Doctoral   Tourism and Food

2003-08-01

Continuity of Settlement in Counties Limerick and Clare: the Role of "Ecclesiastical Sites" in the Formation of Settlement

Kevin Griffin
Technological University Dublin, kevin.griffin@tudublin.ie

Recommended Citation

CONTINUITY OF SETTLEMENT IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE: THE ROLE OF 'ECCLESIASTICAL SITES' IN THE FORMATION OF SETTLEMENT

(VOLUME 1/2)

SUBMITTED BY

KEVIN ANTHONY GRIFFIN B.ED., M.A.

TO SCHOOL OF FOOD SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AT DUBLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR THE AWARD OF
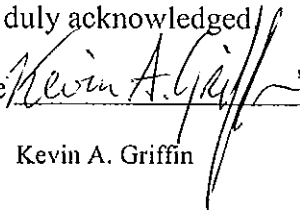
PHD.

SUPERVISOR : DR. PAT DARGAN

August 2003

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis which I now submit for examination for the award of PhD, is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

This thesis was prepared according to the regulations for postgraduate studies by research of the Dublin Institute of Technology and has not been submitted in whole or in part for an award in any other Institute or University

The Institute has permission to keep, to lend or to copy this thesis in whole or in part on condition that any such use of the material of the thesis be duly acknowledged

Signature _____   Date _12/11/2003_

Kevin A. Griffin

ii

ABSTRACT

There has been a recent surge in research regarding the evolution of Irish settlement.[1] Due to the fact that much of this work focuses on larger towns and cities, the investigation of smaller, less influential settlements has consequently been greatly neglected.

One of the themes which has been identified in larger towns is ecclesiastical influence on their development. It can be seen that in the case of large and influential ecclesiastical sites, for example Kells and Armagh, the street layout and architecture supports the hypothesis that ecclesiastical sites have been the basis for subsequent development. These are two of the very limited number of examples which have been investigated with respect to this pattern, and while evidence suggests that this phenomenon is widespread, few practical studies exist which examine the spatial extent. Another shortfall in current research is the absence of comparative study. Apart from the research by Swan, very little analytical work has been carried out to investigate the similarity and differences between Irish sites.[2] This project hopes to rectify this shortfall by exploring the nature and pattern of early Irish church sites, and the manner by which these early foci have evolved into present day settlements.

In Chapter 2 of this study a conceptual framework is presented which directs the work undertaken. This contextualisation of research begins by discussing various approaches which are pertinent to this investigation, thereby providing a foundation for the pattern of early Irish settlement development which follows. The content then focuses on early church sites, discussing their functions and morphology, thereby leading to the generation of a Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites. This model can be used as an aid to identifying and examining settlements of ecclesiastical origin.

Chapter 3 presents a range of sources which are of use in the work. Secondary sources having been dealt with in the conceptual framework, this chapter focuses on primary resources and techniques ranging from maps and archaeology to fieldwork, placename evidence and early primary documentation. Following this the chapter presents a

---

[1]   Simms, A. and Andrews J.H. (1994) *Irish Country Towns*; Ibid *More Irish Country Towns*; Clarke, H.B. (1995) *Irish Cities*; Barry, T.A. (2000) *History of Settlement in Ireland*; Thomas, A. (1992) *(1992) The Walled Towns of Ireland*; Simms, A. Clarke, H.B. Gillespie, R and Andrews, J.H. (Eds.) (various) *Irish Town Atlas* Series.

[2]   Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland in the early medieval period'.

methodology which employs these sources to their maximum benefit, and culminates in a discussion of Plan Analysis, which will be used in the case study investigations.

In Chapter 4, an examination of case study sites is undertaken, focused on Counties Limerick and Clare. This investigation follows a framework which could be utilised in examining the regional or national patterns of ecclesiastical influence on settlement. The approach attempts to redress the current under-representation of settlements with ecclesiastical origins in recent urban literature and to do this in a regional context. By investigating ecclesiastical settlements in this manner the project addresses issues of scale and comparative investigation, providing a valuable insight into this area of academic investigation.

Chapter 5 brings together the material from the case studies and arising from this analysis the Spatial Model from chapter 2 is revisited, resulting in the development of two-pronged tool. The first comprises of a template and checklist which explore ecclesiastical continuity at settlements. The other is a visual representation of settlement continuity at the case study sites which were examined.

The Final outcomes of the study show that, a standardised pattern (or set of patterns) of ecclesiastical influence may be observed. While some sites where continuity of settlement has been interrupted display clear evidence of ecclesiastical influence, and others where continuity of settlement has somewhat obscured church fabric, an overall pattern is identifiable, once the correct investigative tools are employed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Áes Dána	Learned class.
An Post	The Irish national postal service provider.
Annals	Records of religious and secular events, generally maintained at church sites.
Bachall	Clerical staff.
Bile	Sacred tree.
Bóaire	Strong farmer.
Brehon	The individual who formulated laws which safeguarded society - hence the term 'brehon laws'
Bullaun Stone	Hollowed stones – generally an un-worked boulder, with a roughly circular hollow – most likely used for grinding food, but associated with many traditions and beliefs.
Caiseal / Cathair	Stone walled enclosure.
Canons	Church laws.
Capital / Corbel	Stone projection which supports something over it.
Cathach	Also known as 'Battler' - a Latin Psalter, or book of psalms ascribed to Columcille of Iona.
Cellula	Term used to refer to church sites – specifically a small structure – literally a room.
Cenobic / coenobic	Monastic – coenobite / cenobite refers to a member of a monastic community.
Cís / Cíos	Tribute / Tax.
Civitas	Term used to refer to monasteries. Pertains to a community of citizens.
Clachan	Clustered settlement form.
Clochan	Small circular stone-roofed building – commonly called beehive hut.
Cloigthech	Name used for round tower - literally meaning 'bell house'.
Cluain	Shoreline - commonly used in placenames / also refers to a field or meadow.
Coarb	Overseer or keeper of church lands - who was more often a layman rather than priest.
Comarba	Irish word for abbot - translates directly as 'heir'.
Confessions	Writings by Saint Patrick about his 'mission' to Ireland.
Crannóg	Lake dwelling built on an artificial or natural island.
Crosier / Crozier or Bachall	A hooked staff carried by a bishop as a symbol of pastoral office.

Culdees / Céile Dé	An austere reform movement, the Irish example of which, is generally accepted as having begun in Tallaght.
Dairthech	Ancient word used for church (literally 'oak house').
Damhliag	An ancient Irish word signifying a stone edifice - usually used in reference to a church.
Damliac	Ancient word used for church (literally 'stone church').
Déis	Measure of authority - refers to clients and vassals.
Domnach	Term used to refer to church.
Druí	Druid or pagan priest.
Dúchas	The Heritage Services of the Irish Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht.
Duirtheach	A small stone-roofed church.
Dún	Enclosure usually used as a term for a prestigious site or stronghold.
Ecclesia / Eclais	Term used to refer to monasteries.
Enchlann / enech	Honour price / honour.
Eremitic	Hermit.
Fáith	Soothsayer or prophet. .
Familia	Those descended or claiming descent from a common ancestor - used in the context of church sites with a common founder.
Fid	Woodland.
Fili / Filid	Poet / poets.
Fine	Joint family including all male descendants for a number of generations.
Fosse	Trench or ditch surrounding a church site or settlement.
Glebe Land	A piece of land which served as part of a Church of Ireland clergyman's benefice and provided income
Gudgeon	A pin, spindle or pivot on which a bell, or a hinge rotates.
Hagiographers / Hagiographies	Writers of the saints' lives / Accounts of the saints' lives.
Iardom	Sacristy.
Inis	Island - commonly used in placenames.
Kil / Kill	Church - commonly used in placenames.
Lunula	Crescent shaped necklace.
Laura	Greek word used to describe a particular style of monastery – mixture of eremitic and coenobic lifestyle.
Léni	Pasture land along a river.

Life	See Vitae
Lios / Less	Open space within an enclosure- often used to refer to the entire enclosure.
Lubgort / lubhgort	Vegetable garden / herb garden.
Mag	Arable and permanent pasture.
Manaig	Lay monk.
Midhe	Ancient province of Meath.
Monasterium	Term used to refer to monastery – Latin word.
Muintir	Family / retinue / followers / people.
Múr	Rampart.
Ócaire	Small farmer.
Óenach / Óenaige	Ancient ritualistic assembly point.
Ollam / Brehon	Chief poet.
Oppidum	Civic/urban site or town, possibly fortified - generally used for Iron Age settlements.
OS / OSI	Ordnance Survey of Ireland.
Panegyric	Speech of praise.
Paruchiae	Monastic families or confederations of monasteries with common ideals/allegiances.
Platea / Plateola	A courtyard which provided a walking or assembly area for monks.
Promontory Fort	Fort on projection or outstanding area of high land.
Psalters	Book of psalms.
Ráth	Earthen bank enclosing an area - often used to refer to the entire enclosure.
Regular Canons	Regular Canons or 'regulars' were originally those who observed the Rule of St. Benedict. These individuals added religious poverty to the requirements of their community life.
Reiclés	An early Irish church type
Reilig	Graveyard – Irish word.
Rí	King, of which there were many divisions i.e. a Rí Tuaithe was a King of a single tuath or kingdom while a Ruaire / Rí Tuath was a King of several tuath.
Rígdún	Royal stronghold.
Rule	Code of practice and discipline for a religious community
Seanchas	'Traditions about the past', applies to genealogy, place name legends and legal records. Originally orally kept records.
Sét	Unit for measure of status - literally refers to young heifer.

Síd/Sídhe	Fairy mound - In Irish mythology the Gods retreated underground 'into the síd' with the arrival of Christianity.
Slige / Sligeda	Ancient roadway(s).
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record, listing of historical fabric, compiled by Dúchas.
Souterrain	An underground passage or chamber – used for storage or refuge.
Suburbana	Parts of a settlement which lie immediately outside and adjacent to its walls or boundaries.
Teampall / Tempull	Literally 'temple' - commonly used in placenames to denote chapel / church / graveyard - teampall mainistreach refers to monastery chapel.
Termonn	Most sacred part of a church site, usually demarcated by the inner enclosure.
Trian	A district or 'third'.
Triduum	Three days of religious observance.
Tuath	Petty kingdom.
Tumulus / Tumuli	Ancient sepulchral mound or barrow.
Tyrannus	Selfish landlord.
Urnaidhe	Prayer.
Vallum (monasterii)	Church enclosure or wall around an ecclesiastical site.
Vitae / Vitae Sanctorum / Life	Accounts of a saint's life.

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

1.1. AIMS

A small number of large and influential early church sites for example Kells and Armagh, display a street layout which supports the hypothesis that church sites can be the basis for subsequent settlement development. These are just two examples of the sites where this phenomenon has been investigated and while limited evidence indicates that the pattern is more widespread, few practical studies exist which examine its extent. This project seeks to provide a method of analysis which brings together the various data concerning settlements and early church fabric, with a view to establishing the key role played by early church sites in the establishment and continued development of Irish settlement. In addition, a key contribution of this work will be to investigate these traits (settlement establishment and continuity) at a county level, thereby redressing the fragmented nature of previous investigations and studying the topic in a regional context.

The problem of Irish settlement cannot be adequately dealt with by a single discipline.[1] In undertaking this task therefore, a holistic approach to settlement investigation is adopted. This multi-facetted process draws together expertise from a broad range of disciplines. Within this multi-disciplinary approach, the techniques used take cognisance of both documentary and physical evidence. While research that relies entirely on either a physical or documentary approach could appear academically sound, it would result in a narrow, biased and incomplete work. This concern regarding breadth of approach is strongly influenced and encouraged by authors such as Evans who caution against the adoption of narrow specialist approaches to landscape studies:

> One must admire . . . scholarly aims so long as they do not come to be
> regarded as the sole criteria of excellence, so long as curiosity is not
> stifled by technique and the scaffolding does not obscure the building .
> . . Source dominated caution has sometimes restricted the vision, and
> that over-specialisation has made it difficult for the student to look
> beyond his [or her] period or topic and to see, even if [s/]he wished to,
> the bearing of habitat and heritage on the broad course of history.[2]

Thus, scholarly material is consulted from a broad-range of disciplines including Archaeology, Early Medieval History, Old Irish, Cartography, Planning and Historical Geography. This illustrates the wide field of literature that is employed in order to

---

[1]   Doherty, C. (2000) 'Settlement in early Ireland: a review', p. 71.
[2]   Evans, E.E. (1992) *The Personality of Ireland*, p. 15

2

develop approaches that are employed in this investigation. Some of the authors whose work is directly pertinent to this study include Bradley, Butlin, Doherty, Etchingham, Graham, Hughes, Ó Corráin, Simms, Sharpe, Stout, Swan, Swift, Thomas and Valante.[3]

A further complexity within this topic is the dearth of comparative study in research. Apart from the work by Swan, very little analysis has been carried out in Ireland on the similarity and differences between sites.[4] Because of this, the project explores the nature of early Irish ecclesiastical form and develops the comparative aspirations by examining church sites at a spatial level.

The period under investigation is what has been termed the 'early middle ages' i.e. the period between the arrival of Christianity to Ireland in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, and the Anglo-Norman settlement of Ireland, which began in the late twelfth century. The geographical focus is the counties of Limerick and Clare. It is expected

---

[3]   Bradley, J. (1987) 'Recent archaeological research on the Irish town'; idem, (1988) (Ed.) *Settlement and Society in Early Medieval Ireland.*

Butlin, R. A. (1977) 'Urban and proto-urban settlements in pre-Norman Ireland'.

Doherty, C. (1980) 'Exchange and trade in early medieval Ireland'; (1982) 'Some aspects of hagiography as a source or Irish economic history'; (1985) 'The monastic town in early medieval Ireland'.

Etchingham, C. (1999) *Church Organisation in Ireland AD 650 to 1000*; (1996) 'Early medieval Irish history'; (1991) 'The early Irish Church: some observations on pastoral care and dues'; (1993) 'The implications of paruchia'.

Graham, B. J. (1987) 'Urban genesis in early medieval Ireland; (1987) 'Urbanisation in medieval Ireland'; (1989) 'Secular urban origins in early medieval Ireland'; (1993) 'Early medieval Ireland: settlement as an indicator of social and economic transformation'; (1998) 'The Town and The Monastery'.

Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*; (1972) *Early Christian Ireland : Introduction to the Sources*; (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian'; (1978) 'The golden age of early Christian Ireland'; (1987) *Church and Society in Ireland*; idem and Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church.*

Ó Corráin, D. 'The early Irish churches: some aspects of organisation'; (1972) *Ireland Before the Normans*; (1989) 'Prehistoric and early Christian Ireland'.

Simms, A. (1986) 'Continuity and change: settlement and society in medieval Ireland c. 500-1500'; (1994) 'Kells'; (1994) 'Kildare'; (1994) 'The origin of Irish towns' idem and Fagan, P. (1992) 'Villages in County Dublin : their origins and inheritance' idem and Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*; idem and Clarke, H. B. (1985) 'Towards a comparative history of urban origins; idem and Andrews, J. H. (Eds.) (1994) *Irish Country Towns*; (1995) *More Irish Country Towns.*

Sharpe, R. (1984) 'Some problems concerning the organisation of the Church in early medieval Ireland'; (1991) *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives: an Introduction to Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*; (1992) 'Churches and communities in early medieval Ireland: towards a pastoral model'.

Stout, M. (2000) 'Early Christian Ireland'.

Swan, L. (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites and their relevance to settlement patterns of the first millennium AD'; (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland in the early medieval period'; (1985) *Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland.*

Swift, C. (1998) 'Forts and Fields'.

Thomas, C. (1971) *Britain and Ireland in Early Christian Times : AD 400-800.*

Valante, M. A. (1998) 'Reassessing the Irish 'monastic town'.

[4]   Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland in the early medieval period'.

that these two counties will provide a contrast for the study, because habitation in Limerick was extensively shaped by the Anglo-Normans while County Clare was ostensibly outside their sphere of influence.

1.2. HYPOTHESIS

This project is framed within the theory that many Irish settlements have developed from early church sites. The overall hypothesis in this research is:

> By using appropriate methods of investigation, settlement morphology in Ireland can reveal patterns which illustrate the importance of early church sites as focal points for subsequent development.

In order to investigate this hypothesis, the following operational goals are presented as tools to provide focus and direction:

> To investigate the development of early church sites in Ireland;

> To explore the role church sites have played in the development of Irish settlements;

> To use data from specific case studies to assess, in a detailed manner, the spatial extent of ecclesiastical influence on individual settlements and their spatial form, thereby exploring the relationship between church sites and subsequent development.

> To outline models and techniques which will assist in the investigation of ecclesiastical impacts / influences on Irish settlements.

> To explore the potential wider use of models and techniques, with a view to identifying the ecclesiastical influence on settlement within wider geographical areas (both in Ireland and international settings).

5

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK / CONTEXTUALISATION OF RESEARCH

2.1. READING LANDSCAPES

While this work does not delve deeply into geographical discourses which deal with decoding of landscapes, or iconographic representation of space, cognisance is taken of pertinent current landscape literature, particularly that which warns of presenting linear narratives regarding the past.[5] Thus, while the main focus of the work is on case studies and analytical investigation, the early sections of the work set out to provide a perspective on the ecclesiastical landscape. It is only through understanding the symbolism of Christianity, the patterns of church morphology and interactive networks, that one can hope to interpret the early Christian landscape of Ireland. As landscape is shaped and formed according to the beliefs, culture and practices of different groups of people, an attempt is made to raise the sights of this work from a static reconstruction of the past to an investigation which considers the manner in which the Irish landscape may be seen as a reflection of social, symbolic and ideological beliefs, which are rooted in the Christian tradition.[6]

A broad range of approaches have influenced this work, but, the overall discipline within which it is placed is that of historical geography. The methodology used is firmly rooted in the landscape studies of Mitchell and Aalen and the archaeological work of Swan which brings together pioneering aerial photography techniques with that of the academic and field archaeologist.[7] Documentary evidence from early sources is utilised where appropriate, bearing in mind the limitations and inadequacies highlighted by Doherty, Thomas, Swift and McCone and Simms.[8] Further stimulus is found in the documentary landscape investigation pioneered by researchers such as Darby and

---

[5] Butlin, R.A. (1993) 'Historical Geographies of Landscape'; Nash, C. 'Landscapes'; Whelan, Y. (2001) 'Monuments, Power and Contested Space'; (2001) 'Symbolising the State'; Graham, B.J. and Nash, C. (2000) *Modern Historical Geographies*; Barry, T. A (2000) *History of Settlement in Ireland*, Duffy, P. (1998) 'Locality and Changing Landscape'.

[6] Cosgrave, D.E. (1984) *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, p. 4; Crang, M. (1998) 'The Symbolic Landscape' p. 27.

[7] Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, Mitchell, G.F. & Ryan M. (1997) *Reading the Irish Landscape*; Swan, L. (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites and their relevance to settlement patterns of the first millennium AD'; (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland in the early medieval period'; (1985) Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland.

[8] Doherty, C. (1980) 'Exchange and Trade in Early Medieval Ireland'; (2000) 'Settlement in early Ireland: a review', Thomas, C. (1998) 'Early Medieval Munster: Thoughts Upon Its Primary Christian Phase', Swift, C. (1998) 'Forts and Fields: a study of 'monastic towns' in seventh and eight century Ireland' McCone, K. and Simms, K. (Eds.) (1996) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*.

fieldwork such as that undertaken by Evans, later developed by Hoskins and Beresford.[9] In the context of such landscape investigation, methodologies have been further honed and refined from work in British and Irish urban settings by Slater, Simms and Dargan.[10]

The following sections provide discussion of the theoretical foundations on which this project is based. In each case a brief overview of the discipline is provided, followed by a comment on how it applies to the present research.

---

[9] Darby H.C. (1969) *An Historical Geography of England*; (1973) *A New Historical Geography of England*; Evans, E.E. (1992) *The Personality of Ireland*; (1967) *Mourne Country*; (1942) *Irish Heritage*; Hoskins, W.G. (1955) *Making of the English Landscape*; Beresford, M. (1957) *History on the Ground*;

[10] Simms, A. (1990) 'Medieval Dublin: a topographical analysis'; Slater, T.R. (1981) The analysis of Burgage Patterns in Medieval Towns; Dargan, P. (1994) 'The Morphology of Irish Towns'. (see bibliography for fuller list of publications by these authors

2.2. APPROACHES TO SETTLEMENT INVESTIGATION : A LITERATURE REVIEW

The direction of Irish settlement studies has been influenced by a small number of individuals – primarily E.E. Evans, T.W. Freeman and T. Jones Hughes, the first geographers in Queen's University Belfast, Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin respectively. Evans's work was primarily archaeologically and anthropologically influenced field-work, Jones Hughes focused on nineteenth century documentary sources while Freeman was predominantly a population geographer whose settlement focus was on pre-Famine Ireland. The task of identifying key writings by these authors and their students in the area of Irish settlement studies has been simplified by Simms, whose 'Perspectives on Irish Settlement Studies' can be viewed as an honour-roll of the major writings on this topic.[11] Orme's *Ireland*, Mitchell & Ryan's *Reading the Irish Landscape*, Aalen's *Man and the Landscape in Ireland* and Barry's *Irish Settlement Studies* are major works in influencing writings on settlement studies.[12]

B. Graham's 1975 map of medieval settlement in County Meath published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, was possibly the first case study of an integrated landscape. This work brought together the mapping of medieval field evidence with contemporary documentary evidence to present settlement within the framework of the feudal system.[13] Since then a number of authors have examined integrated landscapes. M. Stout in examining *The Irish Ringfort*, illustrates the inter-relationship between secular and sacred sites. A. Simms with J.H. Andrews in *Irish Country Towns* have highlighted the multi-faceted nature of settlements, and G. Stout has brought together a number of diverse sources in her chapter in the *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape* on the Boyne.[14] A number of sections in the best-selling *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape* edited by Aalen, Whelan, and Stout typify this integrated approach as does the multi-disciplined approach of *Gaelic Ireland : Land, Lordship & Settlement c.1250 – c.1650*, edited by Duffy, Edwards and Fitzpatrick. The layout of this volume alone illustrates the current awareness among researchers that a multi-facetted approach yields rich rewards – the main subsections in this publication deal

---

[11] Simms, A. (2000) 'Perspectives on Irish Settlement Studies', pp 228-229.
[12] Ibid, p. 234.
[13] Ibid, p. 232.
[14] Stout, M. (1997) *The Irish Ringfort*; (2000) 'Early Christian Ireland: settlement and environment'. Simms, A. and Andrews, J.H. (Eds.) (1994) Irish Country Towns; (1995) More Irish Country Towns.

with '. . . political structure and social organisation', the natural and build environment: some documentary and scientific records' and '. . . the architectural and archaeological record', with chapters examining such diverse themes as pollen studies, place-names, archaeology, poetry, mapping all in tandem with more conventional documentary analysis.

While many publications deal with Irish settlement in a general sense, the emphasis until the 1970s was on the rural landscape. Camblin's *The Towns in Ulster*, and Butlin's *The Development of the Irish Town*, being the main exceptions to this rule. A major milestone in the investigation of towns and their development was the publication of *Kildare* the first fascicle of the *Irish Historic Towns Atlas* series in 1986, supported by the Royal Irish Academy. To date, eleven volumes have been published: *Carrickfergus* (1986), *Bandon* (1988), *Kells* (1990), *Mullingar* (1992), *Athlone* (1994), *Maynooth* (1995), *Downpatrick* (1997), *Bray* (1998), *Kilkenny* (2000), and *Dublin, Part 1, to 1610* (2002). Six more are in preparation and 24 more under consideration. The Atlas helps to redress the rural focus in Irish settlement research and in addition ties in with Europe-wide Historic Atlas project.[15]

Further focus on settlement study has been provided with the publication of *Irish Country Towns* and *More Irish Country Towns* under the editorship of A. Simms and J. Andrews, and a third volume *Irish Cities*, edited by H.B. Clarke.[16] Other important publications with urban themes include the writings of P.J. O'Connor, J. Prunty, M. Daly and the recent publications edited by J. Brady and A. Simms.[17] The publication of *Irish Towns: Guide to Sources*, by the Department of Geography in University College Dublin in collaboration with Bord Failte has provided a guide for those wishing to embark on investigations of settlements.

The Maynooth Studies in Local History series which began in 1995 and averages 6 fascicles per year indicates the increased levels of interest in local study topics. While

Stout, G. (1997) 'The Bend of the Boyne, County Meath'.

[15] Andrews, J.H. (1986) *Kildare*; Robinson, P. (1986) *Carrickfergus*; O'Flanagan, P. (1988) *Bandon*; Simms, A. & Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*; Andrews, J.H. & Davies, K.M. (1992) *Mullingar*; Murtagh, H. (1994) *Athlone*; Horner, A. (1995) *Maynooth*; Buchanan, R.H. & Wilson A. (1997) *Downpatrick*; Davies, K.M (1998) *Bray*; Bradley, J. (2000) *Kilkenny*; Clarke, H.B. (2002) *Dublin, Part 1, to 1610*.

[16] Simms, A. (2000) 'Perspectives on Irish Settlement Studies', p. 236.

[17] O'Connor, P.J. (1987) *Exploring Limerick's Past*; Prunty, J. (1999) *Dublin Slums 1800-1925*, Daly, M. (1984) *Dublin: The Deposed Capital*, Brady, J. & Simms A. (2001) *Dublin Through Space and Time*; Mc Manus R. (2002) *Dublin, 1910-40: shaping the city and suburbs*.

not focused exclusively on settlement issues, many of the published volumes are settlement based.[18]

Early Irish Studies

A discipline which needs to be considered by any investigation dealing with the early medieval period is Early Irish Studies.[19] McCone's 1996 publication *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, brings together a number of papers by key researchers currently working in this area. As demonstrated in this volume the discipline may be sub-divided into sub themes such as linguistic analysis of prehistoric, old and middle Irish; interpretation of the early Irish narrative tradition; poetry; hagiography; Latin sources; law; early medieval history; archaeology; and similar themes of the 'early modern period'. Each of these sub-themes contains a wealth of information of relevance to the current study, and within each are a myriad of considerations and concerns for the researcher. This section acknowledges the value and complexity of early Irish studies and also presents a brief overview of key issues regarding scholarship into early Irish studies.[20]

In tackling early sources and their use for the investigation of Irish settlement a recurring thorny issue is the need for a high level understanding of the sources coupled with linguistic expertise. This awareness dates back to the nineteenth century when scholars such as Reeves and Stokes set standards for analysis of early texts. This attention to detail continued until the 1970s when Herbert claims a new era of linguistic analysis began.[21] Prominent in this research are authors such as McCone, Sharpe

[18] Gurrin, B. (2000) *A Century of Struggle and Decline in Delgany and Kilcoole*; Lawlor, C. (2000) *Canon Frederick Donovan's Dunlavin 1884-1896*; Clare, L. (1998) *Victorian Bray*.

[19] Professor Próinséas Ní Chatháin, UCD, provided valuable advice on terminology and references with regard to comments on early Ireland.

[20] McCone, K. (1996) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies* this volume contains a number of important review articles including:
McCone, K. (1996) 'Prehistoric, Old and Middle Irish' pp 7-55.
Ó Cathasaigh, T. (1996) 'Early Irish Narrative Literature' pp 55-65.
Breathnach, L. (1996) 'Poets and Poetry' pp 65-79.
Herbert, M. (1996) 'Hagiography' pp 79-91.
O'Loughlin, T. (1996) 'The Latin Sources of Medieval Irish Culture' pp 91-107.
Breathnach, L. (1996) 'Law' pp 107-123.
Etchingham, C. (1996) 'Early Medieval Irish History' pp 7-55.
Ryan, M. (1996) 'Archaeology' pp 155-165.

[21] For an overview of such developments in the area of hagiography see Herbert, M. (1996) 'Hagiography' pp 82-83 - examples include Reeves W. (1857) *Vita Columbae* and Stokes,   W. (1877) *Three Middle-Irish Homilies on the Lives of Saints Patrick, Brigit and Columba*.

Doherty and Ó Corráin who have tackled fundamental source related issues such as date and provenance of texts, and have employed early material in new and useful ways. Of importance to this work is the way in which these authors have highlighted the use of early texts for the investigation of early settlement.[22]

In discussing early Irish sources and their use in settlement studies Doherty has been to the fore in provoking discussion. In discussing the concept of parish in early Ireland he illustrates the origins of words used in Ireland which derive from Greek, Latin and French roots. As he indicates, colloquial usage in an Irish context may not always be linguistically correct, as the use of words alters over time. His commentary on words has proved to be particularly insightful as exemplified in his analysis of terms such as 'forrach' or his questioning of how the Latin word 'villa' could alternatively be interpreted to mean settlement, village or farm - illustrating the need for caution when engaging in early Irish studies.[23] A fact which further compounds the issue is that those who translate texts rely on currently held beliefs and interpretations of historians and archaeologists, who are themselves influenced by translations of the same or similar texts. Thus, analysis of language is a circular argument which is contingent on overall understanding of subject material and is a difficult cycle to break.

In situations where knowledge or understanding of structures or events is imperfect problems are exacerbated. For example what did the word 'urbs' mean in sixth century Ireland? Technically this word could be translated correctly as 'city', 'a monastic establishment' or a 'territory'. Without detailed investigation, adoption of a single definition could obscure an accurate understanding of a text using such a term. While an interpretative minefield can be somewhat avoided in languages such as Latin - which can be compared across cultures, this is not the case with sources in vernacular

---

[22] McCone, K. (1984) 'An Introduction to the early saint's lives'; *Pagan Past and Christian Present in Early Irish Literature*.
Sharpe, R. (1979) 'Hiberno-Latin *laicus*, Irish *láech*, and the Devil's Men'; (1989) 'Quatuor Sanctissimi Episcope: Irish Saints Before Patrick'; (1991) *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives: An Introduction to Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*.
Doherty, C. (1980) 'Exchange and Trade in Early Medieval Ireland'; (1982) 'Some Aspects of Hagiography as a Source for Irish Economic History'; (1985) 'The Monastic Towns in Early Medieval Ireland'.
Ó Corráin, D. (Ed.) (1981) *Irish Antiquity*; (1987) 'Irish Vernacular Law and the Old Testament'.
[23] Doherty, C. (2003) 'The concept of parish'; (1985) 'The Monastic Towns in Early Medieval Ireland', pp 48-50; (2000) 'Settlement in early Ireland: a review', p. 50.

languages, particularly if there is a shortage of glossing or comparative literature.[24] However, this does not mean one should avoid texts altogether. Doherty warns:

> When the early Irish speak directly to us themselves, through the surviving documents, however difficult of interpretation and fragmentary that message may be, any attempt to explain the past without due regard to that message must be considered inadequate.[25]

Recent scholarship which attempts to tackle such issues includes *Studies in Irish Hagiography: Saints and Scholars* edited by Carey, Herbert and Ó Riain which provides a general overview of current thinking with regard to one strand of early literature - Irish hagiography. This work examines the Columban tradition among other themes, also considering accounts of Irish saints in Brittany, Cornwall and throughout Europe.[26] *Text and Gloss: Studies in Insular Language and Literature* edited by Conrad-O'Briain, D'Arcy and Scattergood, takes a broader view of studying early texts, examining the linkages between society in the Mediterranean region, Anglo-Saxon England and early Christian Ireland. The various articles in this publication are largely literary and linguistic but illustrate the importance of considering archaeology, theology, women's studies and historical psychology when examining life in the early periods.[27]

Landscape Archaeology

The discipline of archaeology has evolved rapidly in the second half of the twentieth century.[28] The present dynamic archaeological record results from the discovery of new sites and information, new methodologies and the ever-changing theoretical perspectives and interpretations of the past. Cooney, Condit and Byrnes illustrate the growth in Irish archaeology - in the early 1990s fewer than 150 archaeological licences were issued annually while over 500 were issued in 1997.[29]

---

[24] Doherty, C. (2000) 'Settlement in early Ireland: a review', p 50-51.
[25] Ibid, p. 71.
[26] Carey, J., Herbert, M. & O Riain, P. (Eds) (2001) *Studies in Irish Hagiography : Saints and Scholars*.
[27] Conrad-O'Briain, H, D'Arcy, A. & Scattergood, J. (Eds) (1999) *Text and Gloss : Studies in Insular Language and Literature*.
[28] Dr. Tadhg O'Keeffe, UCD provided advice on various aspects of archaeology and Gillian F. Barrett, University of Wolverhampton assisted with queries on aerial archaeology. The late Leo Swan also assisted and encouraged the author in the early stages of this work.
[29] Cooney, Condit & Byrnes (2000) 'The Archaeological Landscape' p. 18.

In parallel with the increased number of excavations, a number of archaeological inventories and surveys of monuments in Irish counties have been published or are being carried out by the Office of Public Works. These works are of considerable importance. County Louth has been surveyed and inventories exist for Counties Louth, Monaghan, Meath, West Galway, South and East Cork, West Cork and mid Cork, Carlow, Laois, Cavan, Wexford, West Galway and North Tipperary.[30] Individuals or local groups have carried out a number of smaller area surveys. These include the *Dingle Peninsula Archaeological Survey* and *The Iveragh Peninsula Archaeological Survey*.[31] The problem still remains, however, that a systematic national survey of church sites and their archaeological remains does not yet exist - The availability of county level *Sites and Monuments Records* (SMR) particularly in digital format from the Dúchas Web site has gone some way towards dealing with this issue - but a high level of competence with computer technology is required to make use of this resource.[32]

Some of the more important archaeological developments in recent years include aerial photography and other survey techniques such as probing, and geophysical analysis. An author who has progressed aerial photography in Ireland is Barrett who has written a number of articles on the topic.[33] A range of technologically influenced modern techniques have been very successfully used in the Discovery Programme's *Tara Survey Project*. These methodologies include topographic, geophysical and geochemical survey, as well as aerial photography.[34]

One of the major changes arising from these new techniques has been a redirection away from standing, monumental archaeology, towards a focus on low-visibility archaeology, thereby lessening the bias in the current archaeological record.[35]

---

[30] All published by the Office of Public Works, Government Publications Office, Dublin

[31] Cuppage, J. et al (1986) *Dingle Peninsula Archaeological Survey*, O'Sullivan, A. and Sheehan, J. (1996) *The Iveragh Peninsula Archaeological Survey*

[32] http://www.heritagedata.ie/

[33] Barrett, G. (1981) 'Aerial photography and the study of early settlement structures in Ireland'; (1982) 'Problems of spatial and temporal continuity of rural settlement in Ireland, AD 400 to 1169'; (1995) 'Recovering the hidden archaeology of Ireland: the impact of aerial survey in the River Barrow Valley, 1989-91'

[34] Newmann, C. (1997) *Tara : An Archaeological Survey*; http://www.discoveryprogramme.ie/Research_Area/Research_Past.htm

[35] Cooney, G. (2000) 'Reading a landscape manuscript', p. 1-2.

Resulting from these various paradigm shifts, Irish archaeology is currently developing in two ways. The first results from 'the scoping process' carried out in pre-development assessments, such as that undertaken during the construction of gas pipelines, motorways and monitoring of general building works.[36] This has resulted in a major increase in recording of sites and their investigations with an emphasis on individual features, monuments and sites.

A more important development is research which moves away from examining singular sites to the adoption of a regional framework or focus on the spatial dimension. This is exemplified by the Discovery Programme which was established in 1991 as an archaeological research institution dedicated to investigating Ireland's past from earliest times and presenting the results to as wide an audience as possible. A number of current projects by the Discovery programme deal with wide geographical areas including 'the North Munster Research Project' and the 'Ballyhoura Hills Research Project'. 'The Lake Settlement Feasibility Study' and 'The Medieval Rural Settlement Project' by the same organisation are similar, but adopt a thematic, multi-period approach rather than a spatial one. These various research programmes involve topographic and geophysical survey work which is undertaken in tandem with excavation. With all their projects the Discovery Programme take account of the wider European context.[37]

The examples discussed above are all attempting to combat the traditional focus on chronological based work. Technological advancements now mean that some archaeologists are now working towards an understanding of 'the nature and extent of . . . settlement . . . to examine the dynamic processes underlying the ways in which settlement patterns developed over time'. But as Cooney comments, the interpretation and analysis of such results is still deficient. Research is blinded by the 'seductive mirage' which sees social changes as simple one-off events 'rather than processes taking place through time'.[38]

While background research materials such as literature, aerial photography, maps the *Sites and Monuments Record* and Museum records all facilitate deeper understanding

---

[36] See Stout, M. (1997) *The Irish Ringfort*, Chapter 6 to illustrate how large scale civil engineering projects such as pipelines may be used to develop the archaeological record.

[37] http://www.discoveryprogramme.ie/index.html; O'Connor, K. (1998) *The Archaeology of Medieval Rural Settlement in Ireland*; Newmann, C. (1997) *Tara : An Archaeological Survey*.

[38] Cooney, G. (2000) 'Reading a landscape manuscript', pp 2-3.

[t]he emphasis . . . has been on describing the features of different periods and their background rather than on the wider questions of possible regularities, repetitions and discontinuities of pattern when the evidence is viewed over the long term.[39]

Cooney encourages investigation such as that undertaken in this project which attempts to depart from 'simple models of settlement that emphasise mobility and utilisation of different zones at different periods', towards one which uses data to offer insights into the social landscape - in this case - of early Christian Ireland. Thus, long-term settlement continuity as espoused by recent archaeological literature, is seriously considered in this work as a fundamental force of importance.[40]

Writings on Early Christian Ireland

An important factor when considering secondary sources for the period in question is to take into account the various issues regarding interpretation of primary sources. Thus, while a large number of significant histories of early Christian Ireland exist, a small sample of these were employed, with an emphasis on works by authors who have been rigorous in their research and analysis. Some of the main publications used include: Harbison's *Pre-Christian Ireland*; De Paor's *Saint Patrick's World* and *The People of Early Ireland from Pre-History to Modern Times*; Moody and Martin's *The Course of Irish History*; Nicholls' *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the Middle Ages* and Edwards' *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland.*[41] All of these provide valuable interpretations of early Irish history and society.

