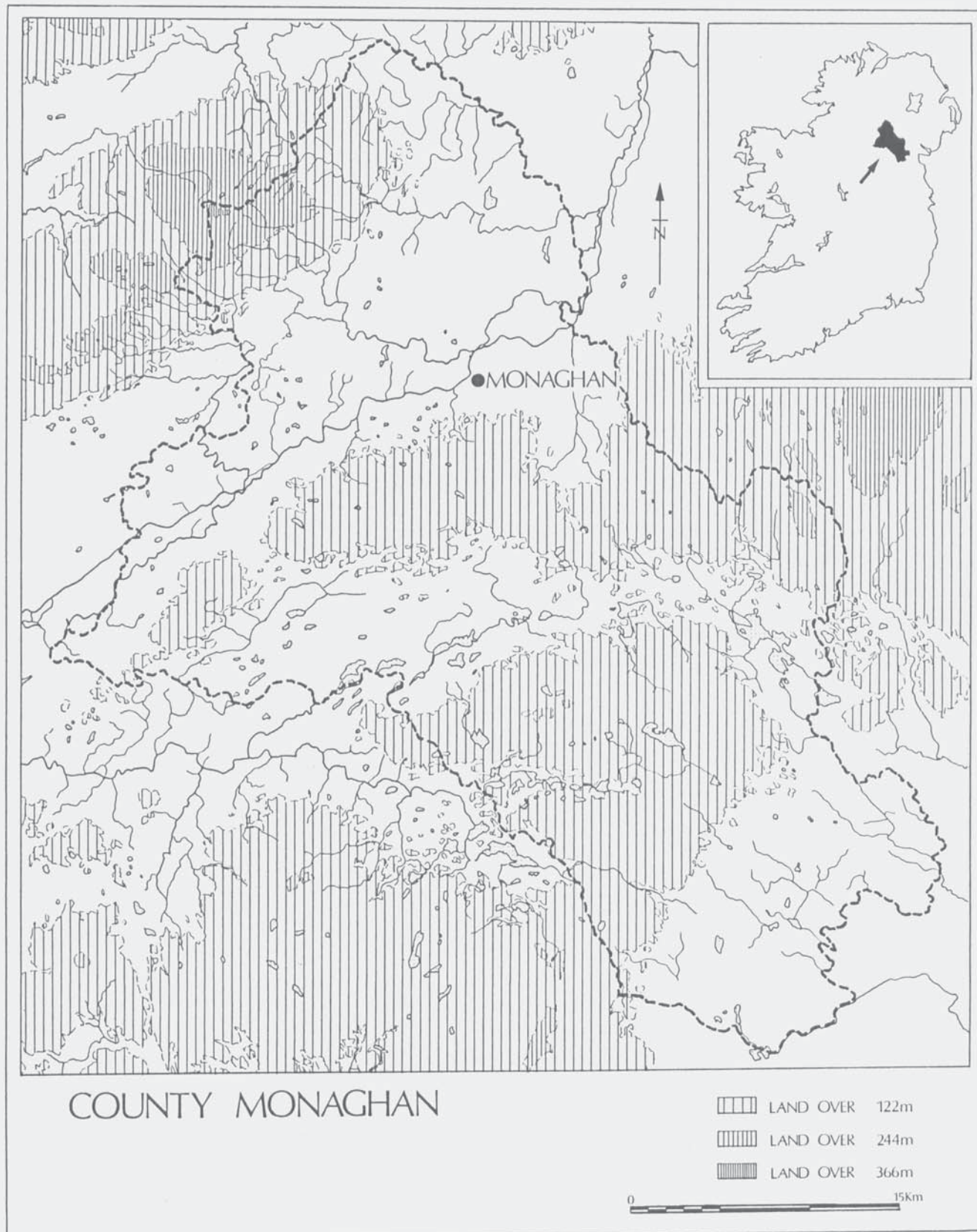"Franciscan architecture in pre-Reformation Ireland", JRSAI
lxxxv, 133-73.