Added to the more general histories, a number of key works have been written which deal more particularly with the Irish Church. The more useful of these draw extensively on primary sources and combine evidence from earlier sources with subsequent research and documentation. The value of the work carried out by these authors varies according to the genre of the study being carried out. Also, older texts must be used with care. While the content and factual material may have remained constant, the interpretation of history has changed from an uncritical presentation to that informed by consciousness

---

[39] Ibid, p. 3.
[40] Ibid, p. 31.
[41] Harbison, P. (1988) Pre-Christian Ireland: From the First Settlers to the Early Celts; De Paor, L (1993) *Saint Patrick's World*; (1986) *The People of Ireland from Pre-History to Modern Times.*
Moody, T.W. and Martin F.X. (1978) *The Course of Irish History.*
Nicholls, K. (1972) *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the Middle Ages.*

16

of issues such as power and politics. Over time the view of the past has altered significantly:

> Our rational analysis of evidence, even our imaginative apprehensions, are different. But from a sympathetic and sensitive questioning of what they [writers of early documents] were attempting [in documents such as the law tracts and annals], history emerges.[42]

Historical understanding can only emerge through a sympathetic understanding of the sources.

The earliest general work on the Christianisation of Ireland is Ware's *De Hibernia* (1654). While this publication is incomplete and gives very little information about many religious foundations, it is 'on the whole most reliable', providing information on a number of the main foundations throughout Ireland.[43] A number of authors borrow from Ware, with varying degrees of accuracy. Archdall's *Monasticon Hibernicum* (1786) is a much larger work, drawing on material from Ware and other authors. While the publication is not always accurate, it does make reference to documents which are now lost or destroyed.[44] It must be remembered that while criticism could be levelled at this work, at the time of writing, there were few reliable maps or books on the topography of Ireland. Thus, Gwynn and Hadcock claim that once care is taken, 'the value of Archdall's work should not be underestimated.[45]

Hogan's learned *Onomasticon Goedelicum*, printed in 1910, identifies many places in Ireland from their old Irish names and gives other particulars and references for many sites.[46] It is a valuable reference book for those studying early documentary sources, particularly when such material is being used in its original form.

The work of Gougaud from the early twentieth century (1923-1932) focuses on the missionary movement of the early Irish Christians and has dealt with the issue of links between Ireland and continental Europe between the fourth and tenth centuries.[47] While not focused on Irish foundations, this author has traced the two-way dissemination of

---

Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*.

[42] Hughes, K. (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian', p. 23.

[43] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. x.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid, p. ix.

[47] Gougaud, L. (1932) *Christianity in Celtic Lands*; (1923) *Gaelic pioneers of Christianity: the Work and Influence of Irish Monks and Saints in Continental Europe*.

Christian beliefs and provides a valuable external viewpoint for the examination of early Christian Ireland.

One of the most useful guides to the study of the early Irish church is Ryan's *Irish Monasticism: Origins and Early Development*, published in 1931. This work makes full use of the extant literature - describing and assessing its true worth for examining the development of Christianity in Ireland. While some of his references to the church in Ireland could be seen as verging on the sentimental, Ryan's book has proved to be a cornerstone of investigation into the early Irish church, combining scholarly analysis of early documentation with later archaeological and research work.[48]

Leask was an early pioneer in investigating the architectural features of church sites. His seminal work - a three volume set *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings* written between 1955 and 1960 outlines the main structural aspects of church sites throughout the country.[49] Leask has come under criticism by some modern writers who have revised some of his interpretations; notwithstanding this, his work is still of value to the researcher of the early Christian period.

Most texts on the origins and development of Christianity in Ireland have drawn to a greater or lesser extent on the sources outlined above and deal with issues such as the arrival of the first Christians to Ireland (usually focusing on Saint Patrick), the manner in which the Irish were converted, the 'unique' nature of Irish Christianity, the universal appeal of Christianity in Ireland. Typical authors of such literature include Cerbelaud-Salagnac or Watt, whose work must either be avoided or used with extreme care.[50]

One reliable author who has tackled the topic of early Christian Ireland is Kathleen Hughes whose books and articles published between 1966-1987 deal with the subject from a variety of angles. Her work has been drawn on for this thesis. Hughes' knowledge of the early sources is considerable, and far surpasses many who have followed her. In her various writings on early Christianity, she provides a learned examination of the conversion of Ireland.[51] Particularly important for this project is her

---

[48]   Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism - Origins and Early Development*; see also (1961) 'The early Irish Church and the see of Peter'; (1976) Clonmacnois a Historical Summary.

[49]   Leask, H. G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vols. I, II and III.

[50]   Cerbelaud-Salagnac, G. (1960) 'The monasteries of Ireland, nurseries of saints'; Watt, J. (1972) *The Church in Medieval Ireland*.

[51]   Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*; (1972) *Early Christian Ireland : Introduction to the Sources*; (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian'; (1978) 'The

Early Christian Ireland: Introduction to the Sources which outlines the very broad range of documents which may be of use in any examination of early Christian Ireland. An investigation of the fabric of particular Early Christian sites is provided in her volume *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church* which she wrote in association with Anne Hamlin. Her advice regarding the use of documentary material in conjunction with field research and studies of other disciplines such as archaeology is important. Despite 'revisionist' commentary on her work by more recent historians such as Etchingham, her publications retain their status as important secondary material.[52] In examining particular aspects of church remains, works such as Crawford's lists of early high crosses, cross slabs and pillars and Barrow's gazetteer *The Round Towers of Ireland* may also be useful.[53]

In 1970 Gwynn and Hadcock published *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland* which stands as a landmark in literature regarding early Irish Christianity. Having investigated an exhaustive range of sources they have established a comprehensive list of church sites and foundations of various dates in Ireland. In their work they identified a broad range of sources with information on the sites they have identified. They have categorised their sites defining them, for example, as cathedral sites or early church sites.[54] Similar works include: De Breffny and Mott's *The Churches and Abbeys of Ireland* and the Ordnance Survey's *Map of Monastic Ireland* which also provide lists of establishments of varying detail.[55]

Following on from Hughes's work on the material fabric at church sites, Hamlin has written papers which focus on the architectural aspects of church buildings. One result of this research is to bring the work of Leask up to date, using new evidence and modern techniques to more accurately date some sites.[56] Also in the 1980s Herity has shown an interest in the structures of early church sites. He is mainly interested in an

---

Golden Age of Early Christian Ireland (7th and 8th Centuries)'; (1987) *Church and Society in Ireland AD 400-1200*; Idem & Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*.

[52] Etchingham, C. (1991) 'The early Irish Church'; (1993) 'The implications of paruchia'.

[53] Crawford, H.S. (1980/1926) *Irish Carved Ornament*; (1907) 'A descriptive list of the early Irish crosses' (1913) 'A descriptive list of early cross-slabs and pillars'.
Barrow, G.L. (1979) *The Round Towers of Ireland*.

[54] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*.

[55] De Breffny B. and Mott, G. (1976) *The Churches and Abbeys of Ireland*.
Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1965) *Monastic Ireland*.

[56] Hamlin, A. (1984) 'The Study of Early Irish Churches'; (1992) 'The Early Irish Church Problems of Identification'.

examination of the broader context of the church - and an exploration of the overall church site layout.[57]

Bitel's 1987 book, *Isle of The Saints* focuses on the social aspect of early Christianity.[58] While not warmly received by critics, this book is a laudable attempt at humanising the early Christian landscape. A more probing work on this theme is Mytum's 1992 book *The Origins of Early Christian Ireland*, which examines in an analytical manner, the social changes which the introduction of Christianity has brought to Ireland.[59]

While the 1990 publication *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland* by Edwards does not deal exclusively with church sites, chapter 6 provides a very useful outline of the historical background and structural evidence of the church, in the context of modern archaeological methods and techniques.

From a different standpoint, Etchingham in a number of learned articles, has examined early Christian Ireland through the use of early sources. He has examined the concept of interaction between foundations and has explored early sources with a view to establishing links between sites.[60]

Doherty has explored early Christian Ireland through intensive analysis of early documents. His work examines Ireland from a socio-economic view-point, exploring issues of trade and exchange, and more recently the difficulties inherent in depending on early documentary sources.[61]

Writings on Settlement Morphology

Focusing on the research of this particular investigation, a small number of authors can be identified whose writings examine early Irish church sites in the context of settlement morphology. One of the main innovations in this area was the 1969 book by Norman and St Joseph *The Early Development of Irish Society* which used aerial

---

[57] Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries'; (1984) 'The layout of Irish early Christian monasteries'.

[58] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints.*

[59] Mytum, H. (1992) The Origins of Early Christian Ireland.

[60] Etchingham, C. (1991) 'The early Irish Church: some observations on pastoral care and dues'; (1993) 'The implications of paruchia' (1999) *Church Organisation in Ireland AD 650 to 1000.*

[61] Doherty, C. (1980) 'Exchange and Trade in Early Medieval Ireland'; (1982) 'Some aspects of hagiography as a source for Irish economic history'; (1985) 'Monastic towns in Early Medieval Ireland'.

photography to identify previously unknown features of the Irish landscape - an entire chapter of this book was devoted to the identification of church sites.[62]

Swan, in his research work has advanced the study of early settlement further by developing a number of techniques for the investigation of sites. First, he expanded on the aerial photography work of Norman and St Joseph. Secondly, he identified the characteristic elements of sites and thirdly, illustrated the variance and form of religious enclosures.[63]

This form of investigation has been continued by authors such as Bradley, Dargan, Graham and Simms, who have applied the techniques in their general writings on early settlement evolution.[64]

In this thesis, examination of the individual sites chosen for detailed study is undertaken using the information and analysis carried out in many of the sources outlined above. In addition, documentary information of a more specific regional or local nature is employed. An example of this are the *Ordnance Survey Letters* of the 1840s, which detail the origins of placenames throughout the counties of Ireland, and discuss much of the historical fabric of the country.[65]

---

[62] Norman E. R. and St Joseph, J.K.S. (1969) 'Early Christian Sites'.

[63] Swan, L. (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites'; (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland'; (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland'.

[64] Bradley, J. (1988) *Settlement and Society in Early Medieval Ireland*; (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town'; (1992) 'The Topographical Development of Scandinavian Dublin'; (1995) *Walled Towns in Ireland*.

Dargan, P. (1994) 'The Morphology of Irish Towns; (1995) 'Celtic Settlement Forms in Irish Towns; (1997) *Nobber Architecture and Development*.

Graham, B. (1976) 'The Evolution of The Settlement Pattern of Anglo-Norman Eastmeath'; (1987) 'Urban Genesis in Early Medieval Ireland'; (1989) 'Secular Urban Origins in Early Medieval Ireland'; (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland: Settlement as an Indicator of Economic and Social Transformation, c.500-1100';

Simms, A. (1979) 'Medieval Dublin; a topographical analysis'; (1986) 'Continuity and Change: Settlement and Society in Medieval Ireland c.500-1500'; (1992) 'The early origins and morphological inheritance of European towns'; (1994) 'Kells'; (1994) 'Kildare'; (1994) 'The Origin of Irish Towns'; (2000) 'Perspectives on Irish Settlement Studies'; idem and Andrews, J.H. (1994) *Irish Country Towns*; idem and Andrews, J.H. (1995) *More Irish Country Towns*; idem and Fagan, P. (1992) 'Villages in County Dublin: Their Origins and Inheritance'; idem and Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*.

[65] O'Donovan, J. (1840) *Letters Containing Information Relative to the Antiquities of the County of Limerick*, Collected During the Progress of the Ordnance Survey in 1840; Idem & Curry, E. (1839-1841) *The Antiquities of County Clare*.

European Context of Irish Settlement Research

One criticism which can be identified in many studies of Ireland, its settlement or otherwise is the insular nature of the work. A. Simms, who has always considered Ireland in a wider European context claims that 'Irish settlement historians could learn from comparisons with the evolution of settlement in other parts of the Atlantic world, in particular with Scotland and Wales, but also with Continental Europe.'[66]

From as early as the 1920s, scholars dealing with the Christianisation of Ireland have noted this broader framework, and have attempted to write in a European context. L. Gougaud's 1923 work 'Gaelic pioneers of Christianity', being one such example which is followed up more recently by M. Herbert and G. Le Duc in J.P. Mackey's 1994 *The Cultures of Europe*. Geographers, historians and other writers of settlement studies have made fewer attempts at comparative work. A major exception to this is the publication of the substantial two volume *Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe* by H.B. Clarke and A. Simms in 1985. Other authors of Europe-oriented material include: R.A. Buchanan and D. McCourt, D. *Fields, Farms and Settlement in Europe* (1976), L.M. Cullen and F. Furet *Ireland and France* (1980), P. Ní Chatháin and M. Richter *Irland und Europa* (1984), R. Bartlett and A. Mackay *Medieval Frontier Societies* (1989), Przemysław, U. 'The origins of towns on the outskirts of medieval Europe - Poland, Norway and Ireland' (1994) De Boe, G & Verhaeghe, F. (Eds.) *Rural Settlements in Medieval Europe*, of particular interest in this volume is T. Barry's paper on, 'Recent research in medieval rural nucleated settlement in Ireland' (1997). These authors have dealt with various themes regarding Irish settlement at a comparative level.[67]

Further impetus for comparative research has been provided by the recently revitalised Dublin Historic Settlement Group, which, under the direction of A. Simms and H.B. Clarke has promoted comparative settlement studies on a European level, and would appear to have this as a goal once again. Similar aspirations are followed by the Group

---

[66]   Simms, A. (2000) 'Perspectives on Irish Settlement Studies', pp 240-41. See also Simms, A. (1995) 'The origins of towns in medieval Ireland, The European context'; (1992) 'The early origins and morphological inheritance of European towns'; (1990) 'Medieval Dublin in a European context'.

[67]   Gougaud, L. (1923) *Gaelic pioneers of Christianity: the work and influence of Irish monks and saints in continental Europe.*
Mackey, J.P. (1994) *The Cultures of Europe: The Irish Contribution*, - see paper by M. Herbert, 'The Legacy of Colum Cille and his monastic community' and Le Duc, G. 'The Contribution to the making of European culture of Irish monks and scholars in medieval times'.

for the Study of Irish Historical Settlement, which, in addition to regular conferences, has published a number of works on Irish settlement. The main publications of this group which have been used in this work include Stout's *The Irish Ringfort*, Barry's *A History of Settlement in Ireland* and Duffy, *et al's Gaelic Ireland, c.1250-c.1650.*[68]

---

[68] Graham, B.J. (1985) *Anglo-Norman Settlement in Ireland.*
Cairns, C.T. (1987) *Irish Tower Houses: a Co Tipperary Case Study.*
Loeber, R. (1991) *The Geography and Practice of English Colonisation in Ireland.*
Graham, B.J. & Proudfoot, L. (1994) *Urban Improvement in Provincial Ireland.*
Stout, M. (1997) *The Irish Ringfort.*
Barry, T. B. (2000) *A History of Settlement in Ireland.*
Duffy, P.J. Edwards, D. & FitzPatrick, E. (Eds) (2001) *Gaelic Ireland, c.1250-c.1650 : Land, Lordship, and Settlement.*
Lyttleton, J & O'Keeffe, T. (Eds) (2003 - forthcoming) *The Manor in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland.*

2.3. EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF IRISH SETTLEMENT

In the context of the literature outlined above, the following sections examine current thinking regarding pre-Christian and early Christian Ireland. As already stated, the context wherein this project lies is the early middle ages - the period between the arrival of Christianity to Ireland in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, and the Anglo-Norman settlement of Ireland which began in the late twelfth century. In Ireland, this is the earliest period that may be confidently investigated using documentary sources. In addition, a large number of remains survive from the period, including; settlements, church sites, buildings and a wide variety of artefacts, ranging from mundane everyday objects to precious relics. Before the period can be fully understood, a brief overview of the pre-Christian period is necessary since this pre-history period may be seen as the canvas upon which Christianity occurs, thereby helping to contextualise the Christianised landscape and provide a foundation for discourse and analysis. Attention to earlier phases of development is particularly important in this study as the continuity of society, economy and landscape over time is a particular focuses of the work.

Pre-Christian Ireland

The purpose of this section is to establish a contextual framework within which the topic of early Irish Christianity in general, and Irish church sites in particular, may be examined. As the overall ethos and societal structures of 'Celtic' Ireland heavily influenced the Christian church which developed, an understanding of this period is paramount to achieve an accurate understanding of the Christian church in early Ireland.

By about 600 BC the dominance of iron-using tribes in central Europe ushered the arrival of a new age.[69] These people were different in their various origins, but their language, general appearance, dress and way of life distinguished them as being what the Greeks called the *Keltoi* or Celts.[70] In Ireland the emergence of a distinct 'Celtic' culture and society appears gradually, with roots reaching back to the late Bronze Age peoples rather than clearly signifying the introduction of new peoples into Ireland.[71] The importance of the 'Celtic' way of life is particularly important because little can be ascertained about the earlier periods i.e. the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age. The

---

[69] Mitchell, G.F. (1978) 'Prehistoric Ireland', p. 42.
[70] Ibid.

domination of this culture for over one thousand years from approximately 150 BC has on the contrary left an abundance of physical remains and other cultural remnants such as the Celtic language which survive to the present day.[72]

Early Ireland - Economy and Society

When studying Ireland in the early periods 'all we have is shreds and sherds of information'.[73] In attempting to understand these people, therefore, reference may be made to the ancient stories and tales that have been preserved. Illustrating the broader context of these narratives, the heroes of these sagas possessed the same virtues as those attributed to the heroes of the Gaulish Celts in the first century BC, the Homeric warriors of the Iliad, and the heroes in the Sanskrit epic poem, the *Mahābhārata*.[74] While these legends do not record strict history, they, like all forms of narrative, reflect elements of the society which produces them, including social structures, attitudes and political ideologies, thus, perpetuating the ideals and ethics of the dominant social class and gender of the period.[75] In many cases these traits survived in later literature, such as the portraits of the Irish saints offered in the hagiographies, which illustrate individuals with secular traits such as their creative and vicious skill in cursing.[76]

The Irish nobleman of this early period was primarily a farmer. Society was rural, the people living in individual farms, with the better homesteads being surrounded by earthen ramparts and a stockade - according to Brehon law the ráth (or dwelling) of a king should have a double rampart built by the king's vassals.[77] Cattle were the most important element of agricultural production, sheep were also important, as to a lesser extent was the production of crops - wheat, oats, barley and flax. The people also hunted and trapped game mainly deer and pigs.[78] Ireland was not unique during this period. This pastoral system is one which existed throughout most of north western Europe.[79]

From prehistoric times there had been much internal and some external trade. An example of the tangential use of historical sources such as hagiographies and annals to

---

[71] Cooney, G. (2000) 'Reading a landscape manuscript', p. 27.
[72] Mitchell, G.F. (1978) 'Prehistoric Ireland', p. 42.
[73] Ó Corráin, D. (2003) 'Is there parish in the early medieval Irish Church'.
[74] Byrne, F.J. (1978) 'Early Irish Society', p. 43.
[75] Naughton, B (1999) 'An analysis of the portrayal of women in fairytales', p. 5.
[76] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 8.
[77] Byrne, F.J. (1978) 'Early Irish Society', p. 46.
[78] De Paor, L. (1993) *Saint Patrick's World*, p. 24.
[79] Doherty, C. (2000) 'Settlement in early Ireland: a review', pp 53-4.

illustrate society can be found in the social inferences drawn from the life of St Patrick in the mid-fifth century. The fact that the Patrick reputedly used a trading ship in his escape to freedom supports theories of international trade. In exchange for pelts, hides and possibly fish from the Irish, the Romans exchanged products such as wine, tin and salt.[80] Contact with the Roman Empire was further increased through raids and looting, which provided both booty and slaves for Irish leaders.

The two pivotal institutions in Irish life of this period were the joint-family or 'fine' and the 'tuath' or petty kingdom. The 'fine' included all male descendants of a family for a number of generations and was connected to ownership of family land.[81] Within the concept of family there operated a complex and well-defined system regarding: inheritance of land and title; responsibility for misdeeds carried out by, and to members of the family, and social status. Outside the membership of the family the legal rights of an individual were non-existent. As will be seen subsequently, this has implications for continuity of occupation and activity at church sites.

A person's 'enechlann' or 'honour price' was their measure of status and was enumerated in material terms.[82] The word 'enech' means both 'face' and 'honour' and also implies 'protection' and 'hospitality'. The concept of honour price was tied up in ability to supply these with status linked to agricultural production and the amount of land owned.[83] At a later period these are important concepts - when land comes under church leaders they adopt these responsibilities and powers, with early ecclesiastics providing important services with regard to protection and hospitality.

There were many ranks in society ranging from the hereditary serfs and slaves up to the 'ócaire' or small farmer and 'bóaire' or strong farmer. Above these were the various grades of nobles, including artists, craftsmen and warriors.[84] At the top of this hierarchy were three grades of kings, based on the subdivision of the country into small kingdoms or 'tuatha': the 'Rí tuaithe' was king of a single 'tuath', the 'Ruire'/'Rí tuath' or over-king who was king of several 'tuatha' and at the top of the ranking was the 'Rí

---

[80] De Paor, L. (1993) *Saint Patrick's World*, p. 24.
[81] Byrne, F.J. (1978) 'Early Irish Society', p. 46.
[82] Ibid, p. 47; Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 5.
[83] Hughes, K. (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian', p. 12; Byrne, F.J. (1978) 'Early Irish Society', p. 51.
[84] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 8; Stout, M. (1997) *The Irish Ringfort*, p. 117.

ruirech'/'Rí cóicid' or king of a province.[85] The size of a kingdom was quite limited. it is known that by the seventh century there were at least 150 'tuatha' throughout Ireland, although the population of the island may have been less than half a million people.[86] Each of the lesser kingdoms paid tribute to the level above them, just as the ordinary men to show their loyalty, paid tribute to their immediate noble. In practical terms, royal power was limited - government was aristocratic rather than monarchic in structure.[87] At a later stage this system of clientelism influenced the administrative structure of the church.

Learning was a factor which provided status. For example, an 'ollam' - chief poet or a 'Brehon' - was equal in status to the king of a tuath.

- The 'Brehon' formulated laws, the main purpose of which, was to safeguard society as a whole;[88]

- The 'filid' or poets, were men of learning and long training, they composed poems and tales, but they were also believed to possessed supernatural powers;[89]

- The other possessors of knowledge were the 'druí' (druid or pagan priest) and the 'fáith' (who appeared to be a kind of soothsayer or prophet).[90]

Between them, these 'wise' people preserved all tribal wisdom and knowledge.[91] Once Christianity and its associated writing arrived, these functions were slowly absorbed by the church - particularly through the documentation of laws, tales and records which were part of the former oral tradition - status was transferred to the church and its leaders.

From the range of social values presented above, and the high regard in which the provision of services such as hospitality and education were held, it can be seen that, while there was no overall public authority which provided social services, each individual had 'certain well defined responsibilities . . . according to his [illustrating the patriarchal society] status'.[92] Those who were wealthier and more important had greater

---

[85] MacNeill, E. (1921) *Celtic Ireland*, pp 101-104.
[86] Byrne, F.J. (1978) 'Early Irish Society', p. 45.
[87] Ibid, pp 55-56; 46-49.
[88] Ibid, p. 51.
[89] Hughes, K. (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian', p. 3; De Paor, L. (1993) *Saint Patrick's World*, p. 28.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 6.

responsibility and thus more demands made upon them and the greater the demands which were met, the more prestige was commanded by the individual.[93]

Early Settlement Forms

While the early literary material quite clearly establishes the existence of a Celtic way of life, it tells us little or nothing of the chronology nor does it provide accurate detail of events or lifestyle. Written sources dealing with early Ireland, while they provide a range of possibilities regarding social and cultural developments, must be tested by alternative means including archaeology and comparative investigation.[94] The following section outlines the various settlement forms which are characteristic of pre-Christian Ireland, but also continue well into the Christian period - in many cases existing in conjunction with early church sites; The main structures include ringforts, crannogs promontory forts and hill forts, with some evidence of unenclosed habitations.

According to Edwards:

> Ringforts, or enclosed homesteads, are the most characteristic type of Irish early medieval settlement. They are also the commonest field monument in Ireland.[95]

A typical ringfort comprises a small level area enclosed by a circular earthen bank and ditch or 'fosse'. The diameter of these structures generally varies from 15 to 47 metres with some much larger examples (exceeding 90 metres) existing.[96] The exact number of ringforts in Ireland has not been calculated, but the number has been estimated at approximately 45,000 of which 41% had been positively identified as of March 1995.[97] Despite accounts by some researchers, survival would appear to be relatively high.[98] For example, in County Fermanagh less than 10% have been lost since their first recording in the Ordnance Survey maps of the nineteenth century, while in Kerry approximately 44% have been destroyed.[99]

---

[93] Ibid.
[94] Raftery, B. (1984) *La Tène in Ireland*, pp 2-3.
[95] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 11.
[96] Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p. 81.
[97] Stout, M. (1997) *The Irish Ringfort*, p. 53.
[98] O'Flanagan, P. (1981) 'Surveys, maps and the study of rural settlement development'; For full discussion of survival rates and projections re-total population see Stout, M. (1997) *The Irish Ringfort* Chpt. 6.
[99] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 11.

In the early Middle Ages enclosed homesteads were known by a variety of names - 'ráth' 'lios' 'caiseal', 'cathair' and 'dún'. While 'ringfort' has come to be regarded as the most acceptable term for these various forms of habitation, it must be noted that these circular structure are highly varied. Some writers have attempted to strictly classify ringforts, but this has proven unsuccessful. In examining these features Edwards has identified a general categorisation.[100]

- Single earthen ringforts
- Stone walled cashels
- Combination ringforts/cashels

Simple earthen univallate ringforts or ráths with a single earthen bank and ditch are the most common structures.[101] These range between 15 and 47 metres across, typically having an internal measurement between 27 and 30 meters in diameter. Multivallate structures also exist (with more than one enclosing bank & ditch), these are less common and internally they are usually of a similar size.[102] Another category - the raised or platform ráth may be easily confused with an Anglo-Norman motte-and-bailey castle, which is further complicated by the fact that in some cases the Anglo-Normans used raised platform ráths as mottes.[103] Stone walled ringforts or cashels also exist. These occur in rocky country, particularly the west of Ireland, in Donegal, the Burren area of County Clare and the Dingle and Iveragh peninsulas of Kerry.[104] Typically these are enclosures with curvilinear drystone walls, seldom having a ditch. In some parts of Ireland these enclosures seem to be smaller than the average earthen ringfort.[105] Numerous other sub-categories exist, but exact classification of these can only be properly discovered by excavation.[106]

Crannogs are lake dwellings located either on natural islands or artificial foundations constructed of stones and brushwood, which have been consolidated by wattle fences and piles that have been driven into the lake bottom.[107] Crannogs are comparable in size and shape to ráths or ringforts, being roughly circular and serving as sites of

---

[100] Ibid, p. 12.
[101] Ibid, p. 14.
[102] Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p. 81; Stout, M (1997) *The Irish Ringfort*, pp 14-18.
[103] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 14.
[104] Ibid, p. 15.
[105] Stout, M (1997) *The Irish Ringfort*, p. 16.
[106] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 15.

farmsteads.[108] These structures would appear to date from the Iron Age continuing in use up to the 16th and 17th centuries.[109]

Two final categories of structure from this period are promontory forts and hill forts. Assessment of promontory forts is difficult as very few of the estimated 200 sites have been excavated, with no obvious pattern. Typically these are small level areas on coastal and inland cliff-defined promontories, which rely on their location to provide defence, being protected on the landward side by ramparts and ditches.[110] The dearth of settlement evidence complicates matters, possibly indicating that these were temporary refuges rather than permanent residences.[111] Hill-forts are usually larger than standard ringforts, with considerable ramparts of earth and stone and they occupy defensible elevated positions.[112] Irish hill-forts are less spectacular and less numerous than their English and European counterparts.[113] Due to the similarity of some sites to Spanish Iron Age forts, Aalen suggests that they may reflect links with Iron Age Iberia.[114]

There also exists a variety of open settlements including round huts and rectilinear houses where there is no evidence of an enclosure or ringfort. These may indicate either lack of prestige or perhaps the necessity to build such structures.[115]

As will be seen later, the enclosures of these various settlement types bear strong parallels to enclosures at early church sites - both in the nature of their construction materials, and in their layout. The tendency towards curvilinear form in early church sites has been attributed to many factors, but having examined settlement forms, this trend would appear to be strongly influenced by secular 'Celtic' 'organic' designs rather than the more formal 'Roman' rectilinear patterns. This may reflect the strong influence of pre-history settlement traditions on subsequent church foundations, but may be a much more complex issue. While some secular enclosures were re-used by church founders, many 'green-field' church sites were developed which also follow this pattern. The most important fact at this stage of the investigation however, is the level

---

[107] Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p. 87.
[108] Ibid, p. 87; Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 35.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid, p. 87.
[111] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 43.
[112] Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p. 88.
[113] Ibid, p. 89.
[114] Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p. 89.
[115] Ibid.

of continuity from the pre-Christian to the Christian period as evidenced in the continuity of style and form illustrated by the survival of curvilinear enclosures.

To conclude this view of early settlement fabric, it must be noted that much work has been carried out on these various ancient settlement forms. However, much of this analysis has been carried out in isolation, focusing on individual structures, with little attempt to relate sites to one another, or to create a broader image of early medieval landscape morphological change. Development of a context and spatial analysis has been attempted to some extent by Stout in his work on ringforts and Simms in her various works on the origins of Irish settlement. Dúchas are also attempting to undertake comparative investigation in their Discovery programme - for example the Western Forts project which examines promontory forts. Notwithstanding these valiant attempts, there is a serious dearth of investigation regarding regional variations, not just in the materials used, but also construction styles, distribution, and evolution of sites. There is also a shortage of studies which examine secular and early church sites in a comparative geographical framework. A final issue that requires further attention is the adoption of a multi-disciplinary approach to investigations, linking various forms of research i.e. document based work, archaeological and geographical study.[116]

Introduction and Development of Irish Christianity

The aim of this section is to overview the foundation and early expansion of the Christian church in Ireland, in the period from the fourth to the eleventh century. The section considers the arrival of Christianity and its adoption throughout the country, highlighting the evolution of the Irish church in relation to the rest of Christian Europe. Within this study particular emphasis is placed on the establishment of early churches.

Knowledge of pre-Christian religious beliefs in Ireland is scarce and uncertain. The evidence which does exist is in the form of mythological cycles which provide no systematic outline of ideology. It is known, however, that the continental pre-Christians were a religious people with a number of deities. Despite the shortage of knowledge about these early beliefs they would appear to have survived long after the introduction of Christianity in the form of magic taboos.[117] For example, before his famous battle at

---

[116] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 48.
[117] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 7.

Clontarf in 1014, it is reported that Brian Boru prayed to both Christian and pagan deities.[118]

Pre-Christian reverence for established festivals, rites and observances was strongly rooted. By tolerating the least objectionable of these and modifying or converting them to Christian purposes, instead of denouncing or abolishing them, the early instigators of Christianity greatly diminished the opposition which would otherwise have been encountered.[119] In using miracle stories and legends, the Christian priests took over the supernatural functions of the druids and 'filid'.[120] Despite this adoption of local practices and awareness of local custom, some researchers have found it surprising that Christianity, a disciplined religion, based on imperial administration was so successful in a society which was familiar, devoid of urban centres and knew nothing of centralised governmental institutions. Hughes has noted:

> It would hardly be possible to imagine a sharper contrast to the insular
> society of the Celtic world than that afforded by the cosmopolitan
> centres of the east Mediterranean.[121]

As noted earlier, however, Ireland was similar in settlement development to much of western Europe and was similar in the way it embraced this new religion. There is ample evidence for the existence of pre-patrician churches in Ireland, but, despite this, the arrival of Patrick is generally taken as the key date in the introduction of Christianity. According to the *Annals of Ulster* the Patron Saint arrived in 432 and this event could be considered the focal point around which Irish Christianisation revolves.[122] Considering the existence of trade links with Britain and Gaul, the arrival of Gaulish scholars seeking refuge in Ireland during early barbarian invasions, the capturing of slaves by Irish raiders from Roman Britain and the influence of mercenaries returning from service in Roman armies, it is highly probable that some Christian presence existed in Ireland before this time.[123] 'Beyond the fact of their probable existence . . . nothing whatever is known about' these early Christians.[124]

---

[118] Ryan M. (1990) 'Brian Boru: his beliefs and religion', p. 3.
[119] Doherty, C. (1985) 'The Monastic towns in Early Medieval Ireland', p. 61.
[120] Evans, E.E. (1992) *The Personality of Ireland*, p. 79.
[121] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 10.
[122] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 1.
[123] Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 61; Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 99.
[124] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 59.

Many authors have dealt with the anomalies that arise due to the sketchy information regarding Patrick's life and works. Problems include:

- The fact that in the seventh century, despite his latter-day importance, the location of the saint's burial place was unknown;[125]

- Conflict over dates of his departure from and subsequent arrival to Ireland;[126]

- Disputes over his education; and the possible existence of two (or more) individuals who have been confused as one person, in the intervening centuries.[127]

Hughes and De Paor have done much to bridge these conflicts.[128] They both suggest that in some cases the work of Palladius, a bishop sent to Ireland by Pope Celestine (c.431) to 'the Irish believing in Christ', may have been confused with and overshadowed in later years by that of St Patrick.[129] It is probable that the former, a Roman missionary came to Ireland in approximately 432 and died in 461 and the latter a British missionary arrived in 456 and died in approximately 490, with subsequent generations attributing their work to the one individual.[130] Despite this, Ryan's comment in 1961 is, still quite valid:

> Ireland knows nothing. . . Her people were converted by the one missionary, whose writings we still possess and who has ever since been revered as the national apostle.[131]

This lack of recognition for the work of Palladius is further exacerbated by a lack of documentary information on his mission.

Despite uncertainty regarding many of his claimed activities, we do know of Patrick from his own writings. It is probable that most of his missionary work took place north of a line from Galway to Wexford and in his writings, he tells much of his baptising, ordaining clerics and journeying to the farthest regions of the country as he preached.[132] This ill-educated itinerant bishop never mentioned an episcopal seat and travelled with a

---

[125] Zimmer, H. (1902) *The Celtic Church in Britain and Ireland*, p. 13.
[126] Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', pp 61-64.
[127] Ibid, p. 64.
[128] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, pp 25-35; De Paor, L. (1993) *Saint Patrick's World*, pp 5-7.
[129] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 31.
[130] Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 64.
[131] Ryan, J. (1961) 'The early Irish Church and the see of Peter', p. 3.
[132] Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 62.

retinue of young nobles, preaching to petty kings.[133] The success of this non-conforming evangelist suggests that, from the beginning, unconventional methods were successful in establishing the Christian church in Ireland.[134]

Patrick seems to have been anxious that Ireland, which had never been part of the Roman Empire, should, like its neighbours, regard itself as part of the Christian Empire based in Rome.[135] The system of church government which he introduced to Ireland is likely to have primarily been episcopal, including bishops with fixed sees, as existed in the Britain of his birth and in Gaul, where he (and other Irish saints) may have received training. The existence of episcopal structures was not exclusive, however, as monasticism also existed at this time. In his writings Patrick admires this dual tradition.[136] In his *Confessions*, he refers to monks and the female religious whom he counted among his converts - 'the fine flowers of his flock'.[137]

Traditional interpretation of the establishment of Christianity in Ireland has been of an institution, which offered stability and continuity in a way that was unknown in the secular anarchy of early medieval kinship. Heron in 1898 for example suggests that:

> [Christianity] gave men a new sense of the sanctity of marriage and of the family relations; purified, consecrated and drew closer all family ties; cultivated the domestic and social affections; bound men in a common brotherhood and encouraged a frugal but cheerful use of temporal blessings.[138]

Such a simplistic view implies that the conversion of Ireland resulted in the instant replacement of all previous 'heathen' social and religious structures with a new societal order. In addition to ignoring the part played by women, this nineteenth century viewpoint was seriously flawed. Despite some superficial trouble caused by minor battles, Irish society at this time was 'fundamentally secure and intensely conservative' - society was stable and had not experienced major change for centuries.[139] While the introduction of Christianity was undoubtedly a major force in the evolution of Irish social, political, religious and economic activity, the process was gradual rather than

---

[133] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 35.
[134] Ibid, pp. 34-35.
[135] Ryan, J. (1961) 'The early Irish Church and the see of Peter', p. 4.
[136] Heron, J. (1998) *The Celtic Church in Ireland*, p. 135.
[137] Ryan, J. (1961) 'The early Irish Church and the see of Peter', p. 6.
[138] Heron, J. (1998) *The Celtic Church in Ireland*, p. 132.
[139] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 39.

immediate with religion being one of a number of factors, rather than being the sole basis for transformation.[140]

There is some debate between scholars as to the nature of the first organisational structures in the Irish church. Nicholls comments that a territorial episcopate existed in embryonic form in the earliest stages of Irish Christianity while Walsh and Bradley claim that St Patrick's 'diocesan system' was overshadowed within a generation by monasticism.[141] Graham agreeing with Sharpe, argues that there is no direct evidence for the existence of early dioceses nor is there reason to believe that monastic federations replaced them.[142]

Cerbelaud-Salagnac comments, that the distinction between regular and secular clergy would not have concerned Patrick or his contemporaries, but instead, this is a debate which surfaced in later years as a concern of those with vested interests.[143] By the beginning of the sixth century in Britain and Gaul, churches were well-established elements of society. The bishops were socially accepted wealthy men who commanded prestige, were active in the world and responsible for their clergy and laity.[144] As part of their duties they held courts and acted as ambassadors for their dioceses.[145] Hughes claims that they were more interested in secular administration and affairs of national defence than in the work of God. While monasticism was firmly established on the continent, monks were definitely in the minority and presented a stark contrast, with their disciplined and godly way of life.[146]

The church in Ireland was an altogether different situation, still struggling in pagan surroundings.[147] During this and the seventh century, Christianity expanded at a rapid rate and some of the sites founded in Patrick's time as bishoprics faded from history, or became monastic.[148] The larger sites became known as centres for learning, while some monasteries remained small in scale and developed in out-of-the-way locations.[149] It

[140] Ibid, pp 44-47; Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p.100.
[141] Nicholls, K. (1972) *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the Middle Ages*, p. 91; Walsh, J.R. and Bradley, T A, (1990) *History if the Irish Church 400-700 AD*, p. 54.
[142] Graham, B.J. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 23; Sharpe, R. (1984) 'Some Problems Concerning the Organisation of The Church in Early Medieval Ireland' pp 230-70.
[143] Cerbelaud-Salagṇc, G. (1960) 'The monasteries of Ireland, nurseries of saints', p. 33.
[144] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 40.
[145] Ibid, p. 41; Bitel, (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, pp 164-165.
[146] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, pp 40-56.
[147] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 85.
[148] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 1.
[149] Ibid, p. 2.

would appear that by the seventh century the Irish church legislators were beginning to recognise the church's position within the established system of government rather than attempting to segregate the two institutions as had been tried earlier.[150]

Sixth century legislation reveals that monasticism was established, yet, it seemed not to have achieved great importance. It would appear that foundations were endowed with property, but as monks were forbidden to baptise or receive alms they apparently had no duties within the early dioceses. Those who ministered to the population were priests and deacons, not monks, yet the clergy also lived under strict rules, being subject to penitential discipline. Hughes suggests that the difference between clerical and monastic life at this time should not be exaggerated, with little differentiating either life.[151]

Interpretation of sources can lead to differing viewpoints regarding this period. An example of this is the current debate regarding the provision of pastoral care by monasteries. Ó'Corráin and Etchingham have debated the nature of service provided by monasteries, - was it a universal service provided by hired secular priests or was pastoral ministry limited to the *manaig* rather than the wider community.[152]

In the eighth and ninth centuries, fewer churches were founded, but arising from the perceived decline in standards, 'Culdees' or Céile Dé reforms (meaning 'clients of god' - an austere reform movement) began to be established in several foundations - beginning with Tallaght (western suburb of present day Dublin).[153] Raiding of sites by the Irish themselves was not uncommon, however, towards the end of the eighth century the Norsemen began raiding island sites. During the following centuries they are also recorded as attacking inland sites. Many sites (particularly those on islands) were destroyed and abandoned, but others survived the attacks and were rebuilt.[154] These attacks had little impact on the overall organisation of the church and up until the early years of the twelfth century many of the surviving (and some newly established) monasteries would appear to have been of the early 'Celtic' type.[155]

[150] Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, 40.
[151] Ibid, pp 52-54.
[152] Ó Corráin, D. (2003) 'Is there parish in the early medieval Irish Church'; Etchingham, C. (2003) 'Pastoral provision in the first millennium: a two tiered service?'.
[153] *Catholic Encyclopedia* http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04563b.htm
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid.

According to Gwynn and Hadcock, the medieval period for the Irish church begins in 1111 with the synod of Rathbreasail. The purpose of this gathering (held at Rathbreasail near Thurles) was to reduce the number of chief bishops in Ireland at this period. To achieve this the country was divided into two metropolitan sees - Armagh and Cashel, with each having twelve suffragan bishoprics.[156] Soon after this establishment of a diocesan system (1111), the work of reorganising the Irish church began. The primary instigator of this would appear to be Saint Malachy, who seems to have introduced the rule of the canons regular in the early 1100s.[157] The new diocesan system meant that churches founded after this time, were much less inclined to adopt older traditions of site layout. Thus, while certain practices continued - such as the east-west alignment of churches, other practices such as the construction of curvilinear enclosures and sub-division of internal space, would appear to be less clear. Instead of the curvilinear topographic formations favoured by their predecessors, protagonists of this new approach adopted the construction of buildings within rectilinear space as favoured by the continental orders. This is a fundamental change in the context of this work, which uses the earlier topographic structures as an indicator for the existence of an early church site.

By 1137 there were regular canons at Cork and other places including Armagh, Cong and Bangor. In 1139-40 Saint Malachy arranged for Cistercian and Augustinian canons to be introduced to Ireland. This is an important development as the Cistercian and the Augustinian approach to establishing foundations differed. Usually the Cistercians settled on a completely new site, where they could find solitude for their community, while the Augustinians wanted to be near people, to whom they could minister. Thus, they often set up establishments in the old monastic centres.[158] This means that the nature of the churches they established would have been very different. After Malachy's death in 1148 his policy continued so that by the time of the Anglo-Norman invasion there were Benedictine, Cistercian, and Augustinian houses and also Augustinian canonesses.[159]

---

[156] Ibid.
[157] According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* : http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12722c.htm, 'Regular Canons' or 'regulars' were originally those who observed the *Rule of St. Benedict*. These individuals added religious poverty to the requirements of their community life.
[158] Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 106.
[159] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 3.

Throughout the country, old church sites were often used as the parish church (parish structures were beginning to be formalised at this time), thus, some sites have witnessed continuous use since their foundation, while others display a more interrupted pattern. Church buildings may be medieval or post-medieval, and may be either intact and in use (modified or otherwise), or disused and ruined - 'the fortunes of churches have varied greatly, and each case needs individual study'. Where churches were remote and not suitable for parochial centres, their decay may have begun in the twelfth century (if not earlier). Other church sites may have been abandoned when the areas of Anglo-Norman influence shrank in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (and thus, their sponsorship of such sites declined), and later in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries because of the Protestant Reformation. This is particularly the case in areas of plantation, where Anglo-Norman populations were concentrated on new centres, with older churches or sites, being abandoned.[160] Though many of the early sites were changed from the 'Celtic' to the Roman layout and style in the twelfth century, others continued to function under the earlier form of 'native' monasticism until approximately the early thirteenth century.[161]

Following the landing of Henry II in Ireland in 1171, the Knights Hospitallers and Templars were brought to Ireland (the latter were suppressed in 1308, as they were seen to be too powerful) and granted land. After 1175, both the Gaelic-Irish and the Anglo-Normans began to build monasteries, but, according to Gwynn and Hadcock, these were generally segregated, the native and immigrant populations sponsoring and attending their own foundations.[162]

All Irish monasteries suffered from economic difficulties and religious unrest from the mid-fourteenth century. The Black Death in 1348-9 followed by four 'pestilences' between 1362 and 1391 struck most communities and severely reduced the numbers of religious of both races.[163] Between 1349 and 1539 no new monastery of monks or of 'Regular Canons' was founded. On the other hand, a change in direction can be

---

[160] Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, pp 103-105.
[161] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, pp 4.
[162] Ibid.
[163] Ibid, p. 2; 9.

observed as numerous houses were founded of 'mendicant friars' so named as they rely on their own work and on the charity of the faithful for support.[164]

Towards the end of the fifteenth century many monasteries of monks and canons were impoverished and in disrepair, with communities diminished both spiritually and numerically, and rules not being strictly kept.[165]

Between 1536 and 1547, as in England, the majority of the monasteries in the dioceses and districts accessible to Henry VIII were suppressed.[166] As the Reformation continued, nearly all of the remainder were suppressed particularly in the reign of Elizabeth (1558-1603), who tried to eliminate clergy and granted surviving monasteries to town corporations, local Irish, Anglo-Norman nobles or to English settlers.[167] The results of this were varied. Some structures were maintained as residences while others were destroyed - even being used as a source of building material.[168] In several areas Irish and Anglo-Norman nobles allowed the religious to remain in their monasteries after 'official' suppression, but the monks and canons found it difficult to continue with no means of income. Queen Mary Tudor's reign brought brief respite, with some restoration of foundations. In 1615 members of the mendicant orders returned from Spain, France and Belgium where they had gone to be trained.[169]

In 1630 an English attempt to once again enforce previous acts of suppression did not succeed, and by the time of the Confederation of Kilkenny, in 1642, many of the old religious houses had been reoccupied. Warfare and the subsequent Cromwellian persecution of 1649-58 attempted to stamp out Roman Catholicism altogether and only a few friars remained in some places. After the Restoration, conditions gradually improved, and while laws were passed (1697-8) during the reign of William and Mary, to banish all regular priests, most returned within ten years, and later attempts to expel them were generally unsuccessful.[170]

The significance of considering this chronology is to provide a framework within which the examination of individual sites may be placed. While the main focus is on church

---

[164] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10183c.htm
[165] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, pp 9-10.
[166] Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 106; Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 10.
[167] Ibid, p. 11; *The Catholic Encyclopedia*: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12700b.htm#II.
[168] Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, pp 106-107.
[169] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, pp 10-11.

sites which were established prior to the Anglo-Norman period, as can be seen in this brief overview of Irish church history, an understanding of more recent events is required to fully appreciate the concepts of continuity and change over time. This chronology is based on documentary sources. Attention to disciplines such as archaeology and early Irish art will be made in the next section which examines the functions and morphology of church sites.

---

[170] Ibid, p. 12.

2.4. THE FUNCTIONS AND MORPHOLOGY OF EARLY CHURCH SITES

As mentioned above, there are varying opinions regarding the organisation of the early church in Ireland with disagreement regarding fifth century church administration About the middle of the sixth century it would seem that the diocesan structure (if it had existed), was superseded by family-founded monastic establishments. Bishops lived in monasteries and ruled dioceses which corresponded to the earlier petty kingdoms. Their function was to ordain, consecrate and perform sacramental functions. By approximately 700 AD, it would appear that the government of the Irish church was in the hands of abbots.[171]

According to Bitel, within these foundations:

> The job of the monks was not merely to pray and perform parish duties, but to act as saints and thus protect and heal, provide refuge, dispense divine justice; in effect, to approach God through the saints, for the benefit of all.[172]

The monks carried out a wide variety of tasks and there were numerous reasons why people entered monasteries. Motives were both religious and sociological. In chronological terms, it is the former which was the initial motivator, while later, the part played by Christian institutions as an integral part of society, resulted in their popularity. According to Hughes the most attractive part of monastic life was the religious ideal of hope to be one of the 'household of heaven'; a 'desire for God'. The concept of atoning for wrong-doings which was central to the Irish legal system found expression in religious belief systems, and thus, men and women were drawn into monasteries where they could pay for their sins by penance, prayer and self mortification.[173] Hughes maintains that beliefs in sin and judgement may have become more realistic during the mid-sixth century when the aforementioned plague swept over Ireland.[174] At a later stage however, the political and economic power of main church sites would have acted as motivating factors for membership of their communities.

The early Irish holy men and women were not portrayed as being meek and mild in their manner. Their main characteristic was their power and their access to the power of

---

[171] Hughes, K. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 7.
[172] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 13.
[173] Hughes, K. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church.* pp 1-4; Bitel, L. *(1990) Isle of the Saints*, pp 108-109; Ryan, *(1931) Irish Monasticism*, pp 320-321.
[174] Hughes, K. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church* pp 3-5.

God.[175] It was through use of this that they were reported to be able to cure the sick, navigate the seas safely in storms, fight ferocious beasts, fend off raiding parties and carry our other such feats.[176] Because of increased recognition of these traits, a cleric commanded a high honour price by the seventh century. Many clerics were of noble or aristocratic status thus, rather than being seen as social misfits or humble retiring hermits, those living monastic lives were seen as having power and status - they were members of the social elite.[177]

The religious activities in a monastery centred on the 'acts of community worship', the saying of office or prayers, which was carried out at fixed hours. Mass was celebrated on Sundays and feast days.[178] The monks also carried out manual activities. They worked as farm labourers. Ploughing, sowing, harvesting and treshing were all activities, which were carried out in sixth-century Iona.[179] It is known that in the beginning, some of the religious houses had lay monks or 'manaig', who lived with their wife and family while actively pursuing the monastic goals.[180] The major change for such laymen on becoming part of such institutions was the enforcement of monogamy, which was not a requirement of early Irish society.[181] The early monasteries, therefore, may be seen as estates with a religious purpose, where even the abbot could be married and the abbacy in most cases was an inherited position.[182]

Two native Irish practices became important elements of monastic life: fosterage and education.[183] There was tradition amongst the upper classes of society for children to be sent away to be fostered. Secular law strictly regulated the education and fosterage of these children, and thus, children who were fostered in a monastery became part of the abbot's household and received a religious education in the monastery school, often becoming clerics themselves.[184]

---

[175] Hughes, K. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 6.
[176] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints.* p. 11; 34.
[177] Hughes, K. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 6.
[178] Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 70, Hughes, K. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 5.
[179] Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 72.
[180] Hughes, K. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 6.
[181] Ibid, pp 6-7.
[182] Bitel, (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, pp 105-106.
[183] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 209.
[184] Hughes, K. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 9.

Education provided in a monastic school was by its nature religious in tradition and according to Ó Fiach the principal subject of study was the sacred scriptures, with special emphasis being placed on the psalms.[185] It would appear, however, that authors such as Columbanus, who was educated at Bangor in the sixth century, and Adamnán who was educated in seventh-century Iona, had an extensive world view which is exemplified in their knowledge of Latin authors i.e. Virgil and Horace. Research indicates that there were close cultural links between Ireland and Spain in the sixth and seventh centuries, as the writings of St Isidore of Seville would appear to have reached Ireland before being brought to central Europe.[186]

The copying of manuscripts was an important activity at church sites. Up to about 800 AD the works being copied and written were primarily in Latin. These were mainly grammar books, comments on the scriptures, service books, litanies, lists of *Calendars* (lists of saints arranged by day of the year), church legislation, annals and *Lives of Saints*. In some cases, during their copying, important books such as the Gospels received special treatment, being illuminated by specialist scribes. The most spectacular surviving examples of this work, are the Book of Kells and the Book of Durrow, which were kept on the altar of their respective monasteries.[187]

We can see from this discussion that Christianity was openly adopted by the native population in Ireland. While the level and speed of acceptance is in some ways surprising, it would appear to be related to the familial structure of pre-Christian Ireland, which welcomed a church of similar nature. The activities carried out at these church sites, and their impact on the landscape, changed the nature of society – altering agricultural practices and methods of production. Having considered the adoption of Christianity, the following section looks in more detail at the most visible landscape manifestations of this Christian world - church sites, focusing in particular on their origins and morphology.

Socio-economic Dimensions of Early Church Sites

When writing about Christianity in Ireland, Mould's advice regarding pilgrimage is worth considering:

---

[185] Ibid, p. 10; Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 70.
[186] Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', pp 70-71.
[187] Hughes, K. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, pp 11-12.

To write of the Irish pilgrimage is to tread on dangerous ground, it is to attempt to keep a true balance between agnosticism and excessive credulity. It is easy to sneer at somebody else's superstition, and equally easy to fall into a too sentimental piety.[188]

Replacing the word pilgrimage with Christianity highlights one of the key considerations to be taken into account when researching church sites - balance. One must take cognisance of and consider both Bitel's idealistic view of early ecclesiastics as spiritual models for lay people and Ó'Corrain's secular view of church sites as centres for levying dues and controlling the local 'money trail'.[189]

As early as 1931 Ryan was writing on topics such as 'the monasteries and civil power', but his treatment of this theme was similar to many of the period. He looked on monasteries as providing 'the state' with 'a power-house of spiritual energy' rather than viewing church sites as important secular centres in their own right. Until recently the socio-economic dimensions of early church sites has been under-played, Doherty has been to the fore in highlighting the secular and trade functions of church sites, and Etchingham has strongly stressed the role the church has played as a key institution role in early medieval Ireland.[190]

While Etchingham considers that the socio-economic importance of the church may be somewhat elevated due to the ecclesiastical nature of many of the sources, Kelly also highlights the role of churches according to religious and secular sources in *A Guide to Early Irish Law*. In this volume he highlights the fact that the 'early Irish Church was not merely an organisation of pious and learned men and women: it also owned a great deal of land and other wealth'. The religious services which an ordained clergy must provide were linked to 'counter-obligations' which the laity owe the church - 'tithes, bequests, first fruits, etc.'[191] Thus, while many have acknowledged the role of the church as an important centre for trade and secular function, even in providing the fundamental church services of baptism, communion, mass, burial and preaching, economic considerations were paramount.

---

[188] Mould, D.D.C.P. (1955) *Irish Pilgrimage*, M.H. Gill, Dublin.
[189] Bitel, (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, pp 12-13; Ó Corráin, D. (2003) 'Is there parish in the early medieval Irish Church'.
[190] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 313.
Etchingham, C. (1999) *Church Organisation in Ireland AD650 to 1000*.
Doherty, C. (1980) 'Exchange and Trade in Early Medieval Ireland'; (1982) 'Some Aspects of Hagiography as a Source for Irish Economic History'; (1985) 'The Monastic Towns in Early Medieval Ireland'; (2000) 'Settlement in early Ireland: a review'; (2003) 'The concept of parish'
[191] Kelly, F. (1988) *A Guide to Early Irish Law*, p. 39, 42.

Thus, the church must be considered as an important socio-economic and political institution. These religious centres were more than just places of spiritual refuge. When one considers the status of clerics - who were treated as equal or superior in status to kings, one can see that these sites were deeply implicated in the power politics of the period and thus were important elements of the social fabric. [192]

The Establishment and Morphology of Early Church Sites

The difficulty with any examination of early Irish church sites is the problem of quantifying their occurrence. Gwynn and Hadcock in their work on medieval religious houses in Ireland, identify 196 early Irish sites, of which 53 were cathedral towns. The following map (Figure 2.1.) illustrates the main enclosures (305 sites) identified by Henry in her work. Bradley in 1987 commented that the number of 'monastic towns' is agreed by scholars to be relatively small, but does not support this view. Swan, however, in 1989 estimated that the number of enclosed early Irish church sites is unlikely to be less than 2,000 and may be considerably greater. In referring to early Irish sites, Herity comments that 'the number of early ecclesiastical sites in Ireland is so large that it would be difficult to estimate'.[193] It is probable that Swan's claims are justified, as he has shown that church sites are far more numerous than previously thought.[194] This claim is also supported by the work of Norman and St. Joseph, who have identified sites using aerial photography and other methodologies.[195]

---

[192] Ibid, p. 41.
[193] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, pp 20-47.
F. Henry, cited in Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland': 56.
Bradley, J. (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town', p. 41.
Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland', p. 55.
Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries', p. 247
[194] Swan, L. (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites'; (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland'; (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland'.
[195] Norman E. R. and St Joseph, J.K.S. (1969) 'Early Christian Sites'

FIGURE 2.1. : MAIN CHURCH ENCLOSURES IN IRELAND
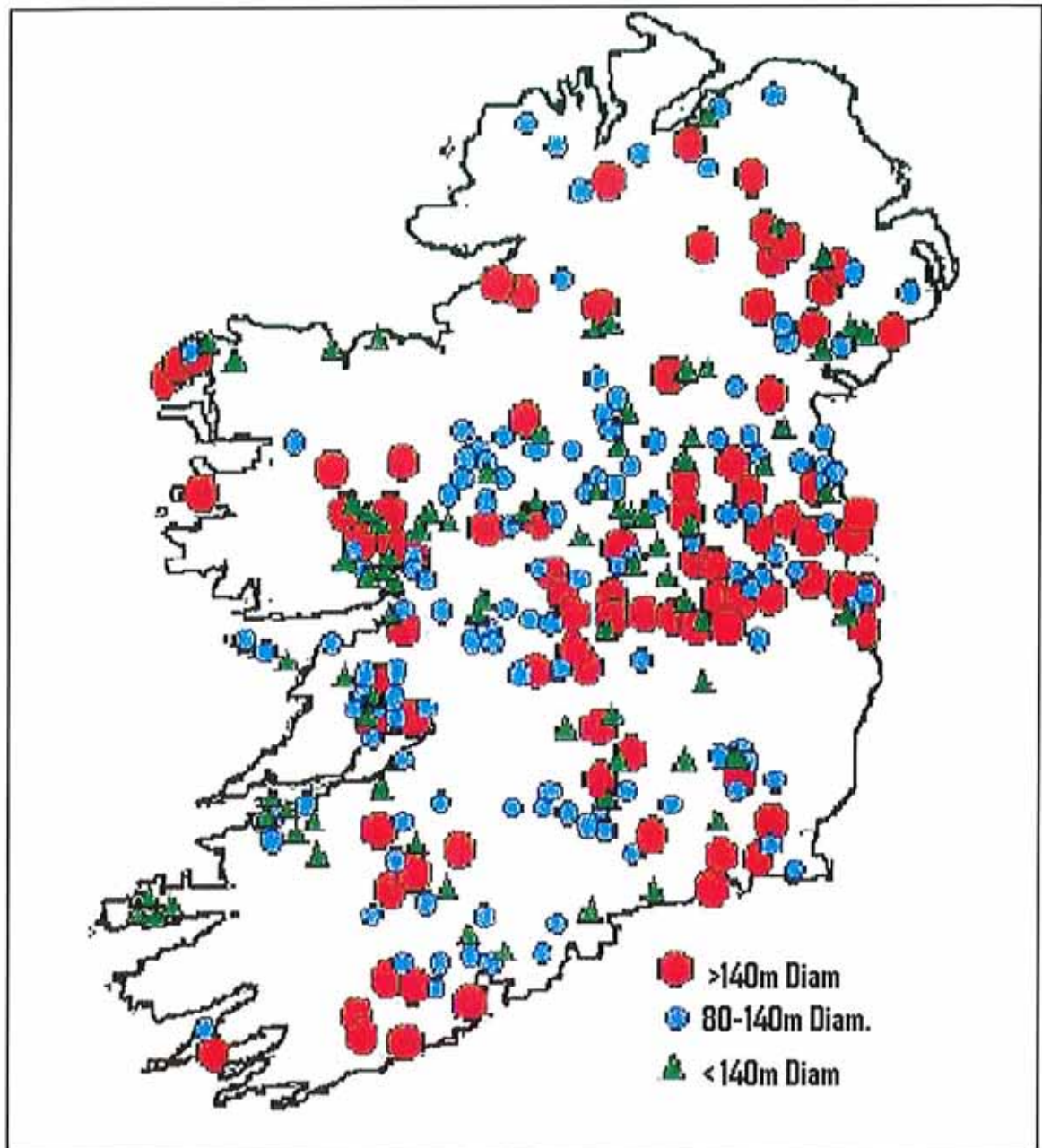
Source: Map by Swan, L. (1989)'Ecclesiastical Settlement in Ireland', p. 56, (based on Henry, F.)

The selection of a site for one of these ecclesiastical foundations was an important process. As Bitel notes:

> The early medieval world was hostile to human survival; as a result, the monks learned to seek out places on the landscape that offered natural resources, but that were also inherently holy and protective. They depended on the saints and the traditional methods of their pre-

Christian ancestors to guide them in choosing settlement sites and coaxing the land to feed them.[196]

In general, early foundations were located near other un-nucleated habitations, with only a small number of hermits choosing to live in isolation.[197] In creating their habitations, the ecclesiastics were not attempting to escape from society, but rather they reshaped the landscape with their sacred enclosures at the centre. These structures looked 'inward upon the relics of the patron saint, but they also looked outward to the lay people they served'.[198] Arising from their strong resource base, plus the protection they provided due to their recognition as a holy site, the successful church sites became important foci of social, economic, political, cultural and spiritual life in early Ireland.[199]

Over the centuries, the ecclesiastics saw that their actions had reorganised the Irish landscape to suit Christianity and its ideals. To vindicate these changes and to add further credibility to their activities, the hagiographers in their ninth-century writings explained the selection of a church site in simplified yet fantastic terms. They produced accounts of miracles, which identified suitable sites for settling, or the establishment of a church.[200] In this manner the site was chosen as a result of God's will, which was often expressed through messages from angels or through miraculous signs.[201]

Not all locations were so dramatically selected or created. It would appear that one of the clearest signs of a suitable site was the existence of previous or contemporary habitation, and/or religious usage, as occurred at both Armagh and Kildare. Successful founders of communities were those who learned to identify and exploit the signs of potential successful settlement.[202]

Ireland is an island with a broad range of landforms, which provide a 'rich mosaic of environmental zones'. Even prior to the arrival of Christianity, humans, through various modes of agricultural production had significantly altered the landscape of Ireland.[203]

---

[196] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 12.
[197] Sharpe, R. (1984) 'Some problems concerning the organisation of the church in early medieval Ireland', p. 230.
[198] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 12.
[199] Mytum, H. (1992) *The Origins of Early Christian Ireland*, pp 268-271.
[200] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 117.
[201] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 17.
[202] Reeves, W. (1860) *The Ancient Churches of Armagh*, p. 5; Simms, A. and Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*, p. 1; Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 18.
[203] Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p.92.

Despite the human intervention, however, environmental strengths and constraints were still vital in determining a physical framework within which settling occurred.[204]

It would appear that the environmental conditions in the early Christian period were different from today in a number of ways. Forest covered much more of the land and due to marsh, mountain or bog, much of the island was uncultivable.[205] The land cultivated by Neolithic and Bronze Age farmers was generally the light hillside soils, (which is now seen as marginal land) and these became drained of nutrients.[206] Consequently the later settlers moved down towards the valleys where soils were heavier and required different production methods. It was not until the fourth and fifth centuries that clearance of scrub and trees (possibly resulting from the work of church foundations) became a more permanent feature of the landscape and in many small areas of fertile soil a stable population began to establish patterns of continuous occupation. By the seventh century permanent habitation had spread over so much of the land, that laws had to be passed which reserved the cutting of certain trees to the owners of the land on which they grew.[207]

In many cases, communities of monks were in a better situation than most, to practice successful arable production.[208] Most ordinary farmers could not afford wooden ploughs, or oxen to pull them.[209] However, there is mention in a number of the saint's *Lives* of the even more advanced and expensive ironclad ploughs. Many of the communities also had sufficient numbers of participating members and good quality land to allow for efficient scales of production.[210]

In order to survive in early medieval Ireland, a community had to find a relatively hospitable corner of the landscape. Ecclesiastics were generally farmers and like their ancestors, preferred sites, which offered fresh water, well-drained clayey soil and a good supply of timber. As a result of need for access to water, hundreds of settlements in Ireland grew up which have the word 'inis' (which means island) or 'cluain' (meaning shoreline / meadow) in their names. Waterside or lakeside sites in the midst of

---

[204] Mytum, H. (1992) *The Origins of Early Christian Ireland*, p. 167.
[205] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 20.
[206] Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p.92.
[207] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 23.
[208] Ibid. p. 24.
[209] Evans E. E. (1992) *The Personality of Ireland*.
[210] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 24.

moist and fertile land provided a convenient focus for travel routes and in some cases such as island and peninsular locations, offered protection for inhabitants.[211]

In the sixth and seventh centuries, the earlier church settlers continued to use and inhabit upland and coastal sites, but also began to spread into unoccupied sites in the lower hills and valleys.[212] No church site however, was far removed from the forest. Despite the inherent dangers of bandits and animals, forests provided: wood for houses, huts and churches; fuel for fires and; a food supply in terms of game and feeding for domesticated livestock such as pigs which were often released to feed in the wild.[213]

The presence of adequate supplies of water, quality soil and wood, would have identified an ideal site for settlement, but, despite this, in a number of cases monks settled in locations which were less than ideal. This is because the landscape of the era was often already settled, thus, foundations had to make do with available space. While a number of church sites now appear to be in isolated locations, in practice they were rarely far from clustered settlements ('clachans'), or single family ringforts ('ráths'). Their apparent isolation is due to the survival of the church and surrounding structures, while the wattle and mud huts of their neighbours have disappeared.[214]

In many cases it is difficult to ascertain, whether church sites pre-date or succeed secular settlements. Excavations of sites rarely investigate the land in the vicinity of the church, providing only isolated information, ignoring the surrounding landscape. Some of the studies where further investigation has been carried out are outlined by Edwards, and these have revealed evidence of secular fabric, i.e. farming communities within or around the circular boundaries of church sites.[215] The problem is that it is difficult to identify the chronology of occupation, to establish whether the ecclesiastics or secular inhabitants were the first to settle, or if development was simultaneous.

Another factor, which was fundamental to the selection of a site was belief in the sacral (or sacred) landscape.[216] Not only were the religious interested in trees, rocks, animals and human activity, they were also concerned with happenings in the 'otherworld'. Certain locations were seen as junctions between the two worlds and believers, who

---

[211] Ibid, p. 36.
[212] Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p.77-78.
[213] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 37.
[214] Ibid.
[215] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, pp 9-11; 101-103; 122
[216] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 42.

wished to capitalise on the spiritual aura of a site, sought these locations. These points were well known before the time of Patrick, being marked by traditional indicators such as trees, wells and tumuli. Many retained their pre-Christian spiritual significance, but were re-defined in line with Christian beliefs. New sites of sacred significance were also established, mainly being sanctified by the burial of a saint's remains.[217]

An example of how a pagan site was adapted for Christian purposes may be seen in the conversion of Kildare. The Celtic high priestess Bríg (or Brigit) and her priestesses maintained an eternal fire at the site, which was later transformed into the foundation of 'Saint' Brigit and her nuns. The abbess and her followers assumed and therefore Christianised many of the duties carried out by their pagan predecessors including the maintenance of the sacred fire.[218] The use of sacred trees called 'bile' and also sacred wells and forests, would appear to have been an established activity with obvious links to Celtic Druids and Shamans.[219]

As already mentioned, the location of other habitations influenced church site selection. In some cases, neighbours guided the founders to a site, in others they limited the choice. Due to the scarcity of good quality arable land, there was little untamed wilderness which would have been suitable for new agricultural production, therefore, the ecclesiastics sought to acquire land which had been previously inhabited, either through donation or by other means.

If family land was provided for a church, this had to be with the agreement of the entire kin group who were sometimes instrumental in establishing the foundation. Land inherited by women had to pass back to the kin group after the death of the recipient, thus, family land could never be handed over by a woman. This would explain somewhat, the fact that while there were many women in early Ireland who followed the monastic lifestyle, there are only four major women's foundations, which survived over long periods (Kildare, Killeedy, Killevy and Clonbroney).[220]

One means of acquiring land was to occupy abandoned land.[221] In some instances the evidence suggests that ecclesiastics may have used abandoned ringforts or other secular

---

[217] Ibid, pp 42-43.
[218] Doherty, C. (1985) 'The Monastic Towns in Early Medieval Ireland', pp 61-62.
[219] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, pp 44-45.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid, p. 38.

sites. Kells, which has been extensively examined by Simms, is one such site.[222] In prehistoric times Kells was the site of a 'dún' settlement which was sited on the road leading to the prehistoric site of Rathcroghan in County Roscommon.[223] This acquiring of abandoned forts and enclosures was either at the invitation of the owner, or after they had stood unused and empty of inhabitants. The abandonment of these ringforts may have been due to fourth or fifth century demographic changes, or else as Bitel suggests arising from the site's lack of permanent habitation. Such sites may have been inauguration enclosures that were only used for kingship rites and assemblies. The use of old forts meant that a ritual site was adopted, thus encompassing the sacred as well as the physical landscape.[224]

It would appear that many owners of land were happy to donate land to the church.[225] Others made a gift of land to ecclesiastics in return for services such as healing. In these cases, members of wealthy families often established religious communities as a means of providing income for themselves and also gaining in a spiritual manner.[226] Members of wealthy families often formed the inner core of administrators, assuming roles of bishop and priest(s), abbot, steward and head of the school.[227] There were also other tangible economic reasons for a family founding a church in this manner. Church land was free from royal dues, thus, the change in status may have been for financial motives. Families could avoid paying costly burial dues to individuals outside the kin group in addition to the possibility of increased revenue accruing from tithes, first fruits, firstlings, rents, and burial dues.[228]

Ecclesiastics who were unable to receive land from zealous converts, or from their kin group were left to fend for themselves in land which required either considerable farming, or was un-productive. Some actively campaigned by offering their services in exchange for land. In other cases communities used more threatening means, such as

---

[222] Simms, A. and Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*; Simms, A. (1994) 'Kells'
[223] Simms, A. and Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*, p. 1.
[224] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 38.
[225] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 285.
[226] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 40
[227] Charles-Edwards, T. (1984) 'The Church and Settlement', p. 171; Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity' p. 68.
[228] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 40; Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 142; Charles-Edwards, T. (1984) 'The Church and Settlement', p. 167.

withholding their services, or even threatening to turn rituals against individuals who were reluctant to donate.[229]

Support for the existence of large numbers of church sites may be found in the historical sources. According to the seventh century *Liber Angeli* or 'Book of the Angel', which is to be found in the book of Armagh, there are three grades or classes of church. This classification would suggest that there were sufficient numbers of establishments to merit such a division. The first is the 'Ecclesia libera' or 'free church', which is not attached to any of the federations and is free from any tenancy or occupation obligations. Secondly is the 'Civitas ab aepiscopali gradu' or 'city of episcopal rank' and the churches attached to it. The third rank is 'dominicus' or 'domnach', which would appear to refer to early foundations.[230]

Numerous other references are made to classes of church buildings and chapels, with a wide range of terms being used throughout the early manuscripts - often based on the kinds of materials used to build the churches. For example, a distinction is drawn between 'dairthech' (literally 'oak house') and 'damliac' (stone church), but, there are also references to churches made of wattles and mud or clay.[231] Wood however was the most usual construction material. In their comments about church sites the hagiographers (writers of the saints' *Lives*) used a wide range of terms to refer to church sites – 'eclais', 'domnach', 'tempull', 'reiclés', 'ecclesia', 'cellula', 'oratarium', 'monasterium', 'civitas'.[232] The term used varied according to location, resources, size status and function, yet the sites, which were documented, were generally the large and successful ones. Bitel points out that:

> The hagiographers wrote for and about the most successful monastic communities and hardly admitted the existence of small hermitages, oratories, tiny shrines operated privately by family groups and episcopal sites.[233]

The approach taken by the hagiographers therefore does not take into account the wide variety in function and appearance of church sites, which the extant physical evidence would imply.

---

[229] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 41.
[230] Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland', pp. 50.
[231] Hamlin, A. (1984) 'The study of early Irish churches', p. 118.
[232] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 58.
[233] Ibid.

It is accepted that in fifth century Ireland, religious life came in two distinct styles.[234] Firstly, the secluded life of the hermitage and secondly, the community which was by far the more dominant. Further variety was added by the presence of both secular and regular clergy, the inclusion of both 'native' and 'foreign' religious, and the fact that there were communities of both brothers and sisters.[235] In function too, they varied enormously. According to Heron:

> The Irish monasteries were really industrial colonies, devoted in a
> large degree to productive labour and to the cultivation of the useful
> arts - to some extent, even of the fine arts and of learning, as well as to
> the practice of the 'religious life'.[236]

The Irish foundations followed the style adopted by church fathers in other countries, being closer in style to the settlements of the Nile valley rather than the great continental constructions of Monte Cassino or Clairvaux.[237] In establishing the influences on, and comparisons with the Irish tradition, Ryan cites the example of Tabennisi, and other settlements of the Pachomian group.[238] Leask draws parallels between the Irish foundations and communities in Syria and Egypt where monks dwelt under self-imposed discipline in separate cells, which were grouped in complexes called a 'laura' around one or more churches.[239] These foreign models closely parallel the various functions and organisation of the early Irish church sites. The lesser importance of the buildings in Ireland compared with continental foundations is hinted at in the use of the word 'muintir', which was used in relation to the people rather than the structures.[240]

There are a number of factors, which have deterred the excavation of church sites. Examination of the ground within enclosures is often made difficult by the obscuring of

---

[234] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 68; O'Crónín, D. (1991) 'Early Irish Christianity', p.131 and Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 99.

[235] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 99; Cerbelaud-Salagnac, G (1960) 'The monasteries of Ireland, nurseries of saints', pp 31-32.

[236] Heron, J. (1898) *The Celtic Church in Ireland*, p. 142.

[237] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 293; Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 68.

[238] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 293. Herbermann, C. G. et al (1907-1914) *The Catholic Encyclopedia*: About the year 318 a St. Pachomius, who was a disciple of Saint Anthony, is believed to have been the first to organise hermits into groups. He founded his first monastery at Tabennisi near Denderah (central Egypt). This lifestyle spread with surprising rapidity and by the date of St. Pachomius' death (c. 345) there were eight monasteries and several hundred monks.

[239] Leask, H. G. (1955-1960) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, p. 11; Herbermann, C. G. et al (1907-1914) *The Catholic Encyclopedia*; Leask, H. G. *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, p. 11.

[240] Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 68.

early Christian features by generations of subsequent burials. Also, the churches and buildings within sites have often been refurbished, remodelled and replaced throughout the centuries from late medieval times.[241] Due to these factors, only a very small number of the estimated 2,000 sites have been excavated in any detail. The following sections draw information from these excavated sites and from the various documentary sources, in an effort to build a more complete picture of the layout and form of early Irish church sites.[242]

Herity has outlined a number of practices which were adopted by clerics and can be seen as fundamental features of the transition by the Irish to Christianity (and thus, have a bearing on religious life and on the layout of church sites). These include: the adoption of Roman dress and tonsures; the use of a shepherds' crook or 'bachall'; and; the use of the bell and the vellum bound rectangular gospel and Psalter. In converting to Christianity new skills were required, particularly writing Latin and the accurate computation of calendar dates, to ensure accuracy of feast-day celebrations. The adoption of the accompanying Christian art is an indication of fundamental transition as it required radical change from the organic Celtic (curvilinear) forms to the geometric book form, with the cross as an important central motif.[243] The adoption of the rectangular church, which accompanied these other changes, is of fundamental importance to this investigation of church sites. The interplay between these more formal Christian forms and the earlier free-flowing motifs can be seen throughout the religious fabric of Ireland.