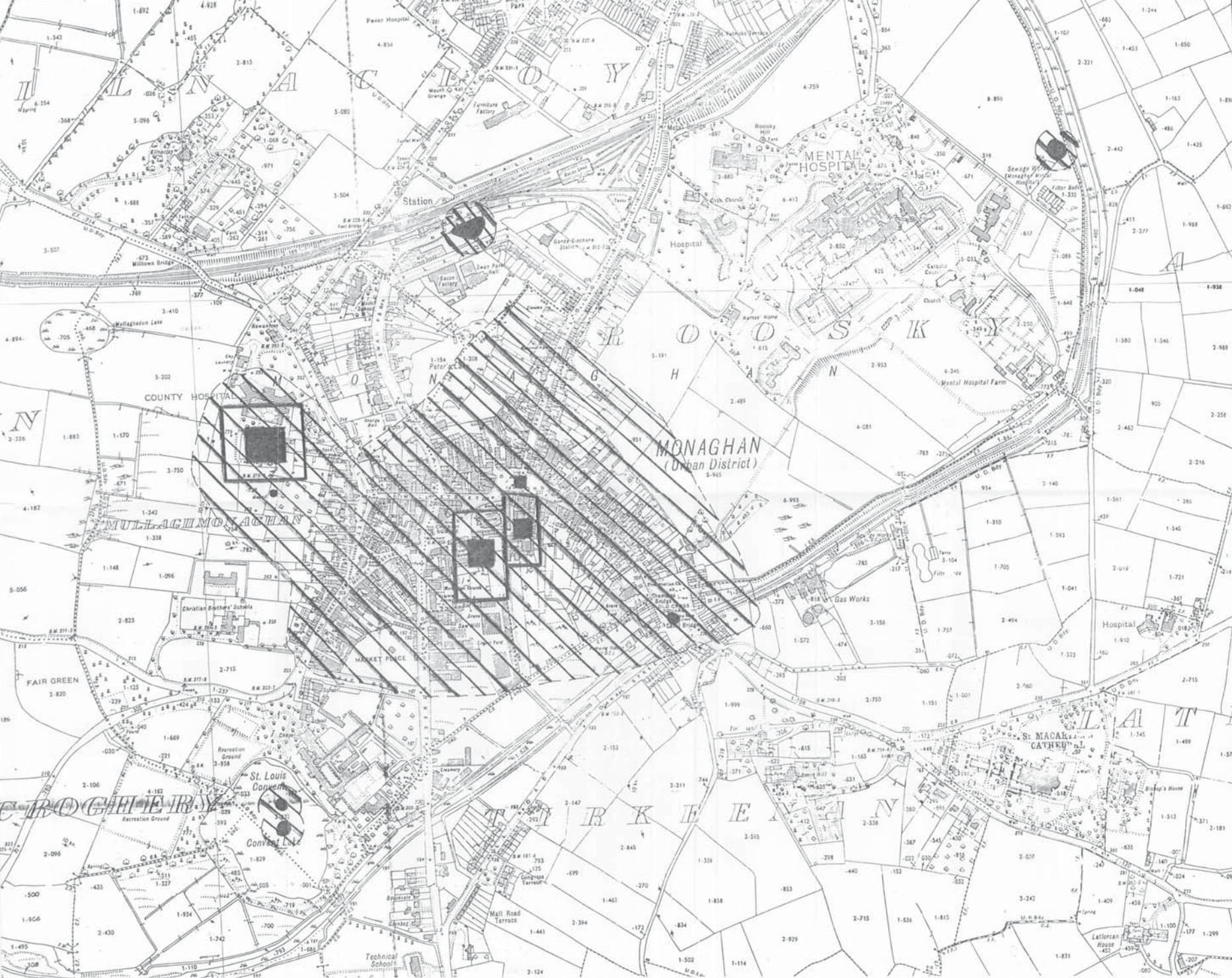Fig. 1. County Monaghan: Location map of Monaghan town.