Swan has identified a range of structural features, which are constantly associated with church sites, and these are set out in Table 2.1. many of these features would have been placed within the area of the inner enclosure or 'sanctissimus' and are dealt with in detail in the following sections.[244] The presence of individual elements may be related to the importance of the site, but most likely result from a complex interplay of influences and opportunities and thus, this list may be considered as a potential list rather than a statement of factors which must be present.

---

[241] Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries', p. 247.

[242] Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland', p. 55.

[243] Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries', p. 247.

[244] Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland', pp 77-81 and; (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites'; Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 148

TABLE 2.1. : FEATURES WHICH AID IN THE IDENTIFICATION OF CHURCH SITES

Enclosures:
      Curvilinear inner enclosure (may be coterminous with graveyard boundary).
      Curvilinear outer enclosure (often identified in property or townland boundary).
Architectural Features:
      Church(es) .
      Pillar stone / carved, shaped, inscribed or decorated stone cross or slab.
      Burial ground(s)
      Founder's tomb.
      Round tower.
      Platea.
      Holy well.
      Souterrain.
      Bullaun stone.
Non-Religious Features:
      Radiating roads & prominent eastern approach road.
      Curvilinear trend in surrounding landscape (i.e. property boundaries, etc.)
      Market area.
Local Evidence:
      Place-name(s) with religious element.
      Associated traditional ritual or folk custom.

Based on: Swan (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns' pp 77-81; (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites' p. 274

One of the primary elements of a church site was a surrounding wall or enclosure, which generally took the circular form of a 'lios'/'less', or 'ráth'. In many cases these would appear to have been double enclosures (an inner and an outer), that demarcated varying degrees of sanctity. The boundary also provided privacy and protected access to the jealously controlled relics of the saints, contained the aura of the saint, and also sent a message across the Christian landscape to announce the presence of clerics.[245] According to Graham, similar examples to the Irish sites may be found in the Merovingian and Anglo-Saxon cases which:

> [were] always sited within a ward or enclosure, which was not defensive but rather a definition of the sacred bounds of the monastery before the development of a cloister.[246]

In early Ireland there existed professional ráth-builders, but the ecclesiastics themselves may have built many of the structures. Ryan identifies excerpts from various documents such as Adamnán's life of St. Columba which detail the construction of fosse and ditch

---

[245] Ibid.

[246] Graham, B.J. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 32.

in the monasteries of Iona and Clonmacnois, and the continental monasteries of Bobbio and Remiremont.[247]

Swan has illustrated that enclosures range in size from 30 to 400 metres in diameter, with 90 to 120 metres being the most common size.[248] Most enclosures are elliptical in shape, but, some such as Clonmacnois are rectilinear in layout. According to *The Tripartite life of St Patrick*, the patron saint made all his foundations on a uniform scale, allowing *c*.42 meters as the diameter, or a circumference of approximately 150 meters.[249] Looking at the surviving structures it appears that there were many variations. The enclosure on Árdoileán off the Galway coast and Nendrum in County Down were sub-circular and not entirely regular in outline.[250] Clonmacnois generally curvilinear in shape, was considerably longer than it was broad, as was Glendalough.[251] Where walls were rectangular or irregular in shape, this may have been influenced by the surface and elevation of the terrain.[252]

An example from the *Vitae (Vitae Sanctorum* or *Saints' Lives)*, which highlights the importance to ecclesiastics of adhering in principle to the circular shape of enclosures can again be found at Cell Áirt.[253] During the construction of this site, an enormous boulder was discovered which halted the workers, who were digging the ditch and constructing the walls. The presence of the boulder would have meant relocating the enclosure, but their employer, who was a 'saint', easily moved the rock 'with a miraculous gesture'. Disregarding the supernatural occurrence, the reluctance to reshape or divert the walls indicates a commitment to the shape, size and overall plan of the proposed enclosure.[254]

As with their layout, there is evidence of varying materials being used in the construction of the enclosing structures, with them being formed of stone/earth, a wooden fence or a thorn hedge.[255] Many of the foundations in the midlands and east of

---

[247] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 285.
[248] Swan, L. (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites'; (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland'; (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland'.
[249] Stokes, W. (Ed.) *The Tripartite Life of Patrick and Other Documents Relating to the Saint* discussed in Ryan, J. *(*1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 286.
[250] Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries', p. 248.
[251] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 286.
[252] Ibid; Norman E. R. and St Joseph, J.K.S. (1969) 'Early Christian Sites', p. 96.
[253] Heist, W. W. (Ed), *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae* cited by Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 59.
[254] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 59.
[255] Graham, B. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 32.

the country were surrounded by an earthen 'vallum' similar to their secular counterparts.[256] It is possible that a hedge or palisade may have stood on top of these banks. Kilreelig, which is in County Kerry, is circular in form and had dry-stone walls marking its boundary. The 'civitas' on the island of Farne was surrounded by a masonry wall, which was almost circular in shape and made of rough stone and sods.[257]

The scale of the structures would also appear to have varied. While Graham suggests that it is likely the vallum was a relatively insignificant feature, Dundesert in County Antrim for example, was surrounded by a large almost circular 'fosse' or trench/ditch.[258] The earth from this trench had been placed up on the inside as a bank, resulting in a slope which was about six or seven metres high and embedded in this were large stones. About seven metres inside this was another concentric fosse and rampart and inside all this was an area where the church and burial ground stood.[259]

Curiously for such an impressive structure, except for the case of Glendalough there appears to have been no gatehouse on these enclosures. While Leask comments that gateways 'must have been a not uncommon feature of the enclosed settlements of primitive monasticism, in Ireland', the masonry structure at Glendalough is the only surviving example of such a feature.[260]

In a number of cases the enclosing structures appear to be similar in formation to the Celtic tradition of constructing stone forts as at Dundesert and Kilreelig.[261] Ryan makes a strong distinction between religious enclosures and military fortifications ('Dún') or high places ('Dind'), which were dotted around the countryside.[262] These claims may be supported by reference to Bede's account of Cuthbert's hermitage on the island of Farne, which could be considered as explaining the purpose of enclosures:

> The wall itself is higher than a man standing upright, but inside he
> made it much higher by cutting away the living rock so that the pious
> inhabitant could see nothing except the sky from his dwelling, thus,

[256] Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries', pp 248-249.
[257] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 286
[258] Graham, B. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 32; Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 286.
[259] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 286.
[260] Leask, H. (1963) *Glendalough*, p. 30.
[261] Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries', p. 248.
[262] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*. p. 285

restraining both the lust of the eyes and the thoughts and lifting the whole bent of his mind to higher things.[263]

It would appear therefore that the 'vallum monasterii' served a number of functions: it delimited property for legal and spiritual purposes while also protecting inhabitants from the elements.[264]

In some European cases, by the eleventh century enclosures were fundamentally defensive. In Ireland, the scale of some of the enclosures might imply a highly defensive structure, which could be supported by evidence of fighting between foundations.[265] Despite this evidence, there is:

> not a solitary documentary example of a monastery being successfully defended against a raid.[266]

While it is possible (as suggested by Graham) that the role of enclosures may have changed over time, to assume a fortified function for these enclosures would require documentary or archaeological proof which has not yet been presented.

The actual defence provided by the enclosure was most likely linked with the concept of spiritual sanctuary. The most important deterrent, therefore, being moral. Persons or property within the church or its boundaries were 'immune from attack', the level of spirituality varying with distance from the core:

> [T]he most holy space and artefacts at the core of the platea, separated by a vallum from the lay suburbana which lay beyond.[267]

Thus, attention has turned away from the recognition of surrounding enclosures as fortifications towards them being seen as a means of identifying an early church site, symbolically representing the social status and wealth of a community.[268]

Once a site was selected for occupation, it had to be sanctified by a 'triduum' (three days of religious observance) or more of fasting and prayer. If the site was donated by a local king or family and had already been inhabited, much of the preliminary work could be avoided, but if the site was previously uninhabited the founder had to mark out

---

[263] Colgrave, B. (1969) *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English people* cited in Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries', p. 249

[264] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 58; Laing, L. (1975) *The Archaeology of Late Celtic Britain and Ireland*, p. 375.

[265] Graham, B.J. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 35.

[266] Ibid.

[267] Ibid, pp 27-28.

[268] Ibid, p. 32.

the boundaries of the settlement.[269] According to Bitel, the marking of boundaries was a three-stage activity:

- First the saint with spades or words of blessing, or both marked the outer limit of the locus. While the walls were sometimes built after the churches and cells, it was believed by the clerics that invisible boundaries of the sacred space came into being once they had been marked by the saint;

- The second step of the process was the indication of the spiritual centre of the site by the saint who marked out the walls of a church, oratory, cemetery and marked it with relics;

- The third step was to divide and lay out the inner spaces of the enclosure.[270]

The blessing of a new site was a highly symbolic practice, as can be seen in the life of St Patrick. In the *Vita Tripartita*, an account is given of the blessing of space and limits of 'Druim Caili'. In sanctifying this foundation the outer limits were defined by Patrick, with a procession which involved the elders of the community, Patrick's 'muintir' (family / retinue), his 'bachall' (clerical staff), and also in attendance were angels.[271] The saint specified the measurements for the enclosure's outer limits and the major buildings and he instructed his followers to do likewise.[272] Maédóc, in his founding of Ros Inbir blessed the site, aided by 'a multitude of angels and . . . saints circling above'.[273]

The strength or power of a consecration was strongly dependent on the status of the saint. According to Cogitosus, who wrote the *Life of Saint Brigit*, the Kildare saint defined invisible limits, which were as effective as walls in keeping intruders out and holiness in. Cogitosus was so convinced of Brigit's power that he thought walls were not needed in Kildare.[274] The symbolism of the enclosure was central to the whole concept of Christianity. The ecclesiastics, through their lifestyle and their structures attempted 'to create a place that existed simultaneously on this earthly plane and on the eternal plane'.[275] The circular enclosure was seen to act as a replication of the cosmos

---

[269] Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 285
[270] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 61.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Stokes, W. (1887) *The Tripartite Life of Patrick and Other Documents Relating to the Saint* cited in Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 61.
[273] Plummer, C. (Ed.) (1997/1922) *Bethada Náem nErenn*.
[274] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 63.
[275] Ibid, p. 61.

and thus this shape predominated in the structures which they built, becoming a universal feature in the morphology of Irish church sites.[276]

From the early sources we know that the first Irish churches were built from many different materials. The earliest structures were regularly made from wood 'of smoothed planks usually oak (with a stone altar), closely and strongly fastened together' and there are many references to such wooden structures in the saints' *Lives*.[277] Mention is made of 'fair boarded churches' constructed from smooth planks with wooden shingles or thatch on the roof. A small body of archaeological material supports this documentary information. Some remains of wooden churches have been found under subsequent stone structures at sites i.e. Church Island off Valencia, Nendrum, Co. Down and White Island, Co Fermanagh, with similar patterns evident in southwest Scotland and south Wales.[278] Hamlin in her work on early Irish churches, brings together a number of references from the annals which deal with the materials that were used to build churches:

- In 892 wooden churches were blown away;
- In 1099 a stone church at Ardstraw was burned;
- Tirechán's memoir of St. Patrick specified a church built of earth;
- Mochaoi of Nendrum collected wattles to build a church and;
- Malachy built a church of woven twigs.[279]

Despite all this documentary evidence, there is no surviving wooden church, and the archaeological material is scant.

In the annals there is a distinction drawn between the 'dairthech' (literally 'oak house') and the 'damliac' (stone church) and there are varying rates of pay laid down in the laws for builders of timber and stone structures.[280] From the 8th-10th century stone churches are recorded at important sites, and their existence became much more common by the 11th and 12th centuries.[281] It is likely that the evolution of building materials was a

---

[276] See Crowley, C. (2000) for a full discussion of cosmological influences on the layout of curvilinear church enclosures.

[277] Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity'. p. 68; From the Life of St. Malachy, cited in Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 287.

[278] Hughes, K. and Hamlin A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 59; Hamlin, A. (1984) 'The study of early Irish churches', p. 123.

[279] Hamlin, A. (1984) 'The study of early Irish churches', p. 117.

[280] Ibid.

[281] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 112.

gradual process. This is borne out in the use of shingled roofs, and other timber 'skeuomorphs' such as winged/butterfly finials at the ends of roof ridges in the oratories at Freshford and Kilmalkedar (Figure 2.2.), which suggest that stone buildings preserved wooden design influences, despite the transition.[282]

FIGURE 2.2. : WINGED FINIALS - SUGGESTING INFLUENCE OF WOODEN CONSTRUCTION
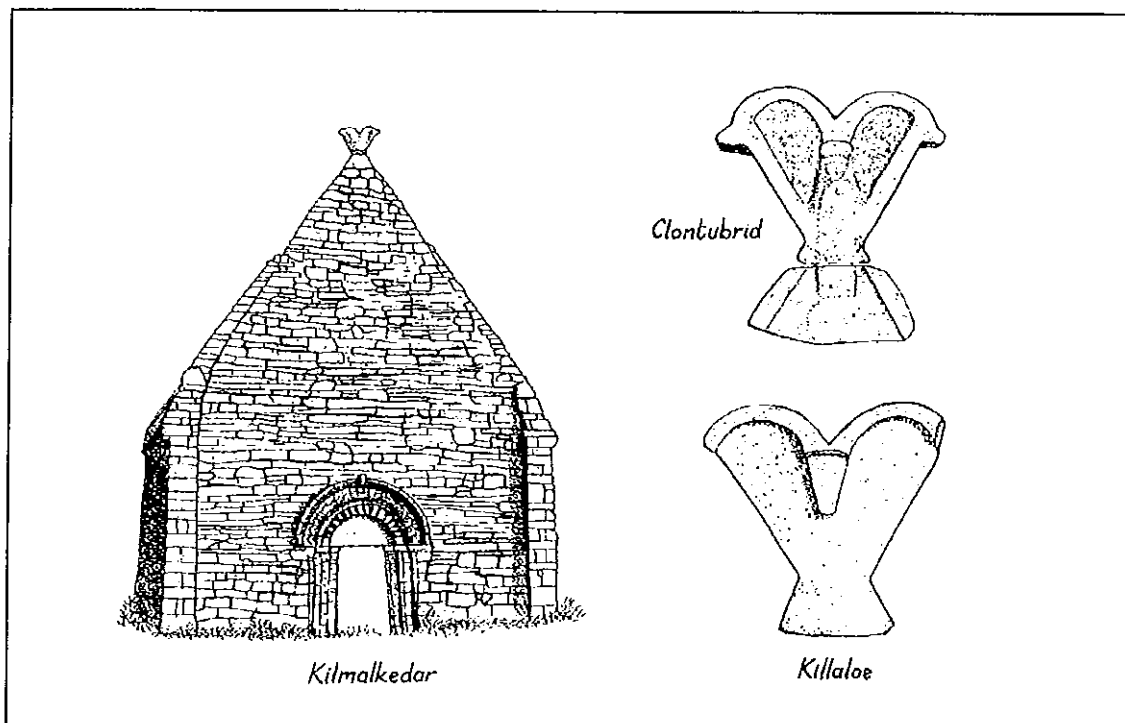
Source :Hughes, K. & Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 59.

Since the 19th century there has been a tradition of churches and oratories being examined and recorded in minute detail, and there is a wealth of publications documenting these structures. At a national level, Petrie, Champneys and Leask, have carried out this work while Westropp at the end of the 19th century carried out research into the origins of Irish church structures at a more localised level.[283] However, just as excavation of enclosures has been lacking, 'our knowledge of . . . churches is still very

---

[282] Laing, L. (1975) *The Archaeology of late Celtic Britain and Ireland*, pp 384-385; Hughes, K and Hamlin A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 59.

[283] Champneys, A.C. (1910) *Irish Ecclesiastical Architecture*.
Leask, H. G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings* (3 volumes).
Petrie, G. (1845) *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*.
Westrop, T.J. (1895) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick'; (1900) 'The churches of County Clare, and the origin of the ecclesiastical divisions in that County'.

far from complete'.[284] This is very much the case with the dating of churches, which until recently has been heavily reliant on the early sources and typological analysis rather than an holistic approach which involves study of structures against comparative material in Britain and the Continent and further archaeological evidence.[285]

Based on the available sources of information, a number of characteristics regarding the placing and distribution of churches may be deduced: First, multiple churches are a common feature of many sites - reference to churches in the plural is made in a number of locations for both Glendalough and Clonmacnois.[286] A common layout pattern is the existence of a major church for big congregations and smaller churches to house relics or to cater for particular groups. In some cases, these buildings are clustered together in the enclosure but in other cases the location of the secondary churches would appear to reflect some form of restriction or preference. Armagh and Clonmacnois are examples where secondary churches for use by nuns are placed apart from the inner enclosure or outside the main enclosure respectively.[287]

Regarding the orientation of the churches, there is little mention in the annals. A church known as 'Cell Tarsna', which is mentioned in the *Martyrology of Gorman*, is described as 'a transverse church, whose orientation is north and south not east and west'.[288] The churches at Derry, Saul and Temple Benen on Inishmore are all reputed to have been orientated north south. The fact that the north-south orientation of these churches has been commented on, implies that this was not the normal practice and thus, merited particular attention.

Solid enclosures were not the only markers used to identify the limits of a site. Bitel lists the different types of boundary markers as defined in the laws: 'a flat mark, a stone mark, a tree mark, a deer mark, a stock mark, a mound mark, a division mark and a water mark, a defect mark and a way mark'.[289] In some cases, trespassing over un-marked land carried no penalty at all. Legal fines were severe, however, if one trespassed over boundaries which were properly marked with fences or ditches. In this

---

[284] Hamlin, A. (1984) 'The study of early Irish churches', p. 117.
[285] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 112; Hamlin, A. (1984) 'The study of early Irish churches', pp 118-121.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 112.
[288] Hamlin, A. (1984) 'The study of early Irish churches', p. 119.
[289] Hancock, W. N. et al. (Eds) (1865-1901) *The Ancient Laws of Ireland* cited in Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 64

manner, ecclesiastics used stone crosses or cross-inscribed slabs as defining boundaries and limits. To add to the secular significance of such markers, the canonists, or church law-makers, instructed Christians: 'wherever you find the mark of Christ's cross, do not damage'.[290] Thus, the cross had powers other than the purely physical, they were used for symbolically enclosing sacred space.[291]

There are records of crosses having additional supernatural powers such as the ability to heal ailing pilgrims.[292] In some cases such as Dísert Bethech it would appear that crosses provided the only protection from the surrounding landscape, but as Herity indicates, this practice may have arisen mainly at hermitic locations.[293] It was more common for clerics to enclose their community with a wall, but examples also exist where double protection was provided by using crosses in conjunction with an enclosure i.e. Castle Kieran and Ferna Mór.[294]

Crosses were not scattered meaninglessly around the enclosure, they were carefully placed to demarcate the enclosure or act as protective markers at internal thresholds.[295] In the stylised plan of an ecclesiastical site in the Book of Moling (Figure 2.3.), a double circle is shown, with named crosses at the cardinal points, at intermediate points and also within the enclosure.[296]

The symbol of Christ was placed on gates and doorways. In some cases this was not in an overtly public manner, as in the case of the carved cross under the lintel of the door at St. Mary's church in Glendalough.[297] It was believed in addition to their earthly protective role that crosses marked and protected portals that opened to heaven above. For this reason, crosses may have been located at cosmic entrances and exits which were invisible to un-believing eyes. The routeway to heaven was believed to begin inside the religious enclosure and thus, crosses were the symbolic signposts, which marked the way.[298]

---

[290] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 64
[291] Herity, M. (1984) 'The layout of Irish early Christian monasteries', p. 108.
[292] Wasserschleben, H. Ed *Die Irische Kanonensammlung*, p. 175 cited in Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, pp 64-65
[293] Herity, M. (1983) 'The Buildings and Layout of Early Irish Monasteries'.
[294] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 64
[295] Ibid.
[296] Herity, M. (1983) 'The Buildings and Layout of Early Irish Monasteries', p. 270.
[297] Leask, H. (1963) *Glendalough*, pp 15-16.
[298] Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, pp 64-66.

FIGURE 2.3. : DRAWING OF ILLUSTRATION FROM BOOK OF MOLING
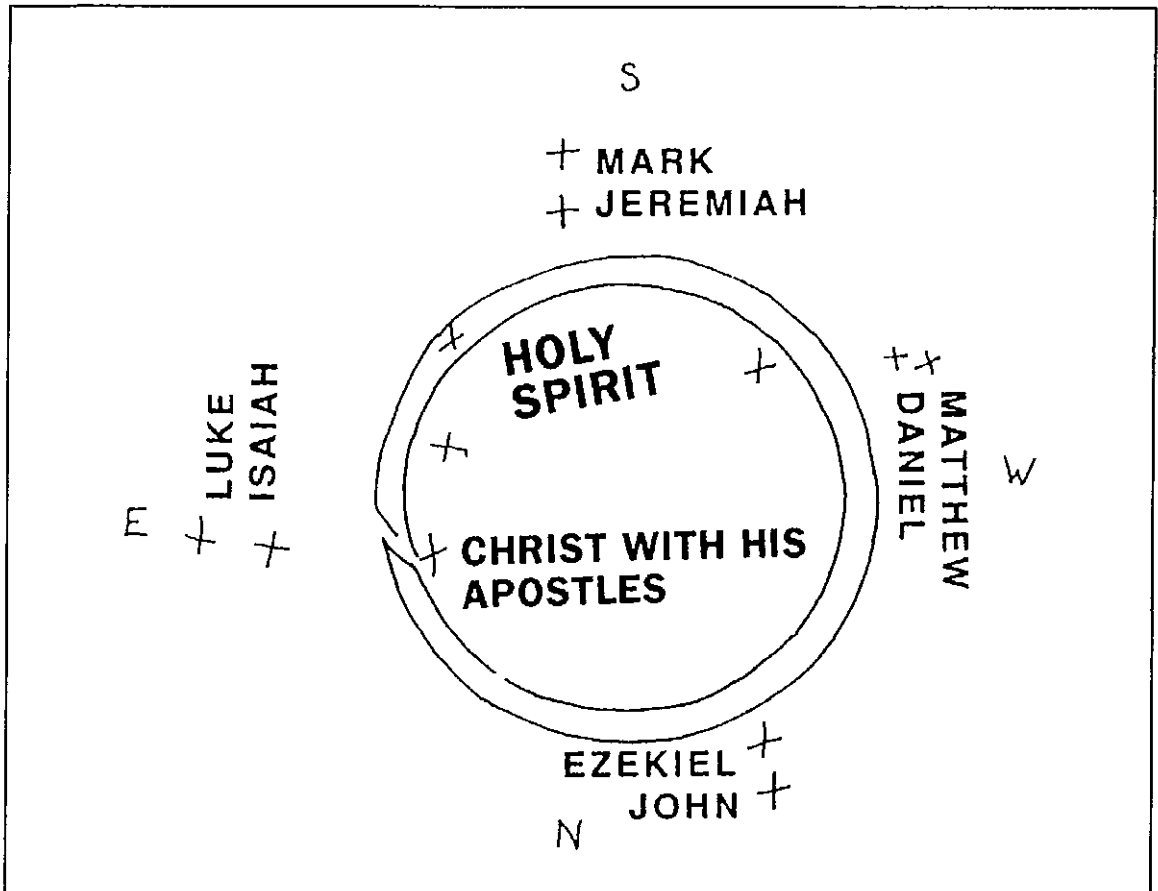
Source : Richardson, R. & Scarry, J. (1990) *Irish high Crosses*, p. 15.

The earliest crosses in Ireland are (cross-carved) standing stones, which reflect attempts to 'Christianise' already existing stones in locations with pagan associations. The carvings on these upright cross-carved pillar stones probably range in date from the sixth century. Another form of cross-carving appears on recumbent stones which date from the seventh century onwards. These are popular grave-markers which were often decorated with crosses.[299]

The best known of the carved crosses, however, are the free-standing, three dimensional monuments often referred to as 'high crosses', which have been investigated by historians, archaeologists and art historians, who have written a plethora of publications on the subject (Figure 2.4.).[300] Earlier carved slabs show evidence of Greek and Latin

---

[299] Hughes, K and Hamlin A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 85.
[300] Some examples include:

64

influence i.e. use of the 'Chi-rho' monogram for Christ's name which is common in Continental inscriptions. It would appear, however, that high crosses evolved as an independent development in Britain and Ireland during the course of the eighth century. These free-standing crosses have been described as 'one of the outstanding contributions of the British Isles to Early Christian art'.[301]

FIGURE 2.4. : HIGH CROSSES AT DYSERT O'DEA AND KILFENORA
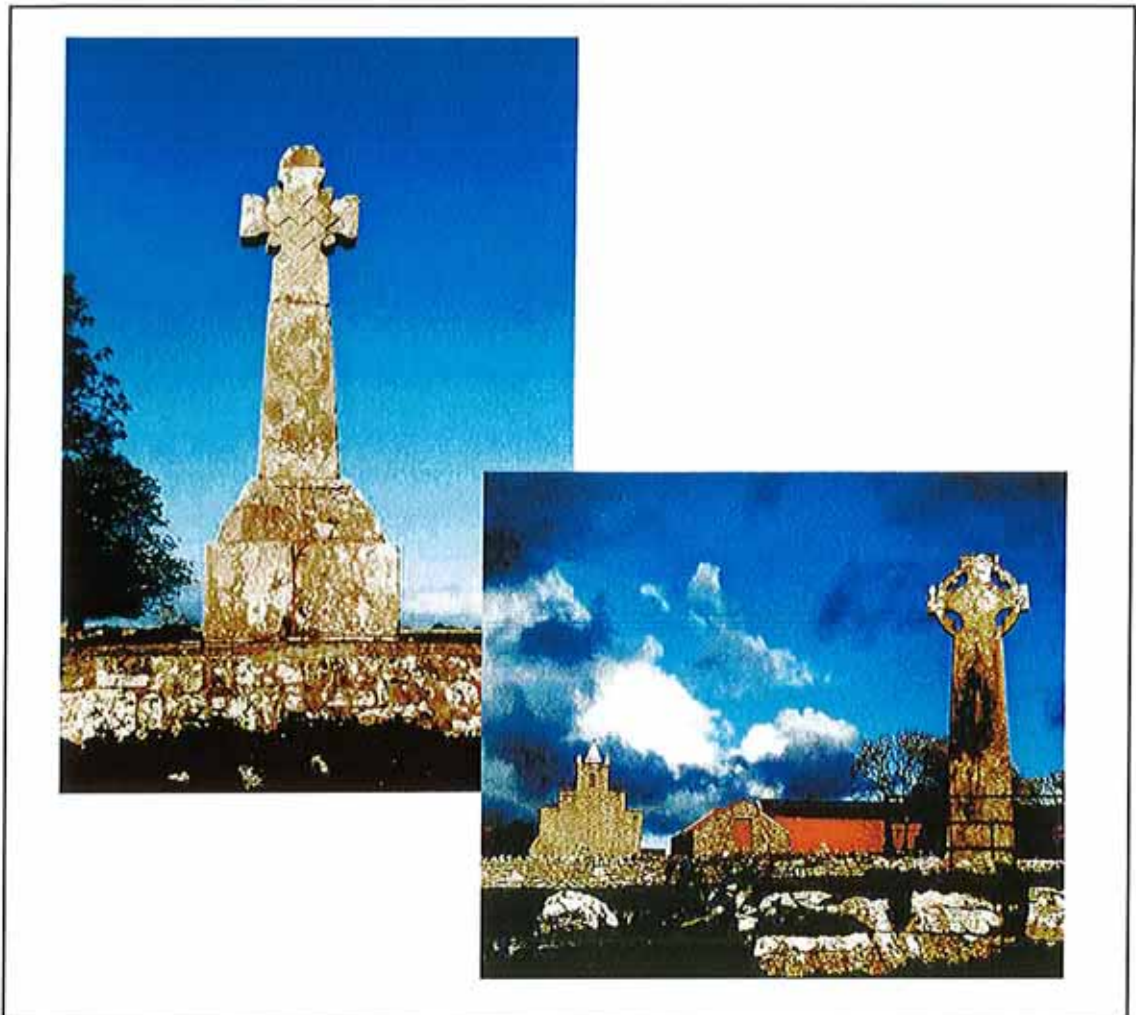
Calvert, J.A. (1978) *The Early Development of Irish High Crosses and their Relationship to Scottish Sculpture in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*;
Harbison, P. (1992) *The High Crosses of Ireland: an Iconographical and Photographic Survey*;
Henry, F. (1964) *Irish High Crosses*;
Richardson, H. and Scarry, J. (1990) *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses*;
Richardson, H. (1984) 'The Concept of the High Cross' ; Stalley, R. (1996) *Irish High Crosses*.
[301] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 162; Hughes, K and Hamlin A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 87.

Burial grounds are found near or around the main church in almost all sites, with carved grave-slabs providing the surface evidence for burials, though these are seldom found 'in situ'. There may in some sites have been a separation of burial grounds, with graveyards for specific groups adjacent to particular churches.[302]

It was believed that relics of the founder, or a revered saint created a direct link with their divine power, bringing great spiritual and material rewards to a foundation. Thus, these were regarded as important treasures. Relics could include the bodily remains of saints, articles connected with them such as; bells, staffs, books and portions of clothing and there are many stories of individuals being sent to Rome to collect these items, which would raise the status of a site.[303] Remains could be housed in a portable casket held within a church, or in other examples they were buried in a location marked by a cross-carved stone, a mound of earth, a small enclosure or saints' 'bed', or even a shrine shaped stone structure. In Ireland this practice led to the adoption of the Gaelic word 'reilig' which means both graveyard and relic.[304]

The 'platea' or 'plateola' - was a courtyard, which provided a walking, or assembly area for the ecclesiastics. This element was mentioned in Adamnán's writings about Iona. The Platea may have been located to the west of the principal church, where crosses may also have been placed. Edwards suggest that the western cross at Clonmacnois may be an example of this arrangement as is likely in the case of the possible paved area in the inner enclosure at Glendalough.[305]

A feature, which appears in a number of sites from the 10th century onwards is a tall tapering round tower, built of mortared stone. The 65 surviving towers in Ireland are in varying states of survival, ranging from Kilmacduagh and Glendalough which are complete with conical roofs, to Nendrum and St. Mullin's where only stumps of towers survive. The tallest extant tower is the one at Kilmacduagh (34.28m), but it would appear that their size varied: height ranged from approximately 23 m to 34m, with walls approximately 1m thick, and bases of 5-6m in diameter.[306] The doorway in all but one is raised (up to 4.5m) above ground level and each tower has several storeys with the top

---

[302] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 113.
[303] See Ryan J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 359; Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, pp 66-71.
[304] Hughes, K and Hamlin A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 77.
[305] Herity, M. (1984) 'The layout of Irish early Christian monasteries', Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 113, Leask, H.J. (1963) *Glendalough Co. Wicklow*

story frequently having four small windows located at the cardinal points. In many sites such as Clonmacnois, Glendalough, Kildare, Nendrum, Monasterboice and Lusk, towers are located to the northwest of the main church.[307]

Many functions have been suggested for these round towers including a place of refuge, a storage space or repository for relics/treasures or a library.[308] These claims are often supported by references in the annals, which would indicate that the towers were used as sacristies to house relics, books and other valuables.[309] Considering the common usage of the term 'cloigthech' or 'bell house', however, it is possible that Petrie's assessment in 1845 is accurate and that the principal function was as a belfry.[310] Edwards supports this theory and comments that bells would not have been hung but instead hand-bells would have been rung from the windows at the top.[311] O'Keeffe contests the fact, asking if such a prominent structure would have been necessary for such a basic function.[312] Towers may have had multiple uses - their defensive properties being doubtful. Thus, it is suggested that their functions may have ranged from spiritual / sacramental, to being used as beacons and watch-towers.[313] Whatever their purpose, these structures which dominated the landscape, must have been powerful symbols of authority and visible from great distances.

The dating of round towers has also been difficult. Barrow claimed that they may have been built as early as the seventh century but Edwards points out the absence of documentary evidence prior to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, further supporting her argument by noting the presence of Romanesque architectural and ornamental features on many towers.[314]

A common element of many sites is the presence of ancillary buildings. As has been discussed, many buildings within sites would have been made of wood and thus, these structures have not survived.

[306] Hughes, K and Hamlin A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 69; Barrow, G.L. (1979) *The Round Towers of Ireland*, pp 100-104

[307] Herity, M. (1983) 'The Buildings and Layout of Early Irish Monasteries', p. 260; Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 112.

[308] Long, H. (1998) Guided tour of Glendalough.

[309] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 128.

[310] Petrie, G. (1845) *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*

[311] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 128.

[312] O'Keeffe, T. (2000) Pers. Comm.

[313] Wakeman, W.F. (1891) *Handbook of Irish Antiquities*, p. 187; O'Keeffe, T. (2000) Pers. Comm.

[314] Barrow, G.L. (1979) *The Round Towers of Ireland*, p. 37-38; Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 128

The residential buildings included individual cells in which the monks lived. These were generally made of wood or wattles and the abbots cell was slightly apart from the rest. Also mentioned in the documentary record are: a 'magna domus' or 'great house' which was a large communal building, probably circular in shape and also constructed of wattle; a refectory with an adjoining kitchen and a long table; a guest-house (where women were admitted but segregated from the males); a library and scriptorium where manuscripts and other writing materials - waxed tablets, parchment and quills - were kept. A workshop and forge were also located nearby.[315] Outside the enclosure were the cultivated lands with farm buildings, which belonged to the monastery.[316] Much if this information comes from one of the clearest sources for information on buildings and the lifestyle of monks in early Irish monasteries - Adamnán's contemporary life of Colum Cille.[317] This account was written in the seventh century in Iona while some of Colum Cille's original disciples were still alive and as is considered as providing one of the most authentic (albeit most likely biased) views of the religious life.[318]

In some of the western sites where less important structures were also made of stone (because of a shortage of wood), evidence of these features has been found. At Nendrum (one of the few excavated sites) traces of stone foundations for several probable phases of round hut construction were excavated.

Archaeology / Investigation of Sites

Few church enclosures have been surveyed in detail and only a small number have been archaeologically excavated.[319] Due to the alteration of structures and sites and the presence of population, churches located within settlements are even less likely to be investigated. An assessment of the studies which have been carried out reveals a bias towards those which are located in isolated or remote areas i.e. Glendalough, Clonmacnois and Nendrum, but it is through the investigation of these unaltered sites that one can develop an awareness of site layout and structure, and thus, such sites are investigated here. Following this assessment of archaeologically explored sites, Section

---

[315] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 113; Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 68.

[316] Ibid, pp 68-69; Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, pp 285-294.

[317] Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 68.

[318] Ibid; Lacy, B. (1998) 'The Legacy of Columba / Columcille'; Ó Maidín, U. (1998) ' The Celtic Monk'.

[319] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 107.

2.5. examines Armagh and Kells to illustrate how church features are manifested in sites which have evolved into settlements.

Herity has carried out survey work on a number of sites, investigating their layout, detailing buildings, crosses, towers and saint's tombs.[320] Figure 2.5. illustrates some of the sites he has investigated in the course of his work.

FIGURE 2.5. : EXAMPLES OF CHURCH SITE LAYOUT
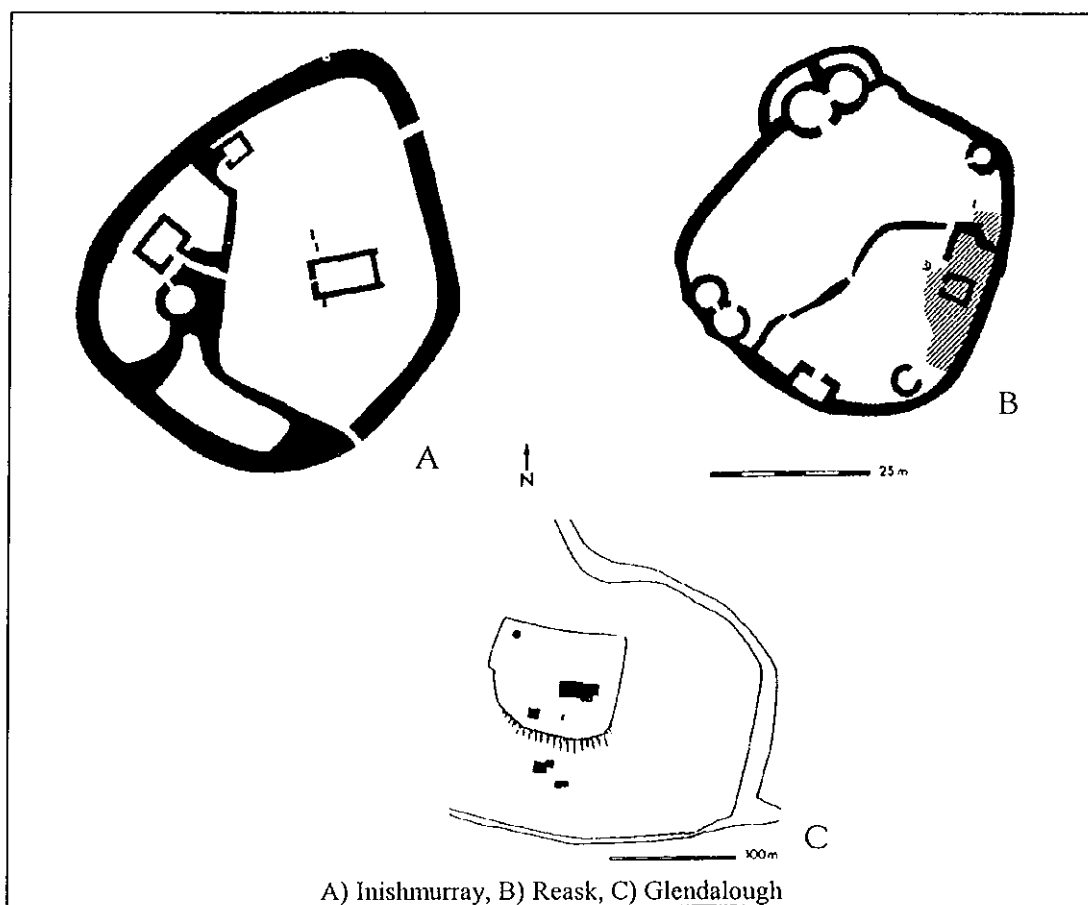
A) Inishmurray, B) Reask, C) Glendalough

Source: Herity, M. (1984) 'The layout of Irish early Christian monasteries', p. 115

The well-preserved enclosure surrounding the church site on Inishmurray Island (Figure 2.5.A.) is irregular, but largely curvilinear in shape. This four meter high stone wall surrounds a central area measuring 53m by 41m.[321] The principal church stands apart and to the eastern edge of the enclosure. Three cross slabs stand in line with the western façade, two to the north and one to the south. The church is surrounded by a burial place, and also within the main part of the enclosure (northwest of the church) is a small

---

[320] Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries'; (1984) 'The layout of Irish early Christian monasteries'

69

building known as 'Teach Molaise' (Molaise's House), which is reputed to be the burial place of Molaise - the founding saint. The area surrounding the principal church is separated from the rest of the enclosure by a stone wall, and beyond this is the 'school house'.[322]

The site at Reask (Figure 2.5.B) on the Dingle peninsula is one of the few to have been excavated in modern times. Similar to Inishmurray, a stone oratory with cross slabs was found at the eastern side of the enclosure. There are numerous graves on a roughly north-south line through the oratory, some being earlier than the oratory itself. A slab shrine is located north west of the doorway of the oratory, and was presumably built to house an important early burial. Postholes located south of this early burial may indicate an earlier wooden oratory, which would have been subsumed by the later stone structure. As with Inishmurray, the oratory and almost all of the burials were separated from the rest of the structures by a wall across the enclosure. In the western sector, living quarters were located. Similar layout patterns with placement of oratory and burials separate from domestic buildings are to be found at nearby Skellig Michael and Killabuonia.[323]

One of the most widely examined and discussed sites in Ireland is Glendalough, which is located in a valley in the Wicklow mountains south of Dublin city.[324] The remains of Saint Kevin's monastery at Glendalough are to be found in two distinct groups.[325] The earliest structures are located near the Upper Lake and these include Temple-na-Skellig and Reefert churches (Points 1-9, in the following Figure). Also within this group is perhaps the oldest known structure, of the Glendalough buildings. Known as Saint Kevin's Cell, this is the remains of a small round stone-built hut, located on a 'lofty spur of the mountain, now enshrouded with trees'. Leask's claims that this pair of

---

[321] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to the National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 292.

[322] Herity, M. (1984) 'The layout of Irish early Christian monasteries', p. 107

[323] Ibid, p. 106

[324] Many publications deal with this monastic site including:
Barrow, L. (1972) *Glendalough and St Kevin*;
Doyle, D. (1967) *The Story of Glendaloch*;
Hogan, M. (1903) *Glendalough: its Records, Ruins and Romance*;
Leask, H.J. (1963) *Glendalough Co. Wicklow: Official Historical and Descriptive Guide*;
Mac Shamhráin, A.S. (1996) *Church And Polity in Pre-Norman Ireland: The Case of Glendalough*;
MacGowan, K. (1988) *Glendaloch: an Illustrated History and Guide to St. Kevin's Monastic City*;
Nolan, J. (1971) *The History and Antiquities of Glendalough*;
O'Connell, J.R. (1909) *Glendalough: its Story and its Ruins*.

[325] Herity, M. (1984) 'The layout of Irish early Christian monasteries', p. 111.

churches and the cell are 'doubtless' the original site of Saint Kevin's retreat – 'Diseart Caoimhghin'.[326]

FIGURE 2.6. : LOCATION OF RELIGIOUS FABRIC AT GLENDALOUGH
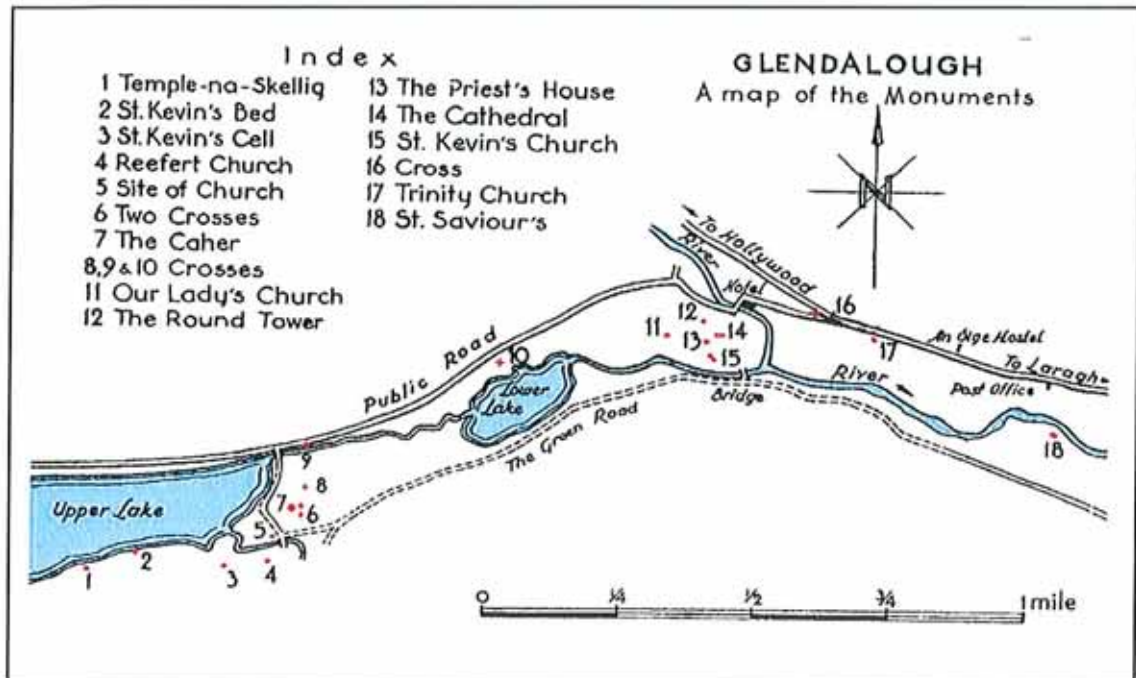
Source: Leask, H. J. (1963) *Glendalough Co. Wicklow* p. 4.

According to tradition, as the fame of Kevin spread and increased, it was necessary to establish a greater foundation to the east of the original site (points 11-15 in Figure 2.6.). While this second site was probably established much later than the time of Saint Kevin, it is this cluster of buildings, located on a series of terraces running east and west from the present cathedral that was the focus of the 'monastic city' of Glendalough.[327] (Hence, it is this latter site with round tower and impressive stone ruins that generates the greatest interest with a state-run visitor centre and car park located nearby). This site, which replaced the original hermitage, was located below the two lakes on a site which was more accessible, and less liable to flooding.[328] For a number of centuries this was an active seat of learning and in 1111 at the synod of Rathbreasail, which outlined the Irish dioceses, it was named as one of the five bishoprics of the province of Leinster.[329]

---

[326] Leask, H.J. (1963) *Glendalough*, p. 5, 10.
[327] Ibid, pp 5-6.
[328] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 105
[329] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 80.

Examining the layout, the site at Glendalough was bounded by the arcs of streams to the north, east and south. While Graham, citing the work of Bradley, presents an enclosure which follows the line of the river to the north and manmade embankments in the form of the cathedral graveyard to the east and south (Figure 2.7.), Swan proposes that the entire area between the rivers to the north, east and south define the line of the enclosing structure (Figure 2.8.).[330] In both of these suggestions the western boundary of the enclosure is almost entirely absent, but, in both cases, as Swan has noted, the general outlines are quite clear, and probably measured in the region of 400 metres across. To the northeast of the outer enclosure, in a location common to both sets of boundary, access to the site is achieved through a gate house which would appear to be an elaborate 'defensive' structure (though unlikely to be military in nature. Directly in front of the gatehouse stood a Market Cross.[331]

FIGURE 2.7. : CHURCH ENCLOSURE AT GLENDALOUGH

This diagram shows one option for the location of the enclosure. Other suggestions place the western limit beyond that indicated, and extend the northern, eastern and southern limits of the boundary to follow the course of the rivers - see following Figure
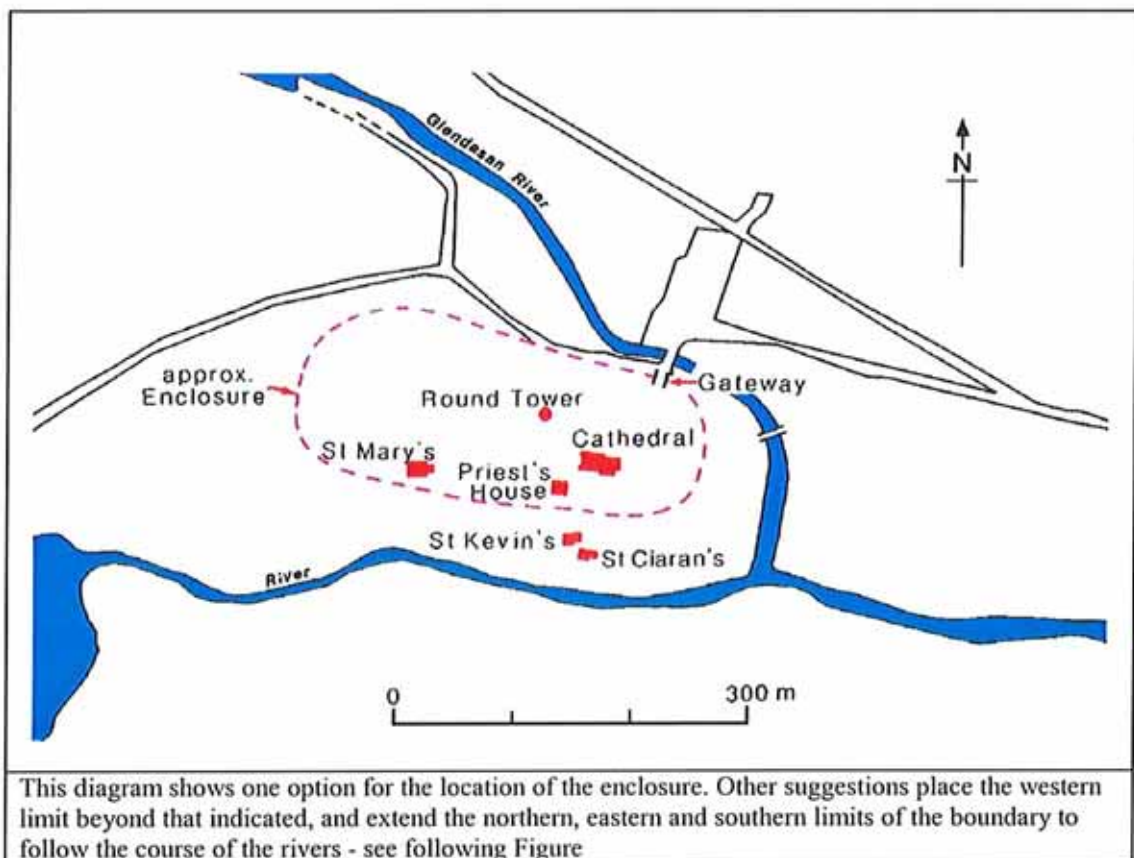
Source: Based on Graham, B. J. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland' p. 28.

---

[330] Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland', p. 95; Graham, B.J. '(1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland': Settlement as an Indicator of Economic and Social Transformation', p. 28

[331] Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland', p. 95.

Within the enclosure stand the principal religious remains of the site. To the east of centre stands the main church or cathedral. Around this building is a graveyard whose curving wall to the southwest may reflect the line of an inner enclosure (Figure 2.5.C.). If this is in fact the line of an inner enclosure, Swan's estimates regarding the outer boundary are more likely than that of Bradley or Graham. This theory would imply the presence of two concentric structures, and thereby suggesting a more definite location for the boundary to the west of Our Lady's / St. Mary's Church.[332]

There are a number of elements of ancillary church fabric within this inner enclosure, which are centred on the cathedral. The main elements are a high cross, which stands to the south and a round tower that is located to the northwest, close to the boundary of the inner enclosure.[333] The original function of the 'Priest's House' or 'Priest's Chapel' which is adjacent to the cathedral is unknown. This may have been used to house some relics of Kevin, as it is most likely that his burial would have been at Reefert church, which forms part of the original site.[334] Edwards highlights the site of Glendalough as possessing a feature which is absent or has been altered at almost all other church sites in Ireland (other than Inishcaltra in County Clare). This is the survival 'in situ' of a number of cross-marked stones, recumbent slabs and other carved grave-markers which suggests the existence of a carefully organised cemetery.[335]

---

[332] Ibid.
[333] Ibid.
[334] Leask, H.J. (1963) *Glendalough*, pp 14-15.
[335] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, pp 129-130

FIGURE 2.8. : SWAN'S SUGGESTION OF ENCLOSURE AT GLENDALOUGH
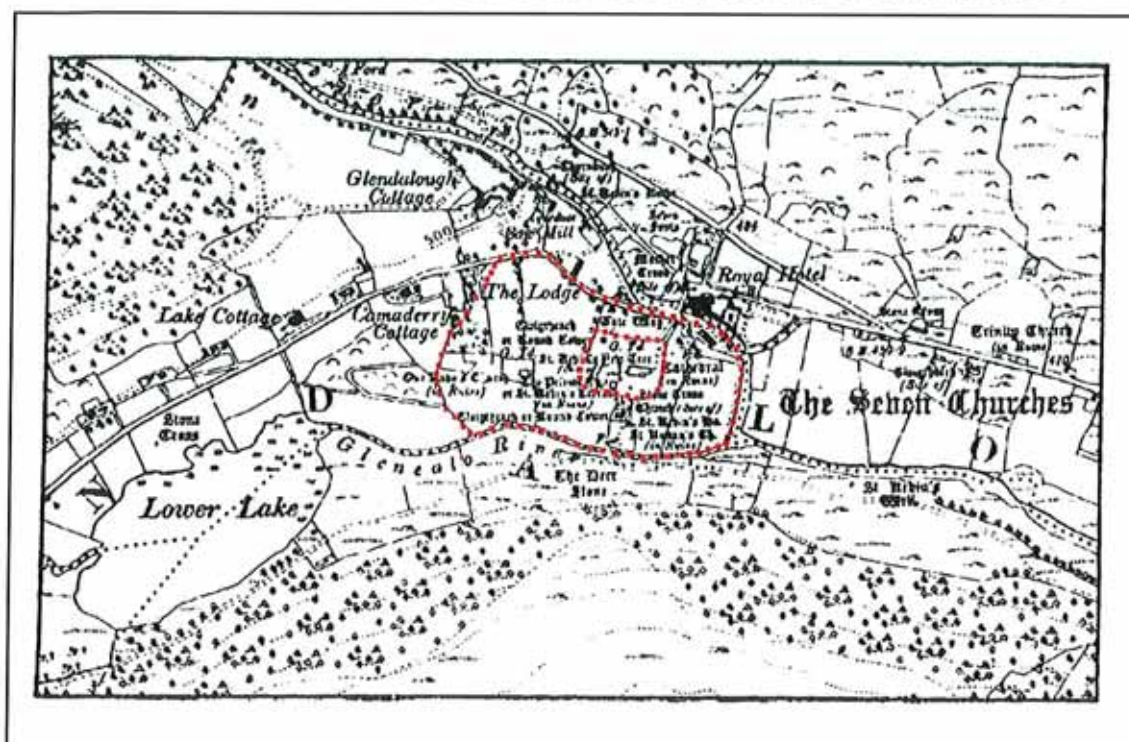
Source: Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland' pp 95-6.

In addition to elements within the confines of the inner enclosure, there are a wide variety of additional religious structures and objects. The features which exist adjacent to the inner enclosure, and possibly within the outer enclosure include St. Mary's (or Our Lady's) church. It is thought that this building was isolated from the central structures and thus, was for the use of women or nuns as would appear to have been the practice in other sites. In addition to the round tower, St. Kevin's Church, which is commonly known as 'St. Kevin's Kitchen' (Figure 2.9.) is probably the best known structure in Glendalough. This small vaulted building (located outside the inner enclosure) is roofed entirely in stone, using a corbelling technique. A number of additional features were inserted to the original structure, including a sacristy and chancel (now disappeared) and the distinct belfry which has been likened to a chimney.[336]

---

[336] Leask, H.J. (1963) *Glendalough*, p. 14.

FIGURE 2.9. : RELIGIOUS FABRIC AT GLENDALOUGH

This picture includes St. Kevin's Kitchen - middle left, behind that structure can be seen the round tower, and centre right can be seen the cathedral.

Scholars have identified Nendrum as one of the best surviving examples of how a primitive Irish church site was arranged (Figure 2.10). Theories on the layout of Irish sites have been based on the surveys and excavations of this site, which were carried out in the 1920s and subsequent work in 1954 (Figure 2.10 & 2.11.).[337]

Saint Mochae or Mahee (reported to have died some time before the year 500) the founder of Nendrum (or Oendruim), is said to have been appointed as a bishop or abbot by St. Patrick, but it may not have developed into a sizeable foundation until the seventh century. An island location made the site easily accessible by sea and it is mentioned in various early sources including the *Annals of the Four Masters*, and the *Annals of Ulster*.[338]

---

[337] Killanin and Duignan, (1995) *The Shell Guide to Ireland*, p. 114; Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 107.

[338] Harbinson, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 118.

FIGURE 2.10. : ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OF NENDRUM
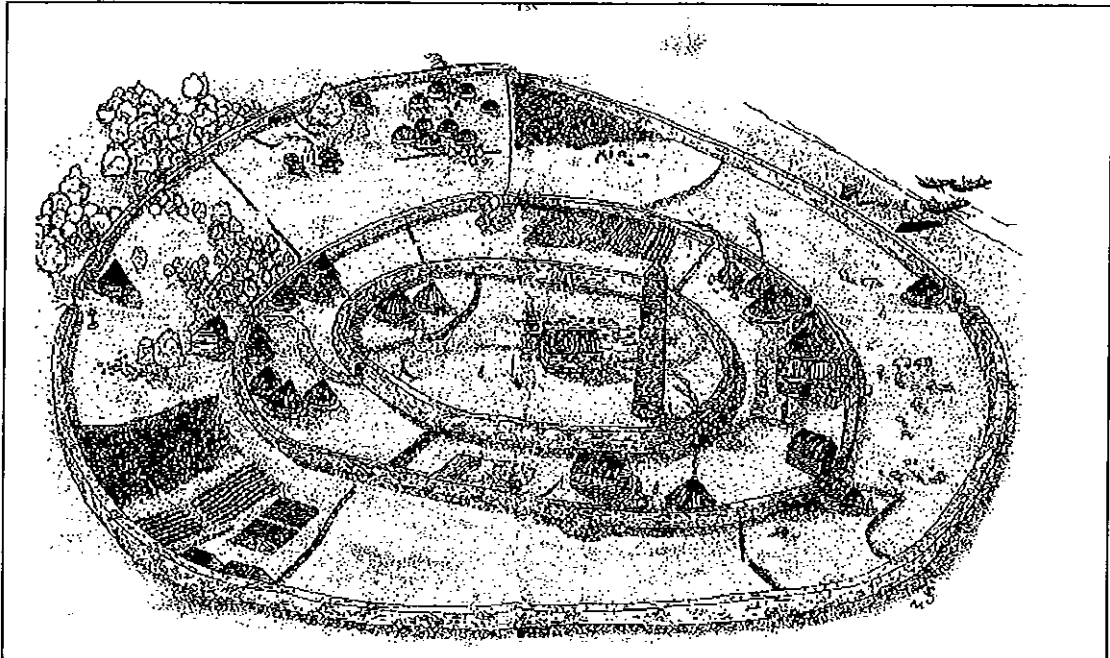
Source: Hughes, K. & Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, pp 46-47

Edwards suggests that the results of the initial dig at the site are now almost impossible to interpret, due to the amount of subsequent restoration work, which was carried out.[339] Working from the evidence of the initial survey, the site would appear to be surrounded by three concentric walls that were built mainly of small stones, with some large boulders (Figure 2.11.). The smallest precinct contains the buildings.[340]

---

[339] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 107.
[340] Harbinson, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, pp 118-119.

FIGURE 2.11. : PLAN OF NENDRUM
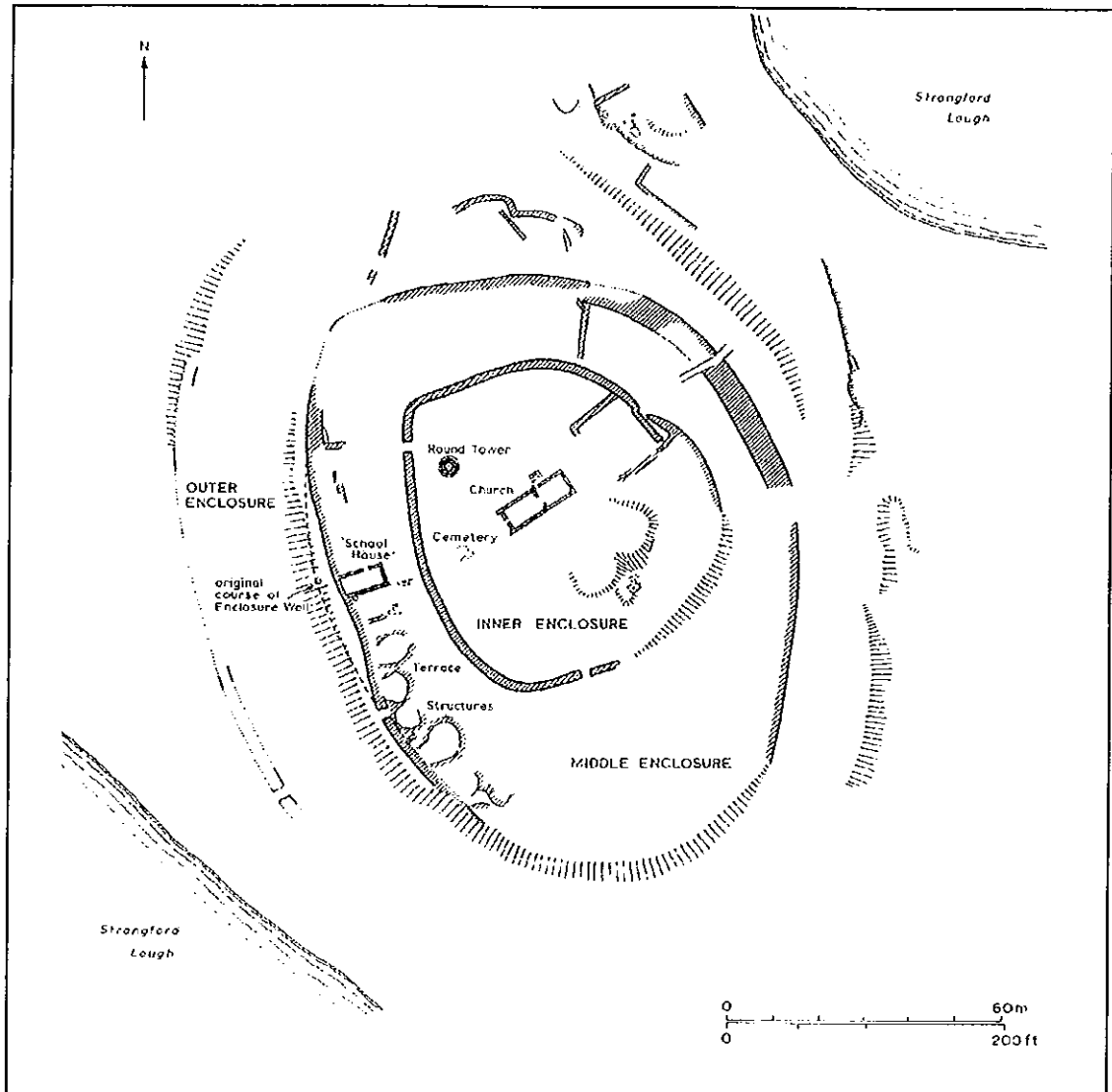
Source: Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 108

This inner enclosure, which contains a stone church, a fragmentary round tower and cemetery, is 76 metres in diameter and is 1.85-2.15 metres in breadth. The tower and church were probably built in the 10th or 11th century, though the eastern extension of the church may have been built in the late 12th century. Excavation of the middle enclosure has been difficult to interpret. The two outer precincts would appear to have contained a variety of buildings including craft workshops and a 'school'. Finds made at the site include decorated stones and an early Irish sundial. Harbison claims that the

evidence from excavation implies the existence of a population which 'would have made Nendrum a 'monastic town' of considerable size'.[341]

Edwards suggests that the currently accepted line of the middle enclosure on the western side, is probably a modern structure as exploratory digs in 1954 discovered what she proposes was the original boundary. This middle enclosure would appear to be 122 metres across and the outer enclosure measures up to 183 metres in diameter. Edwards concludes that in general, the enclosures lack precise dating evidence and the chronological relationship of enclosures to each other needs further study.[342]

We can see from this section that the sites chosen for early churches were selected with care and consideration. Many factors influenced their site and situation. Not only was the siting an important process, the layout of the fabric within a site was carried out with precision. The inter-relationship between the various elements followed strict guidelines, from the layout of the enclosing bank, to the location of the various structures and features. While the isolated rural sites at Nendrum and Glendalough are very different, they illustrate the conformity by which such sites were established, and indicate that while variety existed, an overall pattern is strongly discernible. The next sections explore the inter-relationship between church sites, and examine how some sites developed and became foci for settlement development.

---

[341] Ibid, p. 119.
[342] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 107.

2.5. EARLY CHURCH SITES AS SETTLEMENT CORES

There have been few excavations of church sites. Where digging has occurred, the disturbance caused by generations of burials, alteration, refurbishment, remodelling and enlargement of buildings and sites, has resulted in obscurement of the early Christian features. Due to these factors, the sites, which have been examined in detail, are predominantly rural, thus, abandoned or deserted and thereby preserved in their ancient and archaeologically intact form.[1] Herity in his examinations of the building and layout of early Irish monasteries, has provided background material that is of use in investigating Irish church sites.[2] The problem with most sources, however, is their almost exclusive focus on sites in rural locations.[3] The settled sites explored by researchers are few, with much repetition of the key case studies by those who discuss this theme.[4]

Leading this investigation of settled sites are Swan, Bradley and Graham who have examined a number of sites both urban and rural.[5] These scholars have explored the enclosures of important and well-recognised sites including Armagh, Kells and Kildare and their investigations of these sites are dealt with extensively throughout this section.[6] These researchers focus strongly on the presence of a roughly circular or elliptical enclosure as one of the basic elements of a church site. Thus, identifying the occurrence of such physical patterns may be useful in indicating an early religious presence.

---

[1]   Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, pp 101-102.

[2]   Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries; (1984) 'The layout of Irish early Christian monasteries'

[3]   Norman and St. Joseph examine isolated rural sites: Illauntannig, Co. Kerry; Skellig Michael, Co. Kerry; Nendrum Co. Down; Lullymore Co. Kildare; Kiltiernan, Co. Galway and Cannon's Island, Co. Clare.

   In his articles on the layout of early monasteries Herity deals with a large number of rural ecclesiastical sites including Killabuonia, Co. Kerry; Reask Co. Kerry; Labbamologa, Co. Cork; Inishmurray island, Co. Sligo; Ardoileán Co. Galway and; Rathlin O'Birne island, Co. Donegal.

[4]   The only non-rural ecclesiastical site investigated by Norman and St. Joseph (1969) *The Early Development of Irish Society: the evidence of aerial photography* is the city of Armagh. Henry only makes brief mention of Kells, Slane and Armagh

[5]   Swan, L. (1994) 'Excavations at Kilpatrick, Killucan, Co. Westmeath'; (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites'; (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland'; (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland'; (1994) 'Fine Metalwork from the Early Christian site at Kilpatrick, Co Westmeath'.

   Bradley, J. (1988) *Settlement and Society in Early Medieval Ireland*; (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town'.

   Graham, B.J. (1987) 'Urban Genesis in Early Medieval Ireland'; (1989) 'Secular Urban Origins in Early Medieval Ireland'; '(1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland: Settlement as an Indicator of Economic and Social Transformation, c.500-1100'; (1976) 'The Evolution of The Settlement Pattern of Anglo-Norman Eastmeath'; (1993) Idem and Proudfoot, L.J. *An Historical Geography of Ireland*.

[6]   See also Simms, A. and Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*; Andrews, J.H. (1986) *Kildare*.

As mentioned, there are a small number of settlements where ecclesiastical origins and the presence of enclosures have been investigated. The following sections outline the results of some of this investigative work.

Armagh

One of the clearest examples for the survival of an ecclesiastical layout plan is the city of Armagh, which is sited on a pronounced hill site near a stream flowing northwards to Lough Neagh. The city of Armagh has been the religious capital of Ireland since the seventh century and it is there according to tradition (if not a proven historical fact) that Saint Patrick established his principal church.[7] The supremacy of Armagh has been explained in a number of ways, but one initial factor would have been the pre-Christian importance of nearby Navan fort, which exerted influence over the surrounding landscape.[8] Today, Saint Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral stands at the centre of an eighteenth century town plan which has retained the circular shape of the original church enclosure (Figures 2.12 & 2.13).

In pre-Christian times, this hilltop was probably already the site of a hill-fort or large enclosed settlement, as it is referred to in the annals as the 'ráth' and thus the large circular enclosure may follow the line of this feature.[9] Alternatively, the curvilinear streetscape may be a construction, which was built by Patrick or one of his successors such as Bishop Cormac.[10]

According to Muirchú's late seventh century account, the first church in Armagh was sited nearby on low ground at 'Fertae Martyrum' known as the martyr's burial-ground, probably the site identified as 'Teampall na Ferta' - Church of the Martyrs (Figure 2.12). At a later stage the ecclesiastics were granted the high ground known as 'dorsum salicis' (the ridge of the willow).[11] 'Teampall na ferta' was probably the nucleus of the church site in its early phases and later became the site of a nunnery. The overall evidence at Armagh suggests an evolution of the site over many centuries and the

---

[7] Bradley, J. (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town', p. 42; Reeves, W. (1860) *The Ancient Churches of Armagh*, p. 1.

[8] Evans, E. (1992) *The Personality of Ireland*, p. 79

[9] Bradley, J. (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town', p. 42.

[10] Norman E. R. and StJoseph, J.K.S. (1969) 'Early Christian Sites'

[11] Bradley, J. (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town', p. 42.

archaeological evidence supports this, thus suggesting that there were several phases in development of the enclosure.[12]

FIGURE 2.12. : PLAN OF ARMAGH
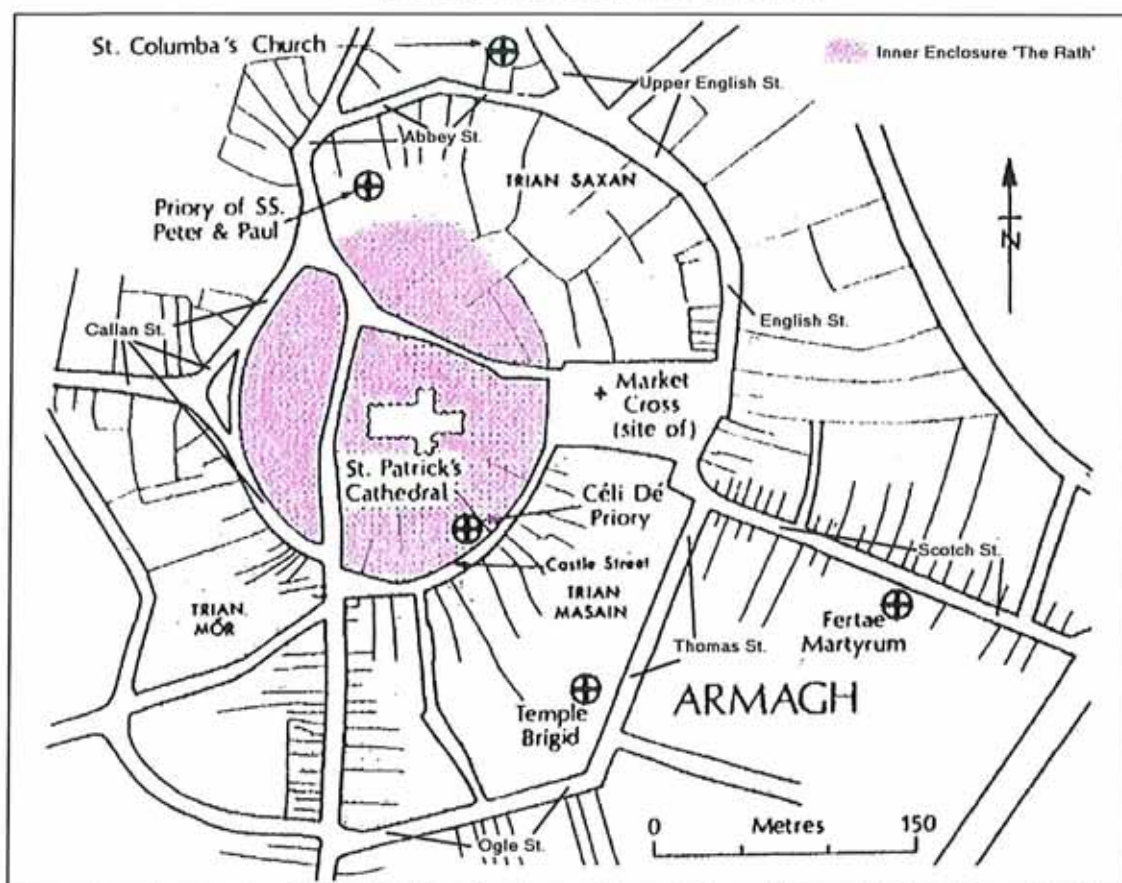
Based on Bradley, J. (1990) 'The role of town plan analysis and the medieval Irish town' p. 42.

Bradley has produced a map of Armagh (Figure 2.12.) using a number of different types of evidence including Bartlett's early seventeenth century map of the city which gives an almost aerial view of the layout of the town in a virtually derelict state (Figure 2.14.).

Inside the inner zone of the site, very little of the medieval church fabric has survived, although two churches, a library, an abbot's house, a priory, a round tower and a cemetery are all known to have existed.[13] According to the annals, the outer sector was divided into three districts or thirds: 'Trian Mór' to the west, 'Trian Saxon' to the north and 'Trian Mason' in the southeast and it would appear that these 'trians' contained streets of houses (Figure 2.13).[14]

---

12   Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 109-110.
13   Dargan P. (1994) 'The Morphology of Irish Towns - Urban Genesis', p. 57.
14   Bradley, J. (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town', p. 43.

81

FIGURE 2.13. : ANCIENT DIVISIONS/THIRDS OF ARMAGH
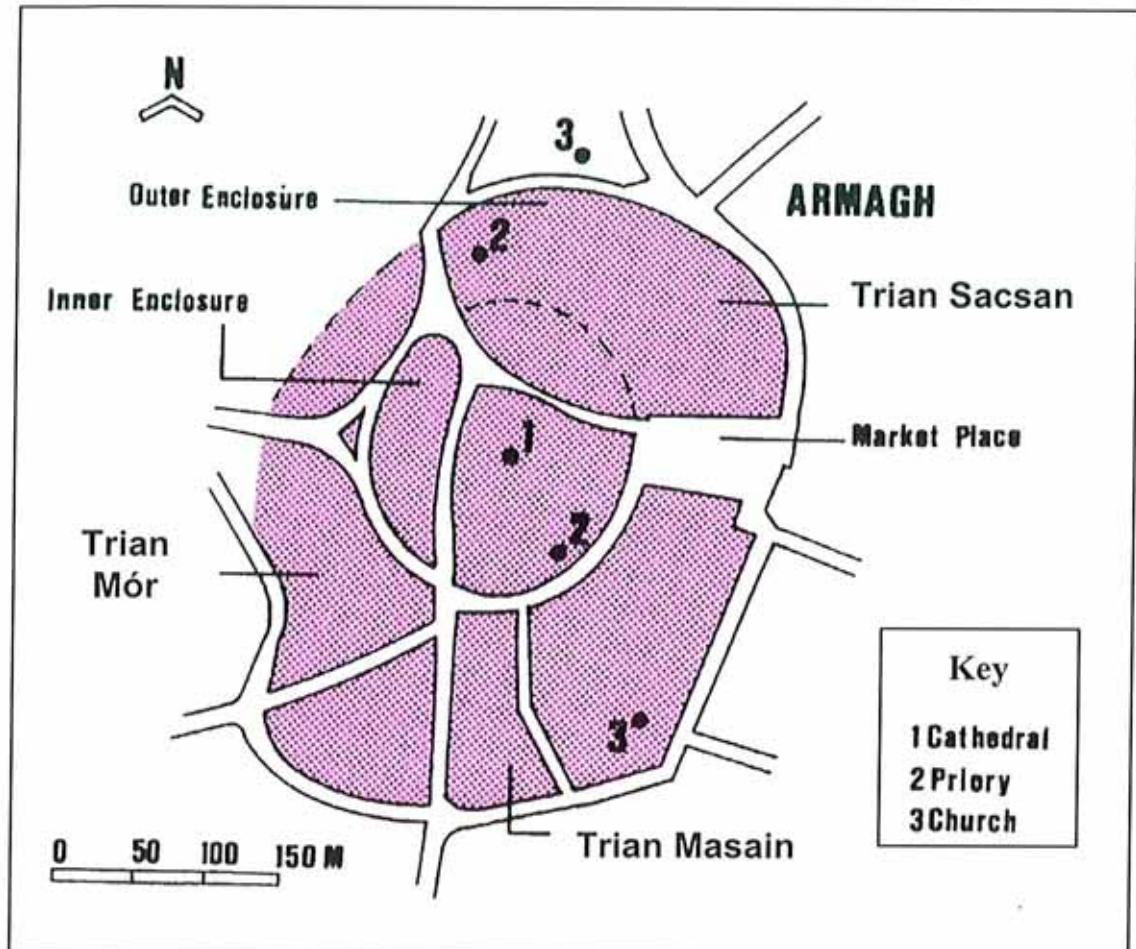
Source: Based on Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic Proto-towns in early medieval Ireland'

The line of the inner enclosure, which is well preserved in the lines of Callan Street and Castle Street, surrounds an area of approximately 200m diameter, around the summit of the hill. Excavations in the southeast of this area have revealed a ditch between Castle Street and the modern graveyard, which was 6.4m wide and between 2.3 and 3m deep. This ditch, if it were to continue around the hilltop, would have enclosed an area of approximately 50m in diameter and has been dated to between 180 and 560 AD. Further dating reveals that this ditch was filled in with material from the outer bank at some time between the fifth and eight centuries. Thus, suggesting that despite the evident functional continuity at the central site, multiple stages of evolution occurred at Armagh.[15]

---

[15] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 110.