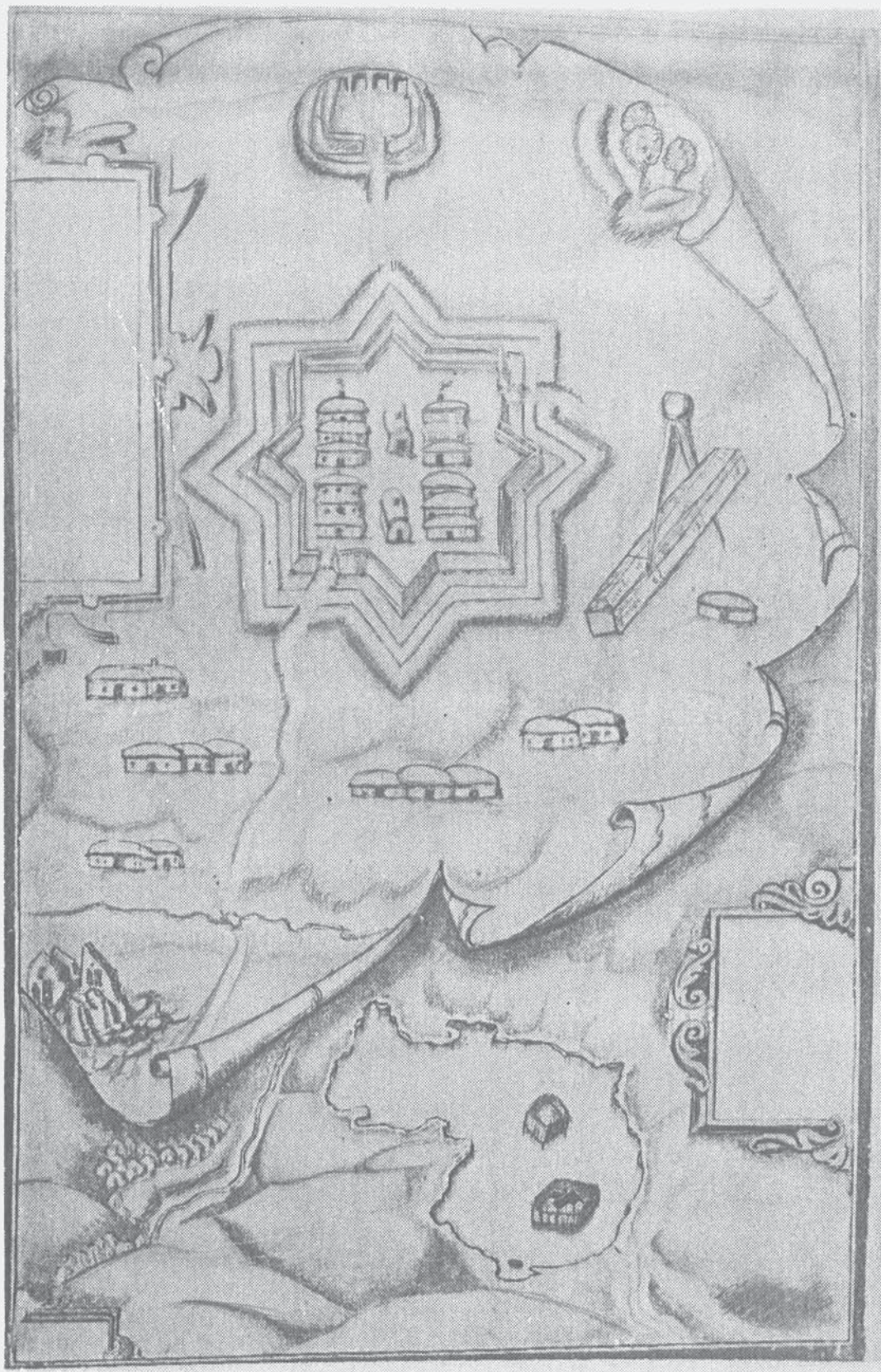Fig 2: Monaghan: Zone of archaeological potential

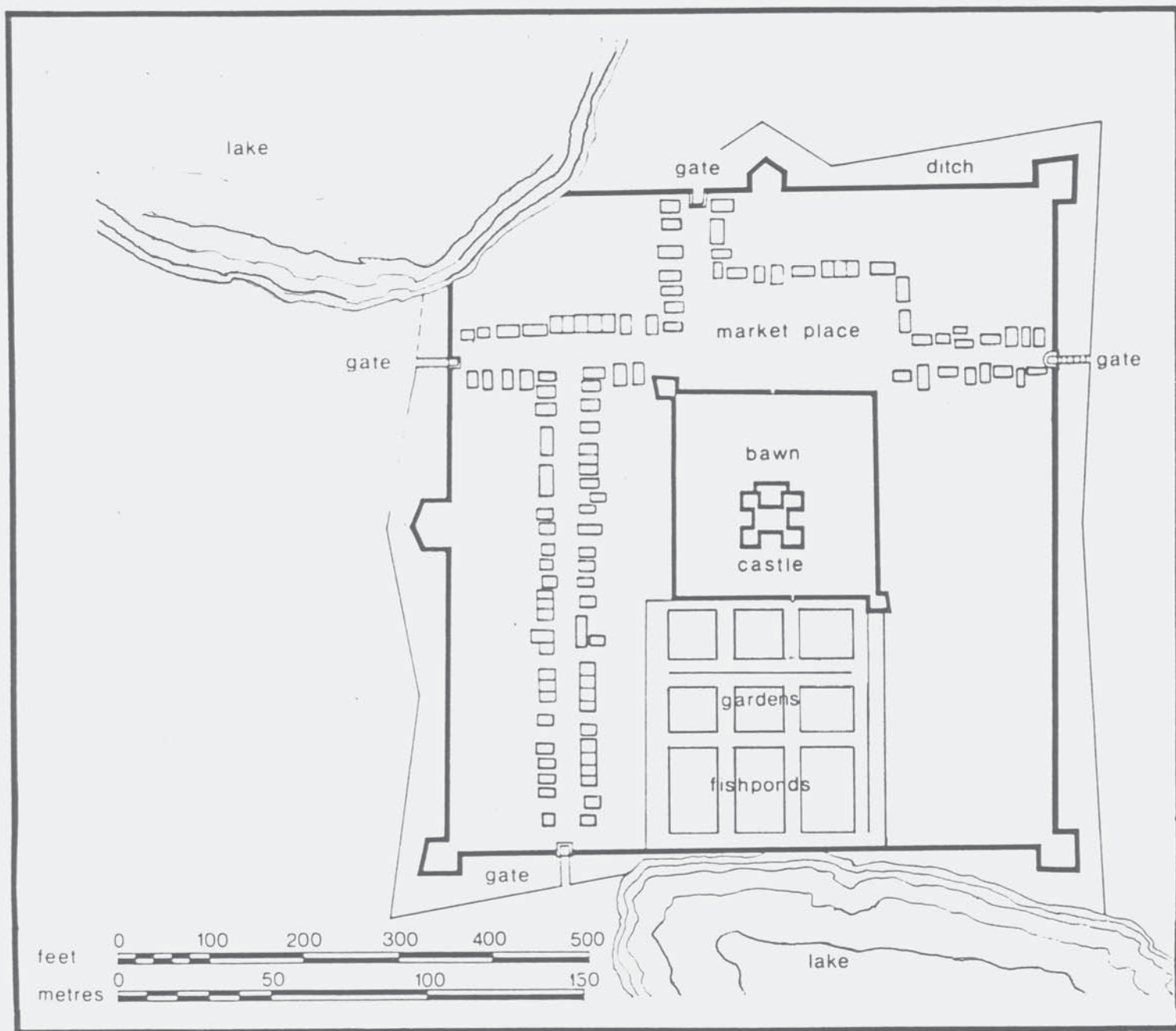Fig. 3. Drawing of Monaghan Fort by Richard Barthelet, c.1602. NLI: Ms.2656(9)

Fig. 4. "A plot of the fort of Balle-Loergen, Sir Edw
Blayney his undertaking, and the towne and castell
of Monaghan". TCD: Ms. 1209 (32), the Monaghan
section redrawn by McMahon and Walsh 1982.