FIGURE 2.14. : BARTLETT'S MAP OF ARMAGH (c.1602)

Source : Hayes-McCoy, G.A. (1964) *Ulster and Other Irish Maps*

Though it does not appear on Bartlett's map, the current layout of the streets and property boundaries suggest the previous existence of an outer enclosure. Callan Lane, Ogle Street, Thomas Street, Upper English Street and Abbey Street, together with property boundaries in the west and north west form an oval area approximately 480m north-south and 360m east-west (Figures 2.12. & 2.13). The name of Upper English Street, which delineates the northern portion of this area, echoes the 'Saxon Third' of the original monastery .

Property boundaries radiate from the inner to the outer enclosure at fairly regular intervals and the main street in Bartlett's map would appear to be present day Market Square and Scotch Street.[16] These are to the east and in front of the cathedral, forming a

---

16   Ibid.

clearly defined market area between the enclosures (where a market cross once stood).[17] Finally, this layout suggests that the primary approach road to the site was from the east.

Kells

The first mention of Kells in Co. Meath as a monastery is in 804. It seems that the site was donated to the 'familia' of Columba in the very early years of the ninth century as a place of refuge for monks from Iona who were fleeing from the Norsemen. The name 'Cúil Sibrille' is used in ancient documents to refer to a 'dún' on the site, but the earliest contemporary reference is the late seventh century Old and Middle Irish tales which describe the town as 'Ceannas na ríg' or 'Kells of the Kings', being a royal stronghold ('rígdún') surrounded by a 'múr' or rampart. There is also some evidence for an Iron-Age site at this point. [18]

Little is known about the religious organisation of Kells, except information gleaned from eleventh and early twelfth century charters, which are copied into the Book of Kells. These charters record land-purchases related to the monastery of Kells between 1033 and 1161 and give evidence for the existence of an important and largely secularised monastery. No archaeological evidence relating to the internal layout of the site has been found, perhaps because of repeated destruction from fires and raids by the Vikings in the tenth century which devastated the monastery. Reports claim that at least three thousand captives were taken in AD 951 and great spoils of cattle, horses gold and silver were taken in various raids. Even if exaggerated, this suggests a foundation of considerable scale and wealth.[19]

Work by Henry, further developed by Swan, highlights the strong similarities between the layout of this site and Armagh, both displaying the characteristic double concentric plan-form, which is typical of towns with religious origins (Pink enclosures in Figure 2.16.). Swan cites Henry's claims that these similarities are so striking that that they may be the result of a deliberate imitation of St. Patrick's city[20]

---

[17] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 110 and Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland', p. 84.

[18] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 82; Simms, A. and Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*, p. 1.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Henry, F. (1967) *Irish Art During the Viking Ages 800-1020 A.D*, p. 43.
Dargan P. (1995) 'Celtic Settlement Forms in Irish Towns'; (1994) 'The Morphology of Irish Towns', p. 58.
Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland', pp 84-85.

FIGURE 2.15. : KELLS IN 1836
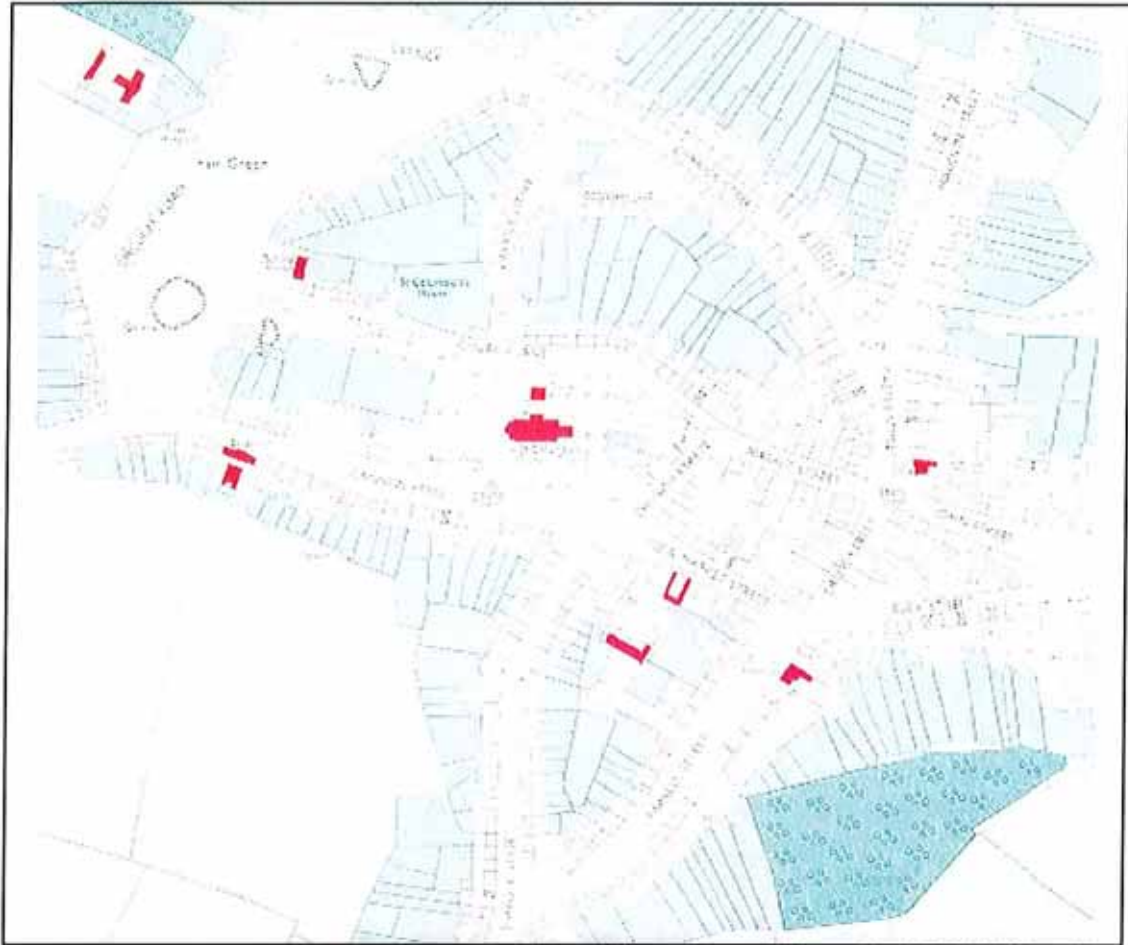
The course of an outer enclosure is clearly identifiable, in the curve of Carrick Street, Castle Street and Cross Street (Figure 2.15.). There is little indication of the southwestern line of the external enclosure, perhaps it follows the line proposed by Simms and Simms (Figure 2.16.) but alternatively it may form a vertical enclosure aligning with Farrell Street to the southeast. An estimate may be made of the original enclosure, based on the line and shape of the visible eastern boundary. This reconstruction would mean that the outer enclosure measured approximately 420 metres north-south, with an east-west axis of 380 metres.[21]

---

[21]   Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland', p. 86.

FIGURE 2.16. : MEDIEVAL KELLS SHOWING TOWN WALL AND RELIGIOUS FABRIC
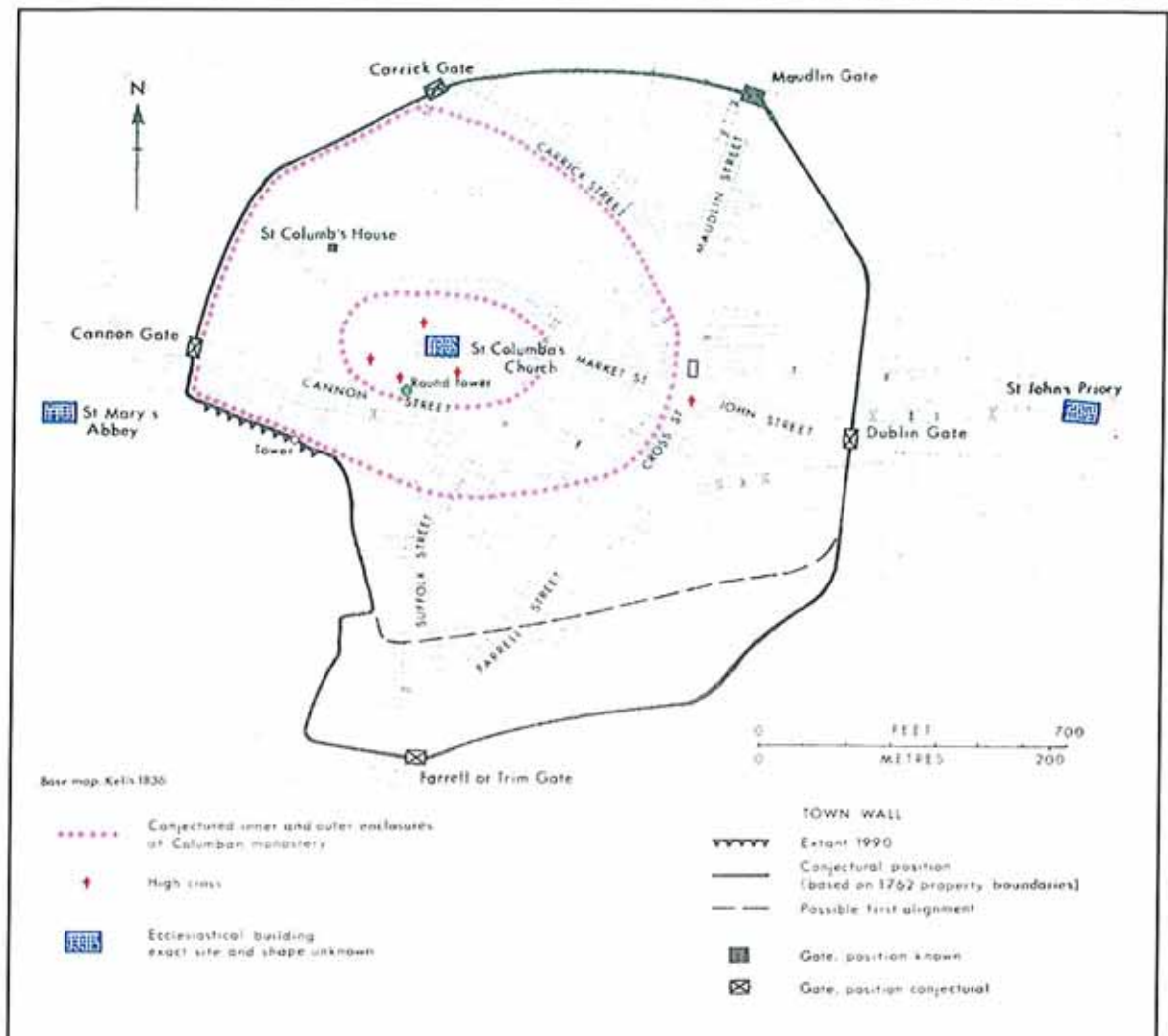
Church Lane, Church Street and Cannon Street, which form the boundary of the present day churchyard, would appear to correspond to the line of the inner enclosure, but there is little evidence to indicate its western boundary. According to Swan the minimum axis could not be less than 120 metres.[22] Within this inner core are located a round tower, a group of stone crosses and an Anglo Norman church tower, all of these testifying to the early foundation date of the church site and subsequent development of the settlement. The main approach road to the site is from an eastern direction and the point where this street (Market Street / John Street) meets the apparent line of the outer enclosure is marked with an early market cross.[23]

---

[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid; Bradley, J. (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town'; Dargan P. (1994) 'The Morphology of Irish Towns - Urban Genesis'.

2.6. DEVELOPMENT OF SPATIAL MODEL OF EARLY CHRISTIAN SITES

Arising from the examination of these well-recognised and broadly studied religious sites, a number of important points can be noted.

- There are a number of elements, which aid in the identification of church sites. These include a central church site, a burial ground, and an enclosure or enclosures.

- Structural features that can be used to identify a church site also include curvilinear (concentric) field and property boundaries and also radiating field and road patterns.

- Even in well-documented sites, while the location of the primary elements may be well identified, there can be much dispute and disagreement regarding the exact location of others (i.e. the identification of enclosures). While this may reflect differences of opinion, it may also reflect the evolution of sites over time.

These conclusions are now used in the following section to establish a model / formula to assist in the identification of early church sites.

In light of the shortage of definitive documentary evidence, deductions from morphological analysis have been employed in research which seeks to understand the early origins and evolution of Irish towns. The main evidence for continuity comes, therefore, from the survival of spatial features attributed to church buildings and sites.

The pattern of streets, property boundaries, roads, fields or fences regularly provides an indication of the original enclosures, with many sites having both a large outer and smaller inner enclosure. Where archaeological investigation has subsequently been carried out it often supports this evidence (i.e. Armagh & Finglas).[24] The layout of these enclosures is often evident in subsequent field boundaries or streetscapes and thus provides a basic tool for the identification of sites.[25]

Secondly, important architectural features; churches (generally aligned east-west with the principal doorway facing west), carved crosses (usually located at the cardinal points), round towers (usually located to the northwest of the church), burial grounds (generally to the south of the church) and wells have survived in many locations.[26] The

---

[24] Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*;
 Swan, L. (1997) Personal Communications regarding excavation work at Finglas, Dublin, which would appear to indicate the existence of an enclosure.

[25] Dargan P. (1995) 'Celtic Settlement Forms in Irish Towns', p. 16.

[26] Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland', pp 53-54.

existence and survival of specific locational characteristics of these features, provides further evidence for the continuity of early church sites.

Thirdly, in many cases the main approach road to these sites is from the east (though it would appear that in some sites the principal approach road is from the west) and is associated with a market area, often closely linked to a 'high' or 'market' cross.[27] There is also a tendency for church sites to be the focus for radiating patterns of ancient road networks.

Finally, in many cases the survival of evidence in the form of local customs or placenames may reflect an otherwise unidentifiable early Christian influence.[28]

By carrying out a detailed investigation of a potential site using these characteristics it should thus be possible to evaluate the level of early Christian influence. To these ends, the layout of 15 well-documented church sites (which are presented in Table 2.2.) has been examined in detail to establish overall trends and patterns. By drawing together the elements of these sites (many extant, but some such as the round tower at Downpatrick, from documentary and cartographic evidence) a 'Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites' is developed (Figure 2.17.). Due to the variable nature of the elements, the theoretical premise of a uniform surface must be adopted, with the model representing a 'best fit' of the various sites adopted.

The first element of the model is the presence of one or two curvilinear enclosures. While in reality the shape of the enclosures varies from the almost rectangular shape of Clonmacnois, to the oval shape of Glendalough, it can be seen in these cases that the surrounding topography has an influence on the overall shape. Thus, based on the general trend of the sites and the documentary factors (i.e. the book of Moling – Figure 2.3.) presented earlier in this chapter, the predominantly circular / oval shape has been adopted.

The predominant east-west orientation of churches is a standard feature and this alignment is evidenced in the various examples, with the main door being on the western side of the main church. It has been noted in a number of cases that the principal church is located slightly to the east of the central enclosure, facing an open

---

[27] Ibid.
[28] Swan, L. (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites', p. 274.

space. This is indeed the case in Glendalough and Kildare and thus in the model, the church is placed slightly to the east of centre in the inner enclosure.

TABLE 2.2. : FABRIC AT RECOGNISED EARLY CHRISTIAN SITES

Site	Main Church Aligned	Inner Enclosure	Outer Enclosure	Main App- roach	Market	Graves	Add- itional Crosses	Round Tower
RURAL / ABANDONED SITES								
Clonmacnois	E-W	Sub. Rect.	Rectangular	E	U	Y	Slabs-	-
Glendalough	E-W	Circular	Horiz. Oval	NE / E	U	Y	Y	NW
Nendrum	NE-SW	Circular	Vert. Oval	S or W	U	Y	-	NW
DEVELOPED / SETTLED SITES								
Armagh	E-W	Vert. Oval	Vert. Oval	E	E	Y	Parts	NW
Cashel	E-W	Vert. Oval	Oval - NE-SW	E	E?	Y	_	NNW
Downpatrick	NW-SE	Circular	Circular	E	E	Y	Y	SW
Duleek	NE-SW	Rectangle	Circular	E or S	E?	Y	N,S	-
Finglas	NW-SE	Rectangle	Circular	W	W	Y	Y	-
Kells	E-W	Horiz. Oval	Horiz. Oval	E	E	Y	4	SW
Kildare	E-W	Horiz. Oval	Horiz. Oval	E	E	Y	SW	NW
Killala	NW-SE	Rectangle	Sub. Circular	E	W	Y	_	NW
Lorrha	E-W	Circular	Circular	E?	U	Y	Y	-
Lusk	NW-SE	Horiz. Oval	Sub. Circular	E	E?	Y	_	NW
Monasterboice	E-W	Circular	Vert. Oval	E/S	U	Y	Y	NW
Tuam	E-W	Rectangle	Vert. Oval	E	E	Y	-	-
U = Uncertain / Not clearly identifiable Source: Compiled by author from the work of various authors and Ordnance Survey 6-inch maps.								

The location of a market adjacent to the core of a site is a common feature. In many cases the market is triangular or wedge shaped, and this is reflected in the model. This market can be seen as an indication of the trade function at the site, and in the case of Armagh, Kells and Tuam this feature is particularly prominent, with a market cross. In Kildare the presence of an eastern market is likely, although a market cross is absent, and a market is also likely at Lusk and Duleek.

Through the Spatial Model it can be seen that an overall pattern may be discerned in the layout of early church sites and continuity of this form may be evidenced in later development of the site. In the 15 studies illustrated above, the street layout and architecture supports the theory that early religious fabric can survive and be identified in subsequent settlements. Thereby, early church fabric may be used to highlight the continuity of settlement. The generation of this basic model is the first step in developing a methodology for the wider investigation of continuity.

FIGURE 2.17. : SPATIAL MODEL OF EARLY CHRISTIAN SITES

Inner enclosure / grave yard ⬡
Outer enclosure ⬡
Church ▨
Round tower ◉
Market area ◱
Eastern approach road ▨

High cross †
Field/property boundaries ⌐
Holy Well ○
Radiating approach roads ▨
Architectural fragments ✗

Compiled by Kevin Griffin
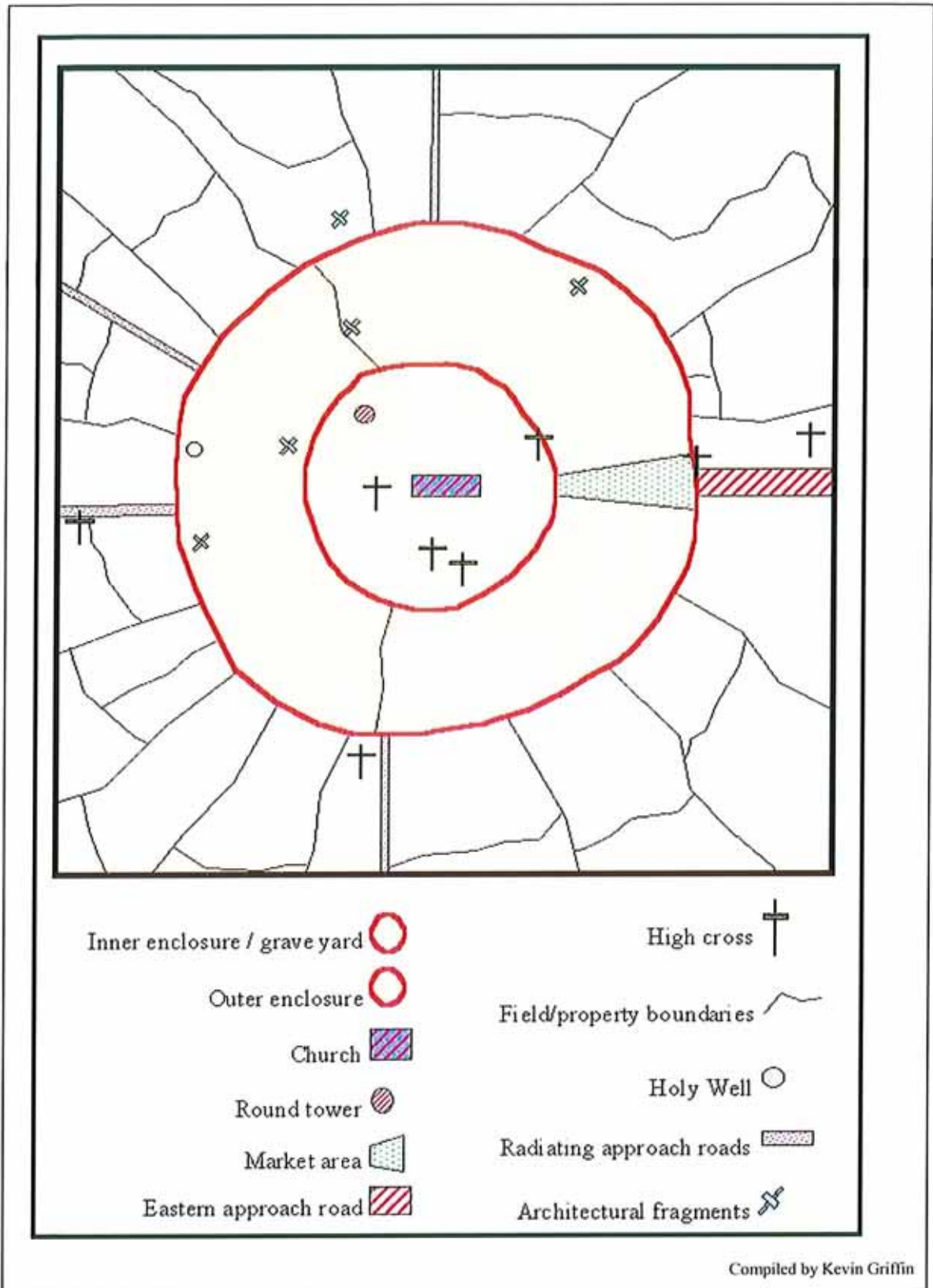
CHAPTER 3: SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

Having established the geographical and historical period within which this work is based, the purpose of this section is to outline the sources and methodologies used in this project. Resources utilised include Ordnance Survey maps, air-photographs and contemporary written documentation including annals, hagiographies and laws. Secondary sources have been discussed extensively throughout the previous chapter, with particular focus on commentaries by historians, archaeologists and antiquarians regarding primary sources. In each case, the potential of these various works is evaluated for use in the current project.

Undertaking this research required working in different libraries including the National Library of Ireland, the National Archive in Dublin, and research libraries in Trinity College Dublin (Main Library and Map Library), University College Dublin, NUI Maynooth and those of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland and the Architectural Archive. Specialist local study collections were accessed in Limerick and Clare County Libraries.

3.1. PRIMARY SOURCES

Maps

The key sources used in the investigation of individual sites are the Ordnance Survey of Ireland 'six-inch' and '25-inch' map series.[1] As these date from the 1840s and 1890s respectively they permit an accurate morphological comparison to be made over a 150 year period. While some investigations of early Irish sites have been fortunate to access earlier cartographic sources such as estate maps, for most of the sites chosen in this investigation, detailed early maps were not extant.

In general the maps of the Ordnance Survey are highly dependable. While errors do exist, to focus on them is 'to misrepresent the high standards of the survey as a whole'.[2] Andrews commenting on the accuracy of these publications states:

> On the whole . . . the early maps will stand up to scrutiny as planimetric records: most of them already have stood up to it from the officers of the valuation department and other government agencies, as well as from the Ordnance Survey's own revision staff.[3]

---

[1] Paul Ferguson, Map Librarian in TCD provided much help and assistance in both the acquisition of
    maps for investigation and their interpretation.
[2] Andrews. J.H. (1986) *History in the Ordnance Map*, p. 6
[3] Ibid.

92

The first set of maps used are the Ordnance Survey six-inch maps. Surveying of the case study areas - Limerick and Clare – was carried out from 1840-42.[4] These 19th productions are highly accurate, and thus a reliable tool for cartographic investigation. In describing their production the Ordnance Survey comment:

> Ireland was the first country in the world to complete national coverage of a map series at this unprecedented large scale. As publication progresses . . . during the 1830s the quality of the engraving and the correct proportioning of the relative strengths and sizes of the outline, the writing and the ornament, produced a work of great artistic beauty and merit.[5]

The second set of maps used are the 1:2500, or '25-inch' maps. Outside of Dublin (which was mapped from 1863) these date from the 1890s, and were revised between then and 1924. Surveying of the case study areas - Limerick and Clare – was carried out from 1893-1903 and 1913-1924.[6] While these are more accurate than the 'six inch' sheets in presenting features such as property boundaries and buildings, in some ways (such as vegetation) they are more generalised.[7]

Archaeology

One of the first places to begin examining landscapes is to explore the work of archaeologists who use physical fabric as their text. The relationship between archaeology and landscape is clearly evident from glancing at introductory texts to Archaeology Bowden's *Unravelling the Landscape*, or Aston's *Interpreting the Landscape*, both outlines the various methodological approaches taken by archaeologists.[8] According to Bowden, the task of an archaeologist is:

> To record the landscape . . . in order to understand its history, development and significance . . [to] look at what is there . . . [to] consider and try to understand, the component parts and how they relate to one another . . . [to] assess how the whole relates to its contemporary context . . . and to comparable examples recorded elsewhere.[9]

---

[4]   Ibid, p. 19
[5]   Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1991) *Ordnance Survey in Ireland an Illustrated record*, p. 30.
[6]   Andrews, J.H. (1986) *History in the Ordnance Map*, p. 43.
[7]   Ibid, pp 43-44.
[8]   Bowden, M. (1999) *Unravelling the Landscape*; Aston, M. (2000) *Interpreting the Landscape*.
[9]   Ibid.

A highly useful source for any investigation of early Ireland is the extensive county-based *Sites and Monuments Records (SMR)* of Dúchas, the Irish Heritage Service. Through their Internet Web page, Dúchas provides data sets of historical sites in each county of the Republic of Ireland.[10] These databases, which can be downloaded, provide details of 783 different categories of monument throughout the country, ranging from the 'Palaeolithic' up to the 'modern period'.[11] The database used for analysis of settlement in this project include 13,545 individual sites. These are predominantly the Dúchas *SMR* data, but this is supplemented with church fabric from Hadcock's *Ordnance Survey Map of Monastic Ireland.*

The 13,272 *SMR* monuments (6,634 in County Clare and 6,911 in Limerick) are classified under 208 different categories of site. The largest by far, is 'enclosure' which accounts for over one third of all monuments, with just six categories accounting for over half of the sites. These six categories are: 'enclosure' (5,997 individual cases); 'ring-barrow' (514); 'earthwork' (494); 'castle' (405); 'holy well' (381) and 'church' (364).

While the data in itself is useful, the main purpose of examining it in the context of this project is to produce maps which illustrate the distribution of fabric from the prehistoric period to the present day, thereby facilitating a long view of settlement geography in the study area. This was facilitated through the use of MapInfo software, which can convert the tabular data as presented in the downloaded files, to mappable points, which can be examined visually.

While the production of a base map and the sorting of the data files was a time-consuming task, the end result is a clear and precise indication of the settlement patterns throughout the various periods of their evolution. The base-map used here is composed of a number of layers: 4 contour layers; sea; lake; river; islands and; county boundaries. These were manually digitised using the Ordnance Survey 1:250,000, 1998 edition, *Ireland West* and *Ireland South* maps. These were scanned and imported into MapInfo as raster images, where they were registered to align with the Irish Transverse Mercator Grid. This allowed the maps to be used as a base into which the Dúchas data could be imported.

---

[10] http://www.heritagedata.ie/en/download_smr.htm

The Dúchas data for each county, is provided in five linked tables. For ease of use, in this work, the 10 tables comprising data for the two counties were merged into a single MS Excel file. This table was imported into MapInfo and the data was mapped as points. Because they are not geo-referenced by Dúchas, 713 sites are not mapped (308 in Clare & 415 in Limerick). Having mapped the remaining data-set, the MapInfo 'select' function was used to create individual mappable layers for each of the 208 Dúchas monument categories. In this way, maps could be produced with relative ease and flexibility.

These maps are used primarily for descriptive purposes, and do not provide a definitive explanation of settlement in the study area. The classification of periods is basic and employed for illustration and simplicity rather attempting to provide any definite statements of historical fact. The largest groups of monuments were classified into periods, however, many site-types are ambiguous, and thus, were omitted for this exercise i.e. a 'battlefield' or a 'mound' could be from any of the periods. Professional advice on the classification of sites into categories was sought from Dr. Tadhg O'Keeffe, Dept. of Archaeology, University College Dublin.

Further caution must be added in considering the caveats with which Dúchas present their data - they warn that the information is provisional and cannot be taken as being absolute. They state that their data: 'should be treated as useful and fairly authoritative . . . guidelines only'.[12] While geo-referencing of the data-set was found to be accurate in most instances, some inaccuracies were found during this work: for example, a number of sites in the Corcomroe-Oughtmama area of North Clare were found to be incorrectly geo-referenced.

Aerial Archaeology

Aerial archaeology means to make archaeological use of remotely sensed information, it is more than just taking photographs. It is a means of data acquisition.[13] This approach hinges on the fact that human impacts on landscape such as settlements, graveyards and fortifications produce specific structures, which can be identified and examined easier from a high viewpoint.[14] This may involve archaeological elements showing on the

[11] '*Thesaur*' file from Dúchas Web Site - http://www.heritagedata.ie/en/download_smr.htm
[12] http://www.heritagedata.ie/en/index.html
[13] Doneus, M. (1996) 'Introduction to Aerial Archaeology'
[14] Ibid.

ground surface, (depending on their state of preservation) by light-shadow-contrasts (shadow marks), tonal differences in the soil (soil marks) or differences in height and colour of cultivated cereal (crop marks). In principle, these may be visible at ground level, but a more distant viewpoint results in structures becoming clearer and the pattern becomes understandable.[15]

In 1945, J.K. St Joseph, a lecturer in Geology, began a pioneering programme of aerial reconnaissance for Cambridge University which continued in subsequent years. The growing collection led the University in 1948 to appoint him as its first Curator in Aerial Photography, supported from 1949 by the Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography.[16] (CUCAP). This group was multi-disciplinary in nature, recording natural landscapes as well as archaeological and historical sites. The CUCAP photograph collection is extensive and now contains over 400,000 images.[17] Dr St Joseph's achievement and international standing were recognised in 1973 by appointment to a personal chair in Aerial Photographic Studies until his retirement in 1980.[18]

The collection forms an archive of international importance for scholarly study which can be consulted by the general public.[19] There is an extensive collection, of the British Isles and parts of the continent, but there is also a substantial Irish collection, mainly of oblique photographs taken in all parts of the Republic and the North (1951-5, 1963-73). There are smaller collections taken in Denmark, the Netherlands and northern France.[20]

As the Cambridge coverage of Irish sites is limited, availability is somewhat a matter of chance, however, in this study, photographs from the collection are used for a number of the case study sites (see aerial photographs for Ardpatrick, Ennistymon, Killaloe, Kilmallock, Quin and Tulla,). As the Cambridge archive curators are highly efficient, access to images is gained with relative ease – the images are catalogued by placename, and prints are relatively inexpensive.

The Ordnance Survey of Ireland possesses a large archive of aerial photographs of Ireland dating back to the 1960s. The majority of these images are in black and white

---

[15]   Ibid.
[16]   CUCAP, (2001b) 'CUCAP General Information'
[17]   Doneus, M. (2002) 'Short Introduction to Aerial Archaeology'
[18]   CUCAP (2001b) 'CUCAP General Information'
[19]   Ibid.
[20]   CUCAP, (2001) 'CUCAP Library'

format, but some more recent images are in colour and are available as prints, diapositives or in digital format. Three main sets of high-flown photographic survey exist which detail the entire country:

- 1970s (1:30,000 scale black and white)
- 1995 (1:40,000 scale black and white)
- 2000 (1:40,000 scale colour and black and white)

Other high (1:15,001 to 1:40,000 scale), medium (1:5,001 to 1:15,000 scale) and low flown photographs (1:1,000 to 1:15,000 scale) of a variety of locations are also available - these are mainly of built-up areas. The Survey also has a limited library of oblique colour photography images.[21]

In this project 1970s aerial survey images are used as a tool for site analysis. One reason for selecting this collection is the comparative lack of settlement development in Ireland by the 1970s in comparison to development in either 1995 or 2000. Also, images from this collection are approximately one quarter the cost of other collections.

These images are easily obtained by grid reference for the site under investigation. Using this, the photographic archivist in the Survey identifies the most suitable image for the area required. Enlarged sections from these aerial photographs are presented in the images used for the analysis of each study site.

Field Work Verification

In settlement studies one of the most valuable sources of information is the landscape itself. In the 1950s and 1960s, W.G. Hoskins wrote about the landscape as an 'unwritten record of environmental and cultural change which could be interpreted and read using a combination of field work and map analysis.[22]

In the field, a detailed survey of each site was undertaken. Sites were visited at least twice, with some being visited a third time. This involved checking the cartographic record, and also the photographic recording of religious fabric. The survey explored the early fabric and aided the juxtaposition of this relative to subsequent developments. The survival of non-ecclesiastical medieval building fabric was also noted as the presence of this may be significant in the identification of settlement continuity. 25 inch and First

---

[21] Ordnance Survey or Ireland, (2002) *Price List for Aerial Photography and Survey Control*, pp 1-2
[22] Hoskins, W.G. (1955) *The Making of the English Landscape*; (1957) *Fieldwork in Local History*, Both cited in Lilley, K. (2000) 'Mapping the medieval city' p. 7.

edition 6 inch Ordnance Survey maps were used to assist scoping and initial observation. Notes were taken with regard to survival of church fabric and the relationship between the church site and surrounding landscape / settlement.

Following the initial drafting of a history and analysis, sites were re-visited to examine features (sometimes twice) and deal with issues which arose and had not hitherto fore been addressed. In some cases further photographs were taken, in other sites measurements of buildings were taken to clarify issues raised in the documentary record. In other sites locals were questioned regarding fabric which was not identifiable, and this yielded valuable results (see notes on graveyard at Kilteely).

This set of fieldnotes was a valuable tool when undertaking subsequent documentary investigations. Having visited the sites facilitated deeper understanding and analysis. Sites such as Ardpatrick, Kilteely, Tulla and Ennistymon which occupy commanding sites cannot be fully understood through documentary and cartographic investigation which do not consider their three-dimensional physical presence in the landscape. Peaceful lakeside sites such as Kilvoydan and the riverside church at Quin come to life when visited, as do the dramatic monuments of Killaloe cathedral and the crosses at Kilfenora. The investigation of Quin illustrates the importance of fieldwork. Being overshadowed by the impressive Abbey, the antiquity of the gravestones in the central church site at Quin simple has been neglected by antiquarians, yet these simple funerary monuments suggest a long period of burial continuity.

Placename Evidence

An essential foundation for research into 'place' in Ireland is an appreciation of placenames. The *Parish Namebooks* and *Memoirs* of the Ordnance Survey are the basis for placename standardisation. These volumes begun in the 1830s, provide Irish language names and their standardised Anglicisations. Each book contains 'received names', their various spellings and derivatives. These names refer to 'places' and also 'small' or 'object' names- houses, bridges, streams & hills. Orthographic authorities which were consulted in the compilation of these records include local government records, estate papers & word-of-mouth from land agents, clergymen residents from all levels of society and pre-Ordnance Survey maps. Obsolete spellings from historical

sources are also recorded. The most prominent of the placename researchers was John O'Donovan, hence these have become known as the 'O'Donovan name books'.[23]

In this investigation the *Namebooks* and *Memoirs* were supplemented by other sources such as Frost's *County of Clare Irish Local Names Explained*, and Ó Maolfabhail's *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*. Where further clarification was sought, placenames were translated using Irish-English dictionaries or advice was sought from Gaelic scholars.[24] The usefulness of placenames in the investigation of extant sites is clear and straightforward – 'cill' meaning church is widely used and suggests ecclesiastical influence, as does the use of the personal name 'Pádraig' referring to saint Patrick. Another key word which appears in case study placenames is 'dún' meaning fort. Where no 'fort' or church is visible however, placenames can be used to infer the presence of a secular or religious site of importance.

Primary Documentary Sources

The tone of many early Irish texts (i.e. annals, canons and hagiographies) is set by their ecclesiastical timbre.[25] Thus, material often tends to be apocryphal rather than literal, while much of the surviving non-ecclesiastical evidence is in the form of law tracts that are tangential in their dealing with non-legal issues. Added to the inherent bias in these documents, our present-day interpretation of these sources can also cause difficulty. The problems of interpreting historical documents have been discussed extensively by scholars such as J. Carey, C. Doherty, M. Herbert, A. MacDonald, C. Swift, C. Thomas and M.A. Valante.[26]

---

[23]   Andrews, J.H. (1986) *History in the Ordnance Map: An Introduction for Irish Readers*

24   Frost, J. (1906) *County of Clare Irish Local Names Explained.*
   O'Donovan, J. (1840) *Letters Containing Information Relative to the Antiquities of the County of Limerick, collected during the progress of the Ordnance Survey in 1840.*
   O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1839/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare.*
   Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1840-1842) *6 Inch Maps* of Counties Limerick and Clare.
   Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh.*
   Advice was sought from Dr. Liam Ó'Paircin, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick City and Professor Próinséas Ní Chatháin, UCD, regarding the derivation of various Irish placenames.

[25]   Richter, M. (1988) Medieval Ireland: The Enduring Tradition, pp 59-62.

[26]   Carey, J, Herbert, M. & Ó Riain, P. (Eds.) (2001) *Studies in Irish Hagiography; Saints and Scholars.*
   Doherty, C. (1980) 'Exchange and Trade in Early Medieval Ireland'; (1982) 'Some Aspects of Hagiography as a Source for Irish Economic History'; (1985) 'The Monastic Towns in Early Medieval Ireland'; (2000) 'Settlement in early Ireland: a review'.
   Herbert, M. (1988) *Iona, Kells and Derry: the History and Hagiography of the Monastic Familia of Columba 400-1200*; (1994) 'The Legacy of Colum Cille and his monastic community'.
   MacDonald, A. (2001) 'Aspects of the monastic landscape in Adomnán's Life of Columba'

These deficiencies act to hinder the development of clear and objective theories regarding early Irish society. Despite the inadequacies and inherent bias of the resource material, however, it is still possible to establish a feasible reconstruction of early Christian Ireland. The written sources must be supplemented by placing them alongside evidence from other sources such as archaeology and comparative studies of life in neighbouring countries.[27]

Comprehensive listings of Irish historical sources and an examination of their contents have been produced by a number of scholars. Among some of the most useful listings in the context of church sources are Kenny's *Sources for the Early History of Ireland*, Hughes' *The Church in Early Irish Society* and Ó Corrain's *A Handlist of Publications on Early Irish Society*.[28] These documents outline the major contemporary sources for the study of early Ireland and its christianisation and they also offer the researcher an in-depth analysis of each source.

The records of the Celts were kept by the 'filid' / 'fili'. These were a group of learned people who followed an intensive training regime and were taught to memorise various forms of record which were seen as fundamental to society.[29] As a form of historical source, the recorded versions of these oral tracts (which are late in origin) are a valuable tool in creating a conceptual understanding of the politics of early Ireland and investigating changes in social structures.[30]

The 'origin-legends' were another popular form of early history. These tell the story of how groups came to be located where they are and also their ancestry.[31] Their main virtue, however, lies in the fact that they illustrate the importance of knowing one's origins.[32]

Swift, C. (1998) 'Forts and Fields: a study of 'monastic towns' in seventh and eight century Ireland'. Thomas, C. (1998) 'Early Medieval Munster: Thoughts Upon Its Primary Christian Phase'. Valante, M.A. (1998) 'Reassessing the Irish "monastic town"'.

[27] De Paor, L. (1993) *Saint Patrick's World*, pp 8-9.

[28] Kenney, J. F. (1929) *Sources for the Early History of Ireland*, Volume I Ecclesiastical; Hughes, K. (1972) *Early Christian Ireland: Introduction to the Sources*; O'Corrain, D. (1976) 'A Handlist of Publications on Early Irish Society'.

[29] O'Curry, E. (1861) *Letters on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History*, p. 2; Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, pp 368-369.

[30] Hughes, K. (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian', pp 3-5.

[31] Joyce, P.W. (1903) *A Social History of Ancient Ireland*, p. 532

[32] Hughes, K. (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian', p. 7.

Stories attributed to the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries were written much later. These were composed to boost the power of various kings.[33] Hughes for example discusses *The War of the Irish with the Foreigners*, which was written as propaganda for the descendants of Brian Boru and *The Battle-Career of Cellachán of Cashel* was written about a tenth century king of Munster in an attempt to re-establish the power of his family in the south of Ireland.[34] Though the historical content of such accounts cannot be taken literally, these sagas provide an insight into the morality of the age, where Christianity would appear to have accepted and adopted the preceding traditions and practices.

Law tracts are another major category of early historical material that survives. Hughes claims that in their broad outlines, they can be taken quite literally. However, they contain much intricate detail, which is best viewed as an 'ideal' rather than a practical representation of society.[35] Until recently the use of the Law tracts for research work has been limited, but, through a series of publications and translations by the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies these Old Irish texts have been brought within the reach of all researchers of this period. Of particular interest for this work is Kelly's *Guide to Early Irish Law*. This volume provides a general account of legal practice in the seventh and eighth centuries with discussion of social background and later 'brehon' families. It also includes a number of sections dealing specifically with the early church: clerics, churches and their buildings, monastic clients.[36]

The documentary sources mentioned to date belong in the main to a native Irish tradition. Yet, the most important source for early Irish ecclesiastical history is the annals which belong to the Latin and continental tradition.[37] Hughes claims that the annals are 'the essential backbone of Irish history'.[38]

Around the ninth century the content of the annals broadens from being continental-style chronologies in Latin to a mixture of Irish / Gaelic and Latin, with Irish ultimately taking over as the dominant language.[39] Much of content consists of compact lists of

---

[33] Hughes, K. (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian', p. 10

[34] Ibid. citing Todd, J. H. (1867) *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh*.

[35] Hughes, K. (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian', pp 14-16.

[36] Charles-Edwards, T. & Kelly F. (Eds.) (1983) *Bechbretha: an Old Irish law-tract on bee-keeping*. Breatnach, L. (1987) *Uraicecht na riar: the Poetic Grades in Early Irish Law*. Kelly, F. (1988) *A guide to early Irish law*; (1998) *Early Irish farming*,

[37] Joyce, P. W. (1903) *A Social History of Ancient Ireland*, pp 521-526.

[38] Hughes, K. (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian', pp. 17.

[39] Hughes, K. (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian', pp 16-17.

place-names and persons' names. Once these can be mastered, they provide lists of kingship and abbacy succession and a chronological list of events such as political affairs and battles, in a form which is absent from the other native records. When analysed in detail the annals can provide information on: changes in institutions, the handing down of abbacies within families, disputes within monasteries, the divergence of political practice and legal theory and the varying pressure put upon the Irish by groups such as the Vikings. These records illustrate the integration of the church into Irish life and the resultant fusion of the native oral tradition of 'seanchas' with the continental tradition of scholarship. This transfer of ideas, language and concepts is not surprising when one considers that clerics, poets and canonists shared the same cultural heritage, and were often from the same families.[40]

The annals which survive for Ireland, do not cover the whole of the country. In Connaught, for example, there is a notable absence of records, as there is from important Leinster churches such as Kilkenny Leighlin or Ferns. A second problem with the annals is their reliability. It is generally agreed that accounts of events of the fifth and sixth centuries are not very reliable, while those from the eighth century onwards are reasonably trustworthy.[41] Because of these considerations the annals are generally taken as a guide to the actions and traditions of sites rather than accurate historical data.[42]

Many of these records have been translated into English, and these are the editions that are used in this work. As mentioned, recent scholarship has illustrated the need for care in using these editions and how, in many cases, direct acceptance of translations can be misleading. For this reason, the material from these sources is employed in an illustrative rather than a literal manner. The following is a list and comment on the main annals used in this work:

- Regarded as the most important collection of all the annals is the compilation of information from surviving Irish annals, commonly known as the *Annals of the Four Masters*. This was produced by a group of Irish Franciscan scholars, at Bundrowes, near Donegal, between 22 January 1622 and 10 August 1636.[43]

---

[40]   Ibid, pp 18-19.
[41]   Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 25.
[42]   Ibid, pp 25-26.
[43]   Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 23.

- As the name implies the *Annals of Ulster* are primarily concerned with Ulster and the northern part of Ireland, however some detail of the southern counties is given, and this provides a reliable cross-referencing of such data. '[F]or the history of the Irish monasteries during [the] early centuries the *Annals of Ulster* are beyond question our main source of trustworthy knowledge'.[44]

- The oldest surviving text is what should be known as *The Annals of Munster* but is better known as the *Annals of Inisfallen*. These annals were kept at the site of their name in County Kerry, from the middle of the twelfth century to the seventeenth century, but it would appear they had been kept in central Munster for some time before that. From 972 onwards they would appear to have been an O'Brien document.[45]

- Two Clonmacnois documents exist - the relatively late *Chronicon Scotorum* which dates to the mid-seventeenth century, and the *Annals of Clonmacnois* which is defective for the earlier centuries, but quite accurate for the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[46]

- A text known as the *Annals of Tigernach*, gives data from 973 to 1178.[47]

- The *Annals of Connaught* run from 1224 until 1544.[48]

- The *Annals of Loch Cé*, are a composite text. The first date is for 1014, but a gap exists from 1316 to 1412, which has been filled with text for these years taken from the *Annals of Connaught*.[49]

Hagiographies or saints' *Lives* are another form of record which draw from both native and continental traditions.[50] As with other early sources, dating the saints' *Lives* is made difficult by the fact that the surviving editions are most likely transcriptions rather than originals.[51] A large number of *Lives* were composed in the eleventh or twelfth century. Historically documents such as Cogitosus' *Life of St. Brigid* are worth little, being merely a 'succession of miracle narratives . . . telling nothing of the historical saint'.[52] Adamnán's *Vita S. Columbae*, written at Iona stands in strong contrast, however. It gives a highly vivid picture of life in a great Irish monastery.[53] In this work

---

[44] Ibid, p. 23.
[45] Hughes, K. (1972) *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 297.
[46] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 24.
[47] Ibid, pp 24-25.
[48] Ibid, p. 25.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid, p. 22.
[51] Joyce, P. W. (1903) *A Social History of Ancient Ireland*, p. 505.
[52] Kenney, J. F. (1929) *Sources For The Early History Of Ireland*, p. 360 cited in Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 20.
[53] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 21.

hagiographical material is drawn on merely to illustrate the life of particular saints and their attachment to sites under investigation.

These, like their European counterparts, often show the saints as exceptional individuals who carry out wondrous acts. Not concerned with history, nor interested in assembling evidence, or coming to a conclusion, the hagiographer is writing the panegyric of a holy person, stressing their holy way of life and the supernatural phenomena which accompanied them.[54] Irish hagiographies place a strong emphasis on the secular hero-type characteristics being influenced by earlier pagan traditions.[55]

[54] Hughes K, (1972) *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 219.
[55] The emphasis on secular traits in the Irish hagiographies contrasts with their English or continental counterpart - Hughes, K. (1977) 'The early Celtic idea of history and the modern historian', p. 22.

3.2. METHODOLOGY

Procedure for Examination of 'Ecclesiastical Settlements'

In addition to examining continuity of settlement at church sites this project develops a methodology for the examination of ecclesiastically influenced settlements which can be adopted at a wider scale. Figure 2.17. presents a template for the examination of such sites, and in order to use this model, Figure 3.1. acts as a procedure for a detailed examination. These models are based on a number of criteria which appear to apply to all settlements which have evolved from church sites:

- Ecclesiastically influenced settlements display evidence of secular and / or ecclesiastical antiquity;

- Evidence of early ecclesiastical influence includes key elements such as church, graveyard and holy well;

- Settlements follow a distinct pattern of curvilinear layout and form often evident in the survival of curvilinear landscape features such as roadways / property boundaries, which indicate church enclosures.

The following is a suggested sequence / methodology for this investigation, and it is proposed that this approach may be more widely applicable than just the current study.

(a) Preliminary Investigation

Having identified a settlement for investigation, it is important to establish the basic form of each site, to assess the presence of potential religious features, and to carry out a basic documentary search. The method adopted in this study is to employ GIS technology - to identify and match cartographic sources with the church features extracted from the *SMR*. This process identifies settlements with / without potential ecclesiastical fabric. Following this a basic documentary investigation is undertaken to identify the extent of sources related to each site.

(b) Pattern of Layout and Form

A variety of characteristics may be identified in relation to church influenced settlements. By synthesising these an overall spatial pattern was identified. Figure 2.17. presents a Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites, which may be used in the initial examination of sites. Not only does this pattern / template apply to Armagh and Kells, it also applies to less influential sites where

evidence of early church influence is difficult to identify. The conforming of a site to this template suggests potential church influence worthy of further study.

(c) Detailed Examination of Elements

The next step in this methodology is a thorough historical / archival investigation (using primary and secondary sources). The purpose of this is to explore the religious influence on a site. In undertaking such an investigation the chronology of a site may be uncovered. In addition to historical data, a broad range of elements may be highlighted for physical examination. These are presented in Table 2.1. which may be used as a checklist to further explore the claims of a particular site.

(d) Plan Analysis

Having established church provenance, more investigation may be undertaken through the use of Plan Analysis to examine the layout of the enclosure (or enclosures) at each site. Using this methodology may help to identify features which would otherwise be missed.

The relationship between individual church elements, or between secular and religious elements may be useful in identifying ecclesiastical provenance. An aid to this is the fact that most church sites follow a distinct spatial type, pattern or form, which is traceable despite interruption / interference by subsequent settlement.

(e) Highlight Continuity

One of the objectives of this investigation is to investigate continuity of settlement at each site. It is proposed that settlement is rooted in and focused on the original church site which usually survives latter-day development. While documentary evidence may be poor or totally absent, this can be compensated for through investigation of topographical and fragmentary elements, ranging from enclosures to ecclesiastical features.

All of this evidence when taken together - historical, documentary, cartographic, topographic, archaeological and typological - will be used to investigate the extent to which early Christian foundations act as seeds for subsequent settlement development and continuity throughout the early Christian, Anglo Norman, Georgian and Victorian periods up to the present day.

FIGURE 3.1. : PROCEDURE FOR EXAMINATION OF 'ECCLESIASTICAL SETTLEMENTS'
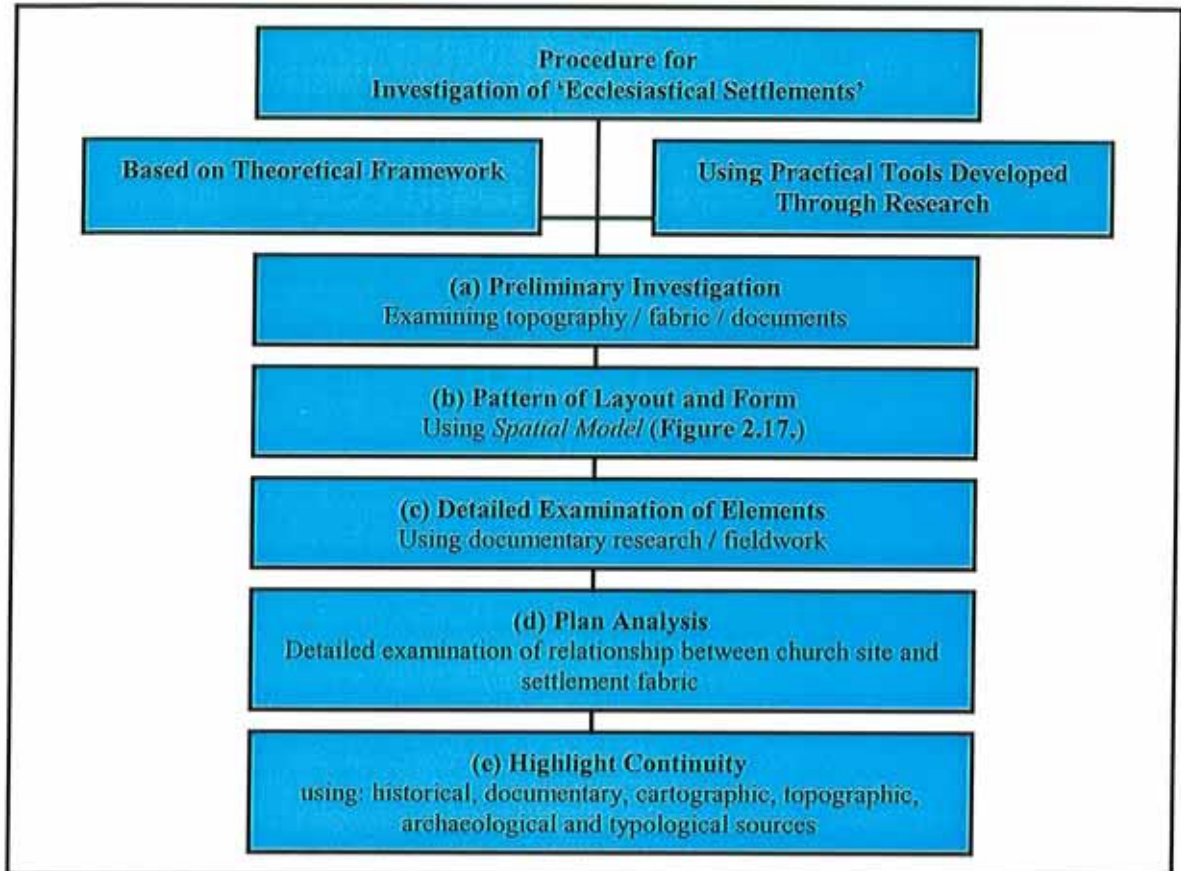
Using this methodology, it is possible to investigate the process whereby settlements in Ireland have evolved from early church foundations. Traces of these early origins may be clearly observed in the landscape, written accounts and the archaeological record, and this technique is useful for bringing such diverse sources together in a practical and useful manner.

Geographical Information Systems

In order to assess the roots of present day settlements and identify potential case study sites, the Dúchas *Sites and Monuments Records* (*SMR*) for Counties Limerick and Clare were intensively examined.[56] This presented a vast database of historical sites that have

---

[56] Initially, hard copies of *SMR* volumes for Limerick and Clare where painstakingly examined to extract religious fabric – first in tabular form and then cross-checked with OS 6 inch maps (1840s and subsequent editions) .
     More recently Dúchas has released the entire *SMR* listings in digital format on the Internet, thus, the database used in this exercise has been up-graded to include all monuments. However, the initial cartographic examination of religious fabric is still useful, as some errors still exist in the *SMR*, which were corrected in this process.

been identified using a broad range of cartographic and historical sources and includes both those that have disappeared and those which are extant.

Following a detailed examination of the entire *SMR* for both counties, all features of a religious nature were extracted. Data from the 1964 Ordnance Survey *Map of Monastic Ireland* was also added. Manipulating and mapping these, together with modern settlement fabric for the study area presented a major task. The tool which was identified for matching these data was a Geographic Information System (or GIS) In this particular case the MapInfo software package was used. A GIS is a computerised or automated method of displaying geographical or spatial information with maps. The system enables the user to extract information from the collection of stored data that describes or explains the geographic objects / entities. The computerised environment enables the capture, storage, and maintenance of a large set of geographic information.[57]

One of the main functions of a GIS is 'point-in-polygon overlay' whereby a user-defined polygon feature is 'overlaid' on a point feature.[58] This can determine which point features are within a polygon region. This 'buffer generation' technique allows a user-defined region to be created in a particular location, thereby identifying the relationship between various sets of data - in this project, the technique was seen as useful for relating church fabric to settlement.[59]

Plan Analysis

The main focus of this work is settlement morphology in Ireland and more particularly the importance of early medieval church sites within the overall settlement process. The methodology used is based on the Plan Analysis technique developed by M.R.G. Conzen. Lilley in reviewing Plan Analysis highlights one of the main difficulties with this methodology -- that despite the acceptance of Conzen's work 'an explicit statement on the methodology of Plan Analysis has been absent, and so too has a demonstration of

---

[57] Martin, D. (1991) *Geographic Information Systems and Their Socio-Economic Applications.*
[58] Antenucci, J.C. (1991) *Geographic Information Systems.*
[59] http://www.kingston.ac.uk/geog/gis/intro.htm#glossary: The Kingston Centre for GIS, Kingston University, Kingston upon Thames define a Buffer as: an enclosed polygon created around points, lines or areas at an equal distance in all directions. The results represent areas at set distances from the original object. For example, the creation of buffer zones around a polluted industrial site may represent the varying extent of pollution measured at specified distances from the source of the contamination. Buffers are therefore useful for proximity analysis and environmental impact assessment.

the historical validity of this technique'.[60] In order to deal with these criticisms a detailed methodology of Plan Analysis is outlined here, followed by a discussion of its testing and historical validation. In addition, justification will be given for its use in the exploration of ecclesiastically influenced settlements.

A common approach to the examination of historical settlements is the recording of cartographic and field data and its subsequent subjection to metrological and geometrical analysis. This 'Plan Analysis' technique is based on the fact that plot boundary lines, field and townland boundaries are extremely resilient and can often be traced directly backwards in time. Because settlements tend to retain these residual features from earlier periods, phases of development can be identified and examined.[61]

Plan-analysis of a settlement's physical characteristics through devising morphologically-based regions has its origins in the research of M.R.G. Conzen. The roots of this morphological analysis of urban form are found in much earlier geographical studies undertaken by German and French geographers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the work of central European researchers up to 1945.[62] Conzen's seminal work on Alnwick and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and his subsequent work on towns such as Ludlow shows how the morphological regions in a town are a combination of three elements: streets, plots and buildings and their evolution over time.[63]

Certain elements are more resistant to change. The town plan (street and plot pattern) is the most durable element while land use pattern is more liable to change.[64] Change can be either 'adaptive' (changing the plots and buildings without changing the street pattern) or 'augmentative' (changing the plot and street pattern simultaneously).[65] Thus, property demarcations are remarkably enduring features of the urban landscape. While archaeological and historical evidence of this continuity is useful, to fully capitalise on

---

[60]   Lilley, K. (2000) 'Mapping the medieval city' p. 9.
[61]   Conzen, M.R.G. (1960) *Alnwick, Northumberland - A Study in Town-Plan Analysis*, pp 6-7.
[62]   Whitehand, J.W.R. (1981) 'Background to the urban morphogenetic tradition';
       Geisler, W. (1924) *Die Deutsche Stadt* and Strahm, H. (1935) *Studien zur Gründungsgeschichte der Stadt Bern* - both cited in Baker, N.J. and Slater, T.R. (1992) 'Morphological regions in English medieval towns'
[63]   Conzen, M.R.G. (1960) *Alnwick, Northumberland - A Study in Town-Plan Analysis*; (1968) 'The use of town plans in the study of urban history'; (1981) 'The Plan Analysis of an English city centre' ; (1981) 'The morphology of towns in Britain during the industrial era'; (1988) 'Morphogenesis, morphological regions and secular human agency in the historic townscape as exemplified by Ludlow'
[64]   Baker, N.J. and Slater, T.R. (1992) 'Morphological regions in English medieval towns'

these various elements requires an overall methodology which binds them in a useful manner. The methodology proposed by Lilley is Conzen's Plan Analysis technique.

Using the town plan, Conzen's analytic framework separates the medieval core, 'the old town', from later developments (in his studies the focus is particularly on developments from the sixteenth century onwards). The survival of a 'fringe belt' whose plan characteristics may derive from obsolete land uses is pivotal to this identification. While boundaries may be moved slightly over time as plots are extended or truncated, in many cases boundaries represent a tide-mark left during the development process.

By studying historical maps, the existing urban form can thus be deconstructed into the dynamics and interactions which produced the present day pattern of building, plot and street. The technique breaks down an urban area into 'morphogenetic plan units' with each characterised by a different combination and phase of processes. This allows an analysis of different morphological areas, which is particularly important in examining the influence of institutions (such as churches) on land use patterns:

> As the [settlement] expands to engulf . . . (institutions) . . . their
> relative insensitivity to the operations of the land market often results
> in their continued presence on central and valuable land, a distortion of
> the street pattern, and an anomaly in the land market.[66]

While it is accepted that land use is volatile, and layout of streets or 'plan' is a conservative aspect of townscape, flexibility of function may not apply strongly to lands occupied by institutions such as churches. Towns therefore, are strongly inclined to retain in their layout, residual church features from earlier periods as exemplified by the survival of enclosure features at Kells, Armagh and Kildare.[67] Plan Analysis therefore, would appear to be a useful tool in investigating the links between early church sites and present day Irish settlement patterns. To further supplement this cartographic Plan Analysis, building fabric is also important as it is the most visually obvious 'carrier of historical information'.[68] Representing a major fixed capital investment it can also be resistant to major change.[69]

---

[65] Conzen, M.R.G. (1981) 'The morphology of towns in Britain during the industrial era'
[66] Rofé, Y. (1995) 'Space and Community' p. 116.
[67] Conzen, M.R.G. Alnwick, Northumberland - A Study in Town-Plan Analysis pp 6-7; Simms, A. and Simms, A. (1990) Kells; Dargan, P. (1994) 'The morphology of Irish towns'; Andrews, J.H. (1986) Kildare.
[68] Baker, N.J. and Slater, T.R. (1992) 'Morphological regions in English medieval towns'
[69] Conzen M.R.G. (1988) 'Morphogenesis' pp 255-259.

Examples of Plan Analysis may be found in a number of English settlement studies which examine the towns of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Stratford-upon-Avon, Ludlow, and Thame.[70] In these investigations, researchers provides useful illustration that by careful application of land surveying and analytical techniques it is possible to establish the morphology of English settlements. Slater has utilised this analytical framework to investigate a variety of smaller English medieval towns, while in Ireland, Dargan has studied Anglo-Norman burgage patterns in Kilkenny and Drogheda-in-Louth.[71] This investigative approach has also been successfully used in Ireland by Simms, Bradley, Swan, Andrews and Graham.[72] The technique also has application further afield. In Austria, Klaar has used street patterns and plot patterns to examine small twelfth and thirteenth century towns.[73]

In this present study the technique is adapted to explore the possible presence of church enclosures in the towns of Counties Limerick and Clare. The advantage of Plan Analysis over other techniques such as pure archaeological investigation is that the

[70]   Conzen, M.R.G. (1960) *Alnwick, Northumberland - A Study in Town-Plan Analysis*.
       Slater, T.R. (1980) *The analysis of Burgage Patterns in Medieval Towns*; (1990) *The Built Form of Western Cities*.
       Bond, C.J. (1990) 'Central place and medieval new town: the origins of Theme, Oxfordshire'.

[71]   Slater, T. R. (1980) *The analysis of Burgage Patterns in Medieval Towns*; (1989) 'Doncaster's town plan: an analysis'; (1990) *The Built Form of Western Cities*: essays for M R G Conzen; (1990) 'Urban morphology in 1990: developments in international cooperation'; (2000) Towns in Decline, AD 100-1600; idem and Rosser, G. (1998) *The Church in the Medieval Town*.
       In Baker, N.J. and Slater, T.R. (1992) 'Morphological regions in English medieval towns' the following studies are given as practical examples of Plan Analysis: Bond, C.J. (1990) 'Central place and medieval new town'; Spearman, R.M. (1988) 'The medieval townscape of Perth'; Haslam, J. Ed.) (1985) *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England*; Baker, N.J. (1989) *The Archaeology of Walsal*.
       Dargan, P. (1994) 'The Morphology of Irish Towns; (1997) *Nobber Architecture and Development*; (1995) 'Celtic Settlement Forms in Irish Towns'.

[72]   Simms, A. (1979) 'Medieval Dublin; a topographical analysis'; (1986) 'Continuity and Change: Settlement and Society in Medieval Ireland c.500-1500'; (1992) 'The early origins and morphological inheritance of European towns'; (1994) 'Kells'; (1994) 'Kildare'; (1994) 'The Origin of Irish Towns'; (2000) 'Perspectives on Irish Settlement Studies'; idem and Andrews, J.H. (1994) *Irish Country Towns*; idem and Andrews, J.H. (1995) *More Irish Country Towns*; idem and Fagan, P. (1992) 'Villages in County Dublin: Their Origins and Inheritance'; idem and Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*; idem and Brady, J. (2001) *Dublin Through Space and Time*.
       Bradley, J. (1988) *Settlement and Society in Early Medieval Ireland*; (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town'; (1992) 'The Topographical Development of Scandinavian Dublin'; (1995) *Walled Towns in Ireland*.
       Swan, L. (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites'; (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland'; (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland'.
       Andrews, J.H. (1986) *Kildare*.
       Graham, B. (1976) 'The Evolution of The Settlement Pattern of Anglo-Norman Eastmeath'; (1987) 'Urban Genesis in Early Medieval Ireland'; (1989) 'Secular Urban Origins in Early Medieval Ireland'; (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland: Settlement as an Indicator of Economic and Social Transformation, c.500-1100'.

latter is extremely slow, often small in scale, is subject to limited opportunity and is extremely costly. Thus, while Plan Analysis is usually much broader in scope than the focused approach undertaken in this work, it is adapted to provide an accessible and accurate means of examining ecclesiastically influenced settlements in Counties Limerick and Clare. Here the approach is used primarily for the identification of the primary church plan unit - in order to isolate this unit for further investigation. The technique then leads to the identification of common structural elements / characteristics of sites such as enclosures (inner and outer), approach roads, market areas and overall field patterns - within the religious site and throughout the surrounding area.

Procedure for Undertaking Plan Analysis

While much of the Plan Analysis work in the current project was undertaken prior to the publication of Lilley's paper 'Mapping the Medieval City', the procedure outlined therein, is similar to that employed in this work, supporting this author's interpretation of Conzen's methodology:

- First a simplified base *town plan* is prepared, using the earliest, most accurately surveyed and detailed cadastral plan of a town. From this is extracted the town's 'morphological skeleton' - streets and plot patterns - to create a base plan.

- The second stage in Plan Analysis involves the identification of 'plan units'. The plots and streets derived from the Ordnance Survey plan are examined in terms of their form - size, shape, orientation - to highlight areas which share a similar morphological character. The boundaries of these plan units or areas displaying morphological unity are termed 'plan seams'. At this stage units are numbered and named. These units are used individually as the basis for analysing historical evidence.

- The third stage involves the careful integration of historical material by mapping it on to the town plan. The historical material may comprise of documents such as property deeds or archaeological reports. A relative chronology is developed for the features within each unit, in an attempt to date the fabric and development of each spatial unit.

---

[73] Klaar, A. 'Die siedslungsformen der "Osterreichischen Donaustadte"' cited in Lilley, K. (2000) 'Mapping the medieval city' p. 7.

- Finally, individual units and their morphological histories are pieced together to create a map which illustrates 'the changing form of the medieval urban landscape'. Essentially at this stage one is 'reading plan units as a physical expression of the formation of an urban landscape'. This final stage is an attempt to interpret what the changing form of the medieval landscape represents.[74]

Thus, morphological analysis and its cartographic representation provides a means whereby one may conceptualise, measure and interpret the various (disparate) forms of data - documentary, archaeological and cartographic, in order to interpret the changing medieval urban landscape.[75]

Assessment of 'Plan Analysis'

One of the main criticisms of Plan Analysis is the lack of a definitive methodology. This has been addressed in the outlining of a procedure in the preceding section. A second criticism is the reliance of this methodology on physical features for which a date of origin is not established. In some cases documentary accounts of features may exist, but records rarely note the date at which such features were established. In defence of the technique however, archaeological or documentary accounts only exist in a small number of sites, and in these such data is often without context. A spatial analysis such as Plan Analysis maximises the potential of such fragmentary evidence, and as shown by Lilley in his investigation of Coventry, this technique can be used to bind together disparate information and create a coherent account of landscape evolution through time.[76]

A number of highly acclaimed English based studies have been undertaken by advocates of Plan Analysis such as Conzen, Slater, Whitehand Lilley. The success of the methodology as an analytical tool has also been displayed in Ireland by a number of authors. Simms' detailed analysis of medieval Dublin using Roque's 18th century map to identify plan units of the early city has been highly influential in the investigation of Ireland's capital. Bradley has illustrated how Plan Analysis can be used to identify the early Christian and medieval characteristics of a number of Irish towns. Dargan has used this approach in his very detailed Doctoral research into Anglo-Norman burgage plots in Drogheda-in-Meath and subsequently in his analysis of Nobber – also in

---

[74] Lilley, K. (2000) 'Mapping the medieval city' pp 12-13.
[75] Ibid, p. 13.

113

Meath.[77] These are some of the authors who have used this technique and illustrated its applicability in Ireland. The particular relevance for discussing these authors is that in their research they have illustrated the strength of Plan Analysis in a variety of contexts ranging from the highly mapped city of Dublin, to smaller Irish settlements such as ecclesiastical Armagh, and small nucleated settlements such as Nobber. Their studies illustrate the successful use of Plan Analysis in situations ranging from where it supports a detailed archival and cartographic record, to settlements where the investigation can be highly speculative, depending heavily on this approach.

---

[76] Ibid. p. 10.

[77] Simms, A. (1979) 'Medieval Dublin: a topographical analysis'.
Bradley, J. (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town'.
Dargan, P. (1998) 'Nobber an Anglo-Norman Village'.

CHAPTER 4 : CASE STUDIES

4.1. INTRODUCTION TO STUDY AREA

The next step in this investigation involves a detailed testing of the 'Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites', by examining church sites in a specific geographical area and thereby, exploring the influence they have had on subsequent site development within this regional context.

The geographical area chosen for this study is the counties of Limerick and Clare (Figure 4.1.). Clare is a maritime county in the province of Munster, bounded on the east and south by Lough Derg and the river Shannon, which separate it from the counties of Tipperary, Limerick, and Kerry; on the west by the Atlantic Ocean, and on the northwest by Galway bay; while on the north and north-east it is bounded by the County of Galway.[1] The County of Limerick is also situated in the province of Munster, to the south of County Clare. It is bounded on the north by the estuary of the Shannon (which separates it from County Clare), on the east by the County of Tipperary on the south by that of Cork and on the west by Kerry.[2]

Settlement in County Clare is small in scale and displays strong indigenous characteristics, there is also considerable evidence of church enclosures.[3] County Limerick also displays considerable evidence of indigenous settlement form, but the scale of settlement is more varied than that of County Clare. A number of towns were developed by the Vikings and the Anglo Normans, the largest of these being Limerick City, but also including the medieval boroughs of Askeaton, Newcastle (West), Rathkeale, Adare, Caherconlish and Kilmallock.[4]

---

[1] Lewis, S. (1837) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* Vol. 1. p. 329.

[2] Ibid, Vol. 2. p. 261.

[3] Swan, L. (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites and their relevance to settlement patterns of the first millenniumBC'

[4] O'Connor, p.J. (1987) *Exploring Limerick's Past*, p. 17.

FIGURE 4.1. : MAP OF IRELAND LOCATING COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map.
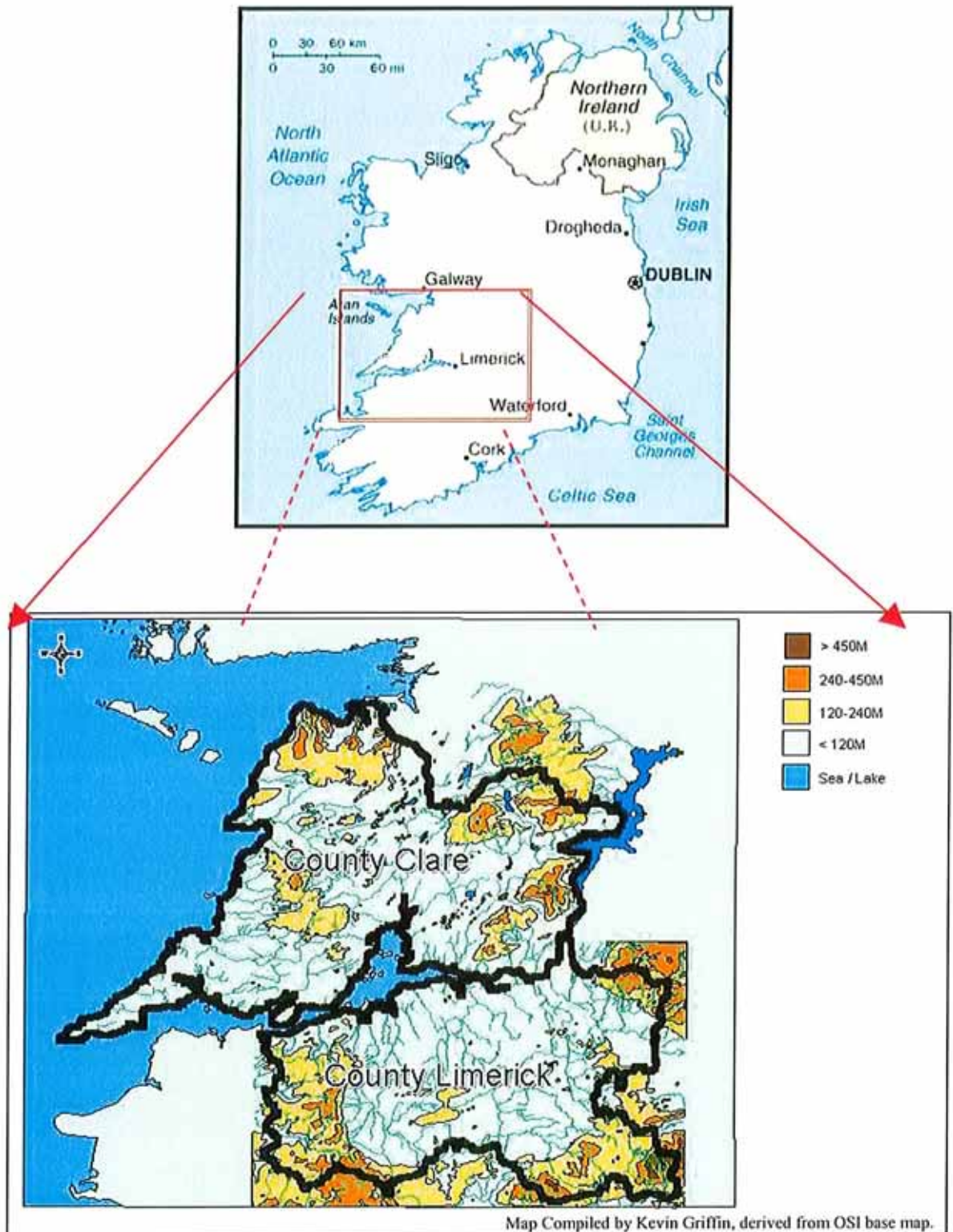
By adopting a spatial approach this work will compare and contrast regional patterns of church influences on settlement. The counties of Limerick and Clare were chosen as foci for study for a number of reasons, which may be summarised as follows:

117

> There is considerable evidence of pre-Christian habitation throughout the counties chosen;[5]
>
> These counties contain many examples of church enclosures;[6]
>
> County Limerick provides a good example of Viking and Anglo-Norman influence in the form of major towns and villages. This contrasts well with County Clare. The use of comparative analysis will add to the findings of this study;
>
> Settlement in County Clare on the other hand is small in scale and because the county was outside the area of major Anglo-Norman influence, it displays strong indigenous characteristics.

Investigating these two counties provides potential contrast, and thereby provides an opportunity to study a variety of spatial forms that may have religious roots. By focusing on Limerick and Clare, the main emphasis of this project is on small and medium sized settlements. Examining the topic from a regional viewpoint addresses the issue of comparative investigation, thereby providing insight into a previously neglected area of academic exploration.

The first step in this investigation is to identify individual sites for investigation. To undertake this it is necessary to establish the relationship between the two groups of data which are dealt with; present day 'settlements' within the counties and the large data set of religious fabric.

Through the use of computerised matching and hard-copy maps and documentary sources, a basic analysis of all potential sites is undertaken to establish an overall pattern of settlement in Limerick and Clare. Using information from this investigation in association with the spatial model, criteria are established for the selection of suitable study sites. The primary consideration is the selection of settlements / sites which appear to have developed at or near churches. The sites selected also fulfil the following criteria:

- Geographical distribution / spread (including selection from different dioceses / counties)
- Varying scale
- Varying importance
- Survival of church fabric

---

[5]   Stout, M. (1997) *The Irish Ringfort*
[6]   Swan, L. (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites and their relevance to settlement patterns of the first millenniumBC'

Detailed investigation of each case study is subsequently carried out using Plan Analysis and employing a broad range of documentary cartographic and photographic sources, in tandem with on-the-ground examination, recording and surveying.

Evolution of Settlement in Study Area

Before a thorough investigation of case studies can be undertaken it is important to present a context within which these sites have evolved. With this as an objective, the following section explores the evolution of settlement in the study area, using maps produced from data extracted from the *SMR* of the counties under investigation.

Earlier Prehistoric Fabric in Counties Limerick and Clare

The first of the maps produced (Figure 4.2.) illustrates the distribution of 18 different categories of monuments, which can be loosely grouped under the title 'Earlier Prehistoric Period' which includes the Mesolithic period (*c*.7500BC-*c*.4000BC) and the Neolithic /Early Bronze period (*c*.4000BC-*c*.2500BC).[7] These 414 monuments (see Table 4.1.) cover a number of periods, generally termed the 'Mesolithic' the 'Neolithic' and the 'Early Bronze-Age'. The Mesolithic peoples were a simple society, who favoured riverine or coastal sites. As farming spread throughout Europe, the evolution from single cist burials to the massive megalithic monuments of the Neolithic peoples, can be observed.[8] These tomb builders were the first farmers and their distribution in Ireland is concentrated in the north and east, hence the relative dearth of sites in Limerick & Clare. The exception to this is wedge tombs, of which there are 140 in the study area. 120 of these are in Co. Clare – half of the entire number in the province of Munster.[9] The main focus of these (and indeed the large proportion of all megalithic sites) is the upland area of the Burren in north Clare. Secondary groupings exist in southeast Clare and in a band through east Limerick.

The evidence supports the theory that the first farmers (i.e. Neolithic period *c*.4000BC-*c*.2500BC) settled on the lighter upland soils of the Burren, which would have been more suited to their technology.

---

[7] Dating the various periods of pre-history is a complex issue. The dates here are taken from Cooney, C. 'Prehistoric settlement studies in Ireland'

[8] Stout and Stout (1997) 'Early landscapes, from prehistory to plantation', p. 33.

[9] Ibid, p. 33.

119

Later Prehistoric Fabric in Counties Limerick and Clare

The next map and table illustrate the 'Later Prehistoric Period' (*c*.2500BC - *c*.600BC), which coincides with the later Bronze Age and the beginnings of the Iron Age. 15 different data categories comprise this table which totals 1,252 sites (Figure 4.3. & Table 4.2.). These data are classified into three distinct groups: fulachta fiadh which are ancient cooking sites; barrows – or burial structures and; assorted stone monuments – which includes carved stones, standing stones etc.[10]

Comparing the distribution of these with the previous map illustrates the geographical expansion of territory under human influence. Principal in this, is a spread into central Clare and the uplands of East Limerick. The second point to note is the clear distinction between the location of fulachta fiadh in northern and central Clare, and the concentration of barrows in southeast Limerick. While both of these monuments appear to date from the Bronze Age (*c*.2500BC-*c*.600BC) into the subsequent Iron Age, in this study area they have distinct patterns of distribution.[11]

Pre-Christian Fabric in Counties Limerick and Clare

The third phase of development considered here is the 'Pre-Christian Period' (*c*.600BC-*c*.400AD) which, refers to the Later Iron Age and is to a certain extent coterminous with the introduction of Christianity (Figure 4.4. & Table 4.3.). There are 880 sites in this map and table, primarily composed of cashels and assorted ringforts.

As would be expected, promontory forts occupy coastal sites along the western seaboard, of County Clare, displaying a spread to the south from the earlier focus in north Clare. This spread is further evidenced in the presence of ringforts in the western tip of County Clare. Overall, however, the focus of settlement appears to follow from the earlier maps, with the pattern dominated by a slight expansion of the territories occupied in the Later Prehistoric period, (i.e. north Clare, central Clare and eastern Limerick).

---

[10] 'fulachta' being the plural of the word 'fulacht' - O'Sullivan and Sheehan (1996) *The Iveragh Peninsula*, pp 117-118; 124.
[11] Ibid, pp 117-118; 124.

> Ecclesiastical settlement is a significant component in the overall
> settlement pattern of the early medieval period in Ireland. It comprises
> both early Irish monasteries and many other less easily defined sites of
> an ecclesiastical nature.[12]

A cursory examination of Figure 4.5. supports Swan's claim that County Clare is remarkably rich in the wealth of its early Christian remains.[13] In the introduction to his *Survey of the Ancient Churches in County Limerick*, Westropp comments on the fact that County Limerick affords a rich field to workers on antiquities.[14] He says of the church foundations which are the main focus of his interest: 'how numerous and interesting are the churches and monasteries'.[15]

The 1054 items in Figure 4.5. and Table 4.4. contain only fabric which can be considered reliable in identifying 'early' and important sites: early sites as identified in the Ordnance Survey map of early Christian Ireland; round towers and religious enclosures as identified by Dúchas. Burial grounds, graveyards and holy wells, which are all very general features, are included to illustrate the overall distribution of early Christian fabric / influence throughout the counties. Finally, this map / table includes bullaun stones, which are generally associated with early church sites.

As can be seen, the distribution of remains from this period, ranges much wider than that of the earlier periods. The uplands of western Limerick and western Clare are the only areas where fabric is sparse.

In establishing the patterns of early Irish church distribution Bowen refers to Gwynn & Gleeson's *History of the Diocese of Killaloe*, and points out that 'the relationship of early . . . [church] sites to the geological outcrops of Co. Clare is worthy of special attention'.[16] According to this theory, most of the 'early Celtic churches' are to be found on the limestone deposits in the eastern part of the county, this is particularly the case in the central area of the county around Ennis, which contains sites such as Quin and Dysert O'Dea. Bowen dismisses the 'peninsula of West Clare [which is] made up of

---

[12]   Binchy, D.A. (1962) 'Patrick and his Biographers'
[13]   Swan, D.L. (1991) 'Some Ecclesiastical Sites in Co. Clare'
[14]   Westropp, T.J. (1905 ???) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in Co. Limerick', p. 27.
[15]   Ibid.
[16]   Gleeson, D. F. and Gwynn, A. (1962) *A History of the Diocese of Killaloe*, cited in Bowen, E. G. (1977) *Saints, Seaways and Settlements in The Celtic Lands*; Bowen, E. G. (1977) *Saints, Seaways and Settlements in the Celtic Lands*, p. 222.

flagstones and shales [and has] only a few churches of historic interest'.[17] The exceptions to this pattern, appear to be sited in estuarine locations and on island sites - particularly the important sites in the Shannon estuary and on Lough Derg.[18] While Bowen's thesis would require further exploration before being adopted wholeheartedly, it appears to also apply, at least at a superficial level, in County Limerick where the majority of sites are located in the fertile limestone areas. While some of the more general church fabric appears to be more evenly distributed, the specifically early elements, i.e. bullaun stones and round towers, appear to follow this pattern.

Medieval Fabric in Counties Limerick and Clare

The Map of Medieval Fabric (Figure 4.6. & Table 4.5.) contains 579 monuments, 405 of which are classified under the generic term 'castle'. These again follow the overall trend identified in earlier periods. The main focus has shifted however, with a move away from the north Clare region, towards the river Shannon, and a spread of sites throughout the rich agricultural lands of County Limerick. A number of theories could be proposed with regard to this distribution, but the most striking pattern is the absence of sites in upland areas, in favour of settling in the lower more productive agricultural land. Within the overall distribution, a number of patterns may be observed – primarily, the concentration of moated sites in Limerick and the predominance for bawns to be located in north Clare. It is likely that this reflects settlement by the Anglo Normans who focussed their attention on rich, productive, heavy soils (in this case those of central Limerick), leaving the lighter less-productive soils (of Clare and the upland areas) for the native Irish.

[17] Bowen, E. G. (1977) *Saints, Seaways and Settlements in the Celtic Lands*, p. 222.
[18] Ibid, pp 222-223.

FIGURE 4.2. : MAP OF EARLIER PREHISTORIC FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE
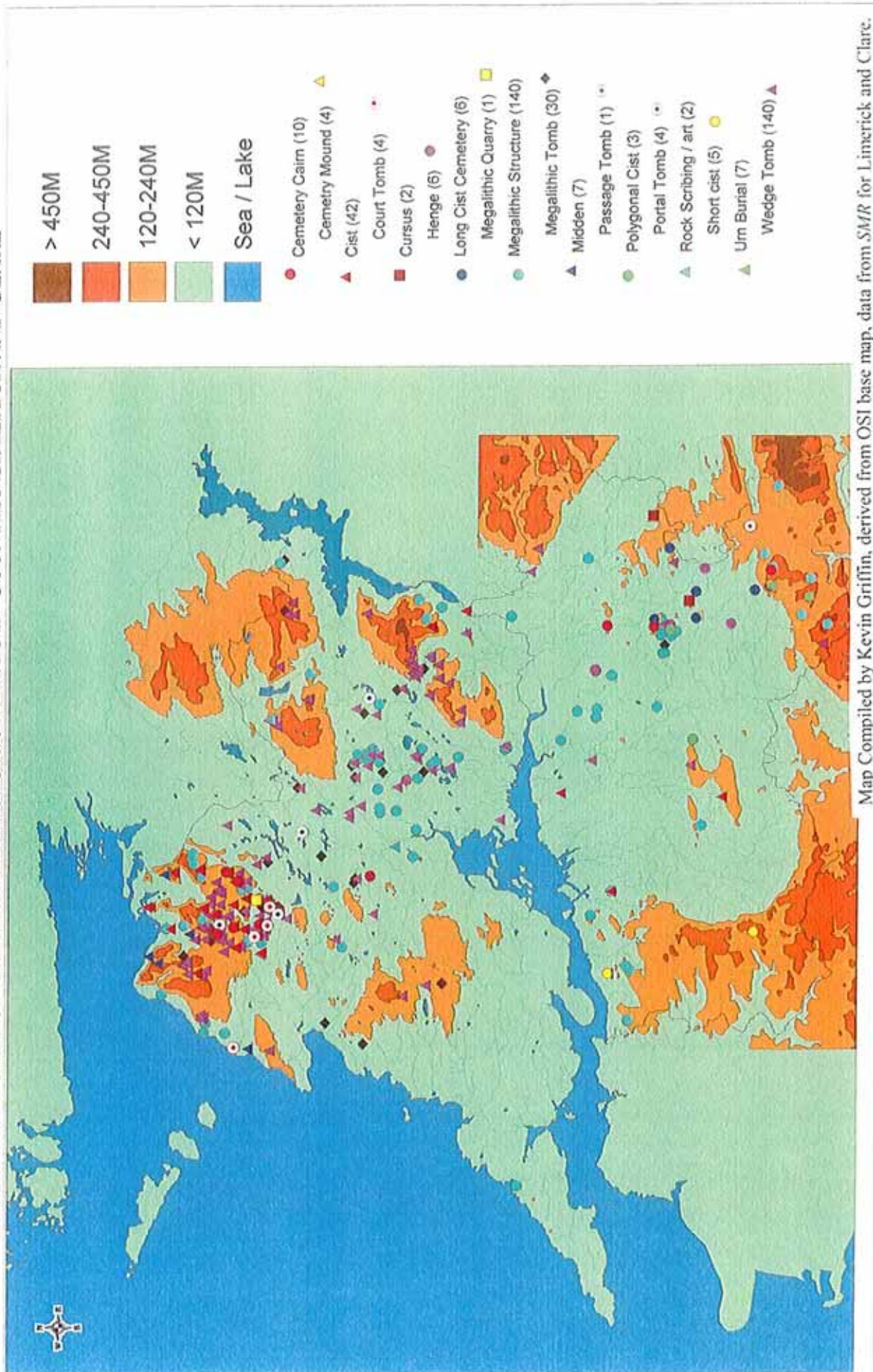
Legend:
- > 450M
- 240-450M
- 120-240M
- < 120M
- Sea / Lake

- Cemetery Cairn (10)
- Cemetery Mound (4)
- Cist (42)
- Court Tomb (4)
- Cursus (2)
- Henge (6)
- Long Cist Cemetery (6)
- Megalithic Quarry (1)
- Megalithic Structure (140)
- Megalithic Tomb (30)
- Midden (7)
- Passage Tomb (1)
- Polygonal Cist (3)
- Portal Tomb (4)
- Rock Scribing / art (2)
- Short cist (5)
- Urn Burial (7)
- Wedge Tomb (140)

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from SMR for Limerick and Clare.

123

FIGURE 4.3. : MAP OF LATER PREHISTORIC FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE
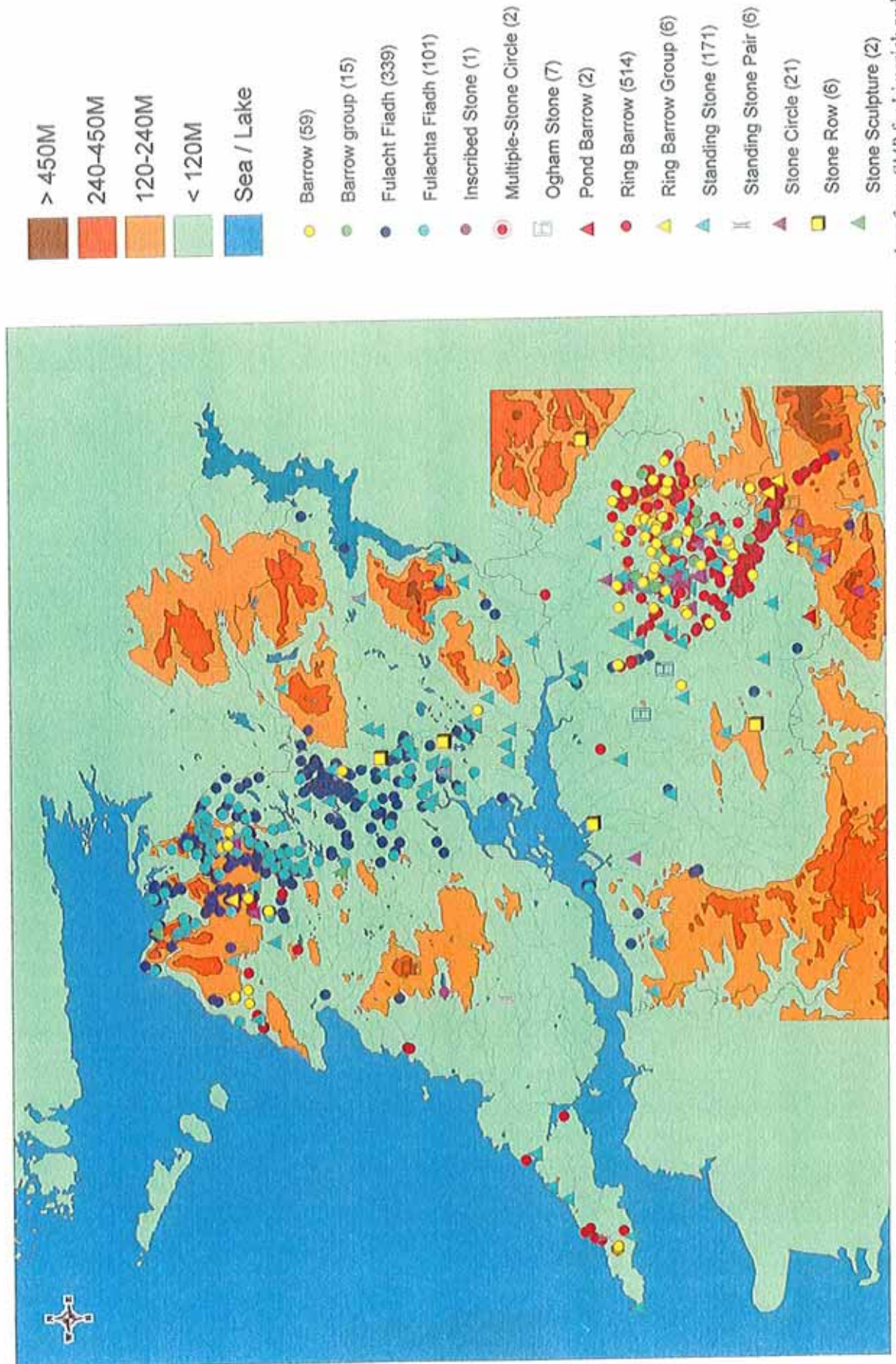
Legend — Elevation:
- > 450M
- 240-450M
- 120-240M
- < 120M
- Sea / Lake

Legend — Site types:
- Barrow (59)
- Barrow group (15)
- Fulacht Fiadh (339)
- Fulachta Fiadh (101)
- Inscribed Stone (1)
- Multiple-Stone Circle (2)
- Ogham Stone (7)
- Pond Barrow (2)
- Ring Barrow (514)
- Ring Barrow Group (6)
- Standing Stone (171)
- Standing Stone Pair (6)
- Stone Circle (21)
- Stone Row (6)
- Stone Sculpture (2)

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from *SMR* for Limerick and Clare.

FIGURE 4.4. : MAP OF PRE-CHRISTIAN FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE
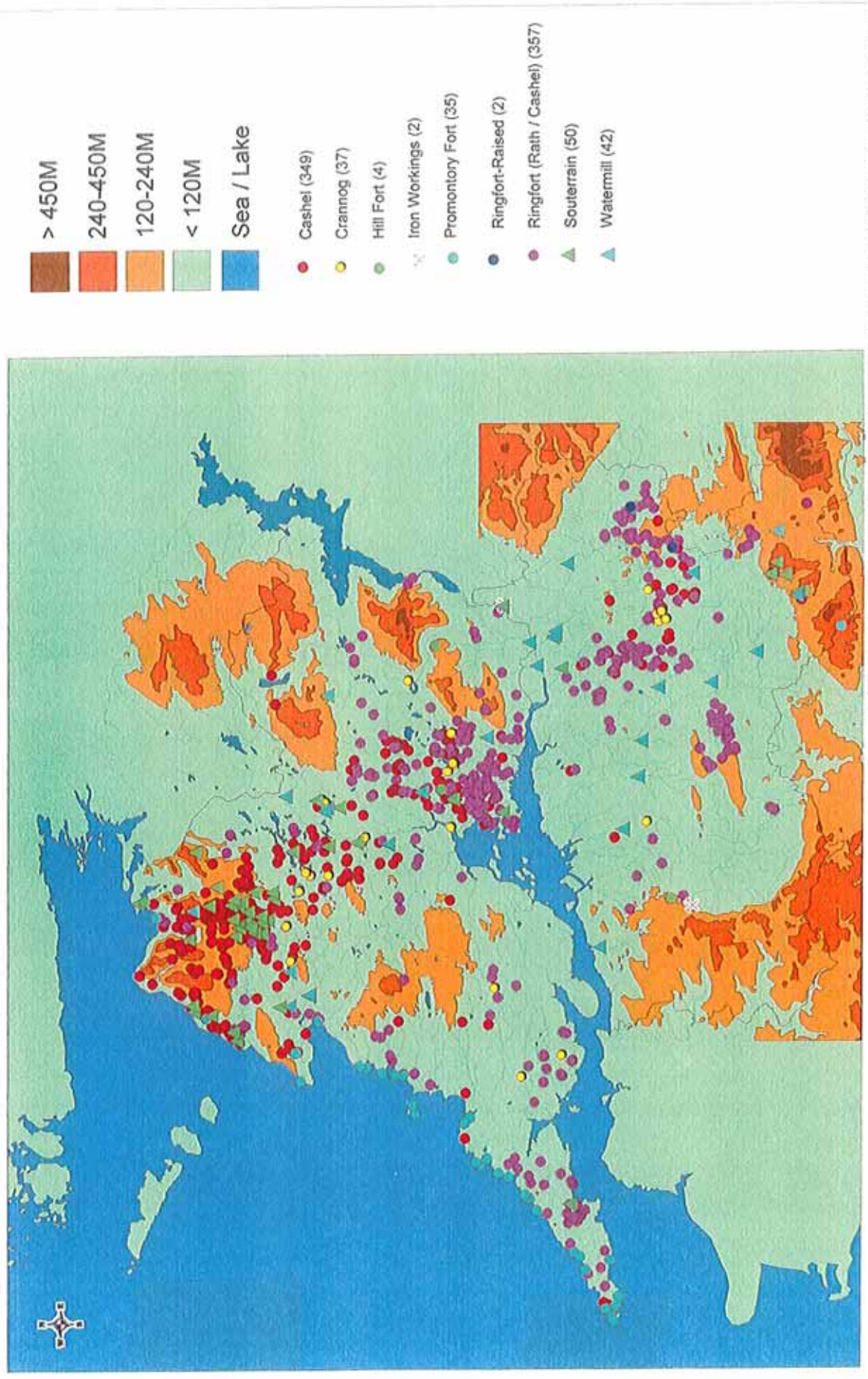
> 450M
240-450M
120-240M
< 120M
Sea / Lake

Cashel (349)
Crannog (37)
Hill Fort (4)
Iron Workings (2)
Promontory Fort (35)
Ringfort-Raised (2)
Ringfort (Rath / Cashel) (357)
Souterrain (50)
Watermill (42)

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from *SMR* for Limerick and Clare.

FIGURE 4.5. : MAP OF EARLY CHRISTIAN FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE
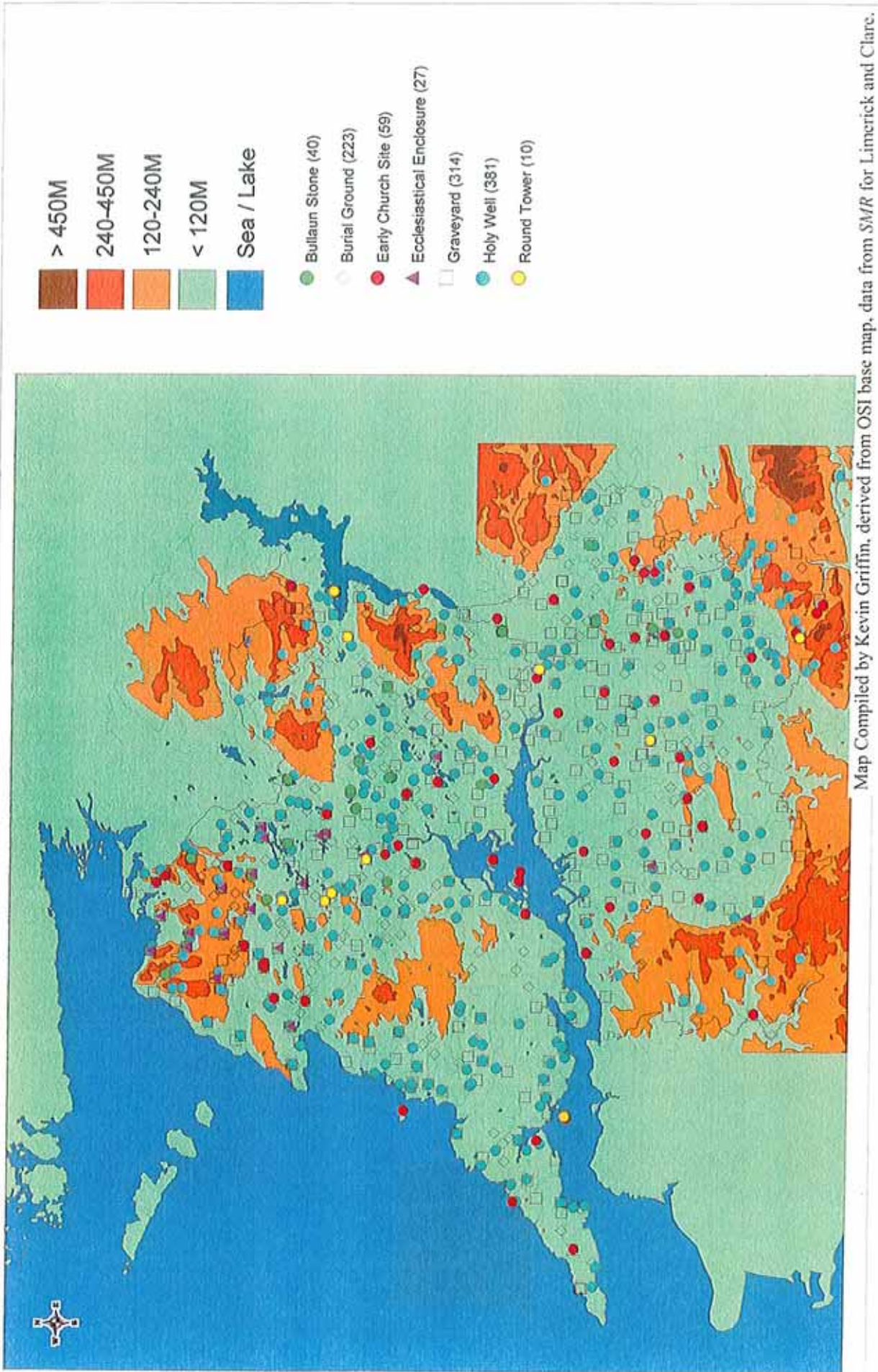
> 450M
240-450M
120-240M
< 120M
Sea / Lake

● Bullaun Stone (40)
◇ Burial Ground (223)
● Early Church Site (59)
▲ Ecclesiastical Enclosure (27)
□ Graveyard (314)
● Holy Well (381)
● Round Tower (10)

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from *SMR* for Limerick and Clare.

FIGURE 4.6. : MAP OF MEDIEVAL FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE
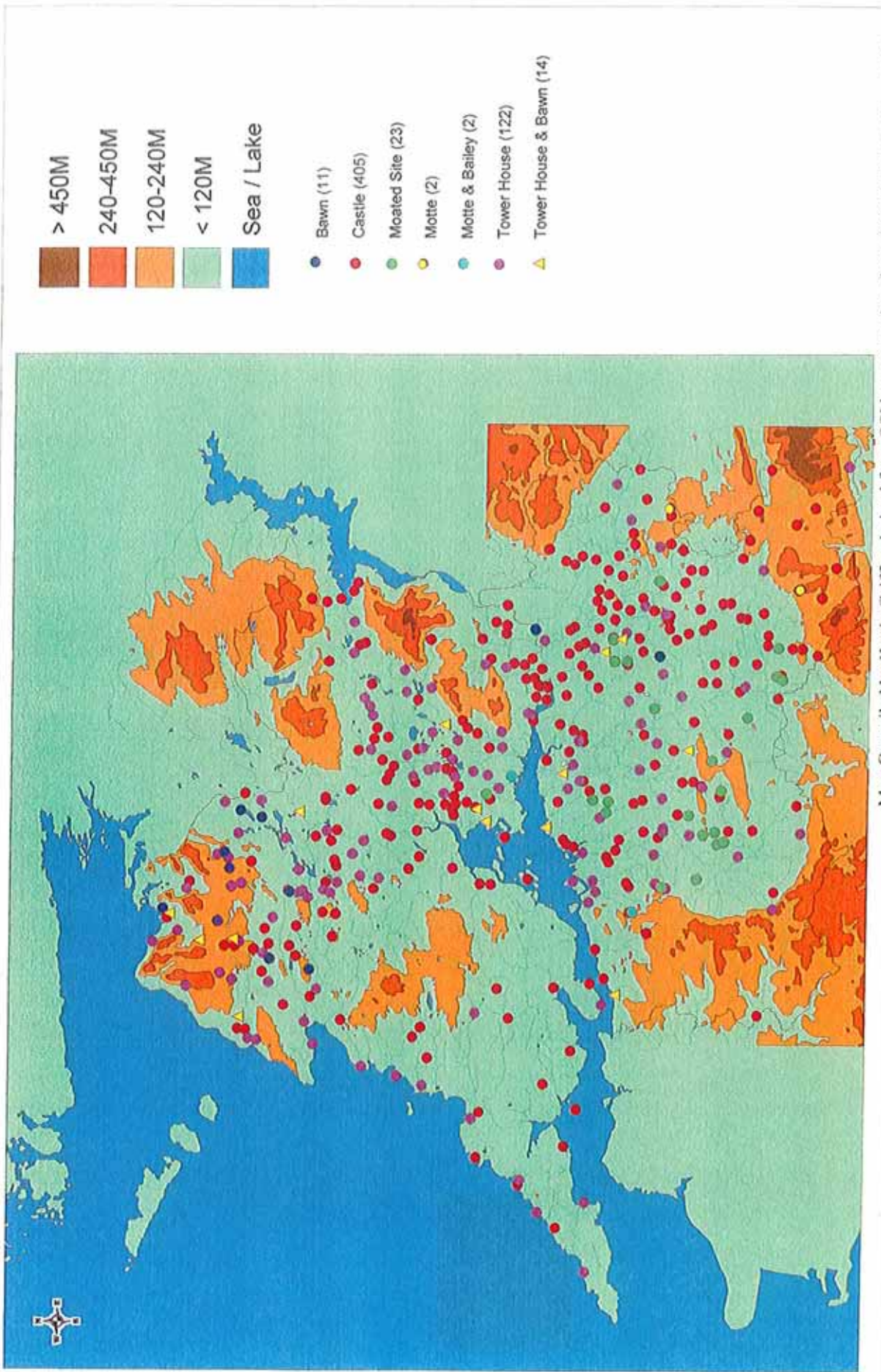
> 450M
240-450M
120-240M
< 120M
Sea / Lake

Bawn (11)
Castle (405)
Moated Site (23)
Motte (2)
Motte & Bailey (2)
Tower House (122)
Tower House & Bawn (14)

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from *SMR* for Limerick and Clare.

FIGURE 4.7.: MAP OF PRESENT DAY SETTLEMENT FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE

> 450M
240-450M
120-240M
< 120M
Sea / Lake

Census Towns (65)
Additional Map towns (110)
Post Offices (140)
Deserted Settlements (33)
Historic Towns (16)

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from *SMR* for Limerick and Clare.

TABLE 4.1. : EARLIER PREHISTORIC FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE

Category	No.	Category	No.
Cemetery cairn	10	Megalithic tomb	30
Cemetery mound	4	Midden	7
Cist	42	Passage-tomb	1
Court-tomb	4	Polygonal cist	3
Cursus	2	Portal-tomb	4
Henge	6	Rock scribing \ art	2
Long cist cemetery	6	Short cist	5
Megalithic quarry	1	Urn burial	7
Megalithic Structure	140	Wedge-tomb	140

Source : OPW, *SMR* Records

TABLE 4.2. : LATER PREHISTORIC FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE

Category	No.	Category	No.
Barrow	59	Ring-barrow	514
Barrow – group	15	Ring-barrow group	6
Fulacht fiadh	339	Standing stone	171
Fulachta fiadh	101	Standing stone - pair	6
Inscribed stone	1	Stone circle	21
Multiple-stone circle	2	Stone row	6
Ogham stone	7	Stone sculpture	2
Pond barrow	2		

Source : OPW, *SMR* Records

TABLE 4.3. : PRE-CHRISTIAN FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE

Category	No.	Category	No.
Cashel	349	Promontory fort	35
Crannog	37	Ringfort - raised	2
Crannog group	2	Ringfort (rath \ cashel)	357
Hillfort	4	Souterrain	50
Iron working	2	Watermill	42

Source : OPW, *SMR* Records

TABLE 4.4. : EARLY CHRISTIAN FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE

Category	No.	Category	No.
Bullaun stone	40	Graveyard	314
Burial ground	223	Holy well	381
Early Church Site (OS)	59	Round tower	10
Ecclesiastical enclosure	27		

Source : OPW, *SMR* Records

129

TABLE 4.5. : MEDIEVAL FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE				
Category	**No.**	**Category**	**No.**
Bawn	11	Motte and bailey	2
Castle	405	Tower house	122
Moated site	23	Tower house and Bawn	14
Motte	2		
		Source : OPW, *SMR* Records		

TABLE 4.6. : SETTLEMENT FABRIC IN COUNTIES LIMERICK AND CLARE				
Category	**No.**	**Category**	**No.**
1996 Census Towns	65	Historic town*	16
Additional OS Towns	110	Deserted Settlement	33
Post Offices (2000)	140		
* = Historic town is a classification used by Dúchas in the SMR to identify settlements of antiquity - this usually involves listing the historical quarter of the relevant settlement as an archaeologically sensitive area.			
		Source : OPW, *SMR* Records, OSI Maps, An Post		

Present Day Settlement in Limerick and Clare

Following the medieval period, the next wave of settlement to impact on the Limerick and Clare area was the Plantation of Munster which was carried out in 1584. In this ambitious plan approximately 100,000 hectares of profitable land was confiscated primarily in the counties of Waterford, Cork & Limerick. The proposal was to attract 15-25,000 colonists, headed by powerful landlord-undertakers such as Walter Raleigh, Sir Richard Grenville and the poet Edmund Spenser.[19] This, like other such plantations of the 16th and 17th centuries was almost totally unsuccessful, particularly in the case of planned development in Limerick and Clare.[20]

According to Andrews, throughout the various colonies during this period, habitation is characterised by continuity, being focused on existing sites for a number of reasons. These reasons include:

- Familiarity of place name;

- Presence of medieval castles or early churches which could be adapted to modern governmental or military requirements;

- Geographical advantage.[21]

[19] Aalen, F. H. A. (1978) *Man and The Landscape in Ireland*, p. 142
[20] Andrews, J. (2000) 'Plantation Ireland: A review of Settlement History', p. 140.
[21] Ibid. p. 144

130

Thus, while in theory one would expect some differentiation between 'planted' Limerick and 'unplanted' Clare, the settlement form and fabric remained chiefly unchanged at this time in both counties. Smyth supports this in his analysis of sixteenth century settlement fabric stating that Ireland's urban structures at this time were formed of 'old towns' which were predominantly walled.[22]

During the eighteenth century the Irish economy and agriculture expanded and the landscape as it exists today was chiefly formed.[23] The ruling elite sought to remould the rural and urban landscapes, and this may be seen in the proliferation of 'Palladian and neo-classical residences and carefully landscaped demesnes'.[24] This was accompanied by the creation of a high quality road network and the enhancement of navigation canals. The Georgian vision of a 'tidy landscape' can be further evidenced in urban improvements and the expansion of cities and towns i.e. Dublin, Cork, Waterford and Limerick.[25] Further down the hierarchy, estate villages were planned and built and 'Georgian' models / styles filtered into even the smallest settlements where the architecture and plans of the period can be seen to the present day. Again, following the pattern presented thus far these developments were undertaken predominantly at established settlement sites

The Famine of 1845-51 is the turning point of population growth in nineteenth century Ireland. The overall trend of the century is one of population explosion throughout the first half, followed by a sharp drop in population resulting from the famine and subsequent emigration. The resultant decay in settlement fabric was somewhat tackled during the last decades of the century, with the construction of fine new buildings and regeneration of existing settlements in the style which has been labelled 'Victorian'.

In many cases it took until the mid-twentieth century for the post-famine trend of decline to be arrested in areas both rural and urban. This leads to the present day pattern of settlement distribution which is outlined in Figure 4.7.. The most practical classification of settlement is the identification of 'towns' as identified by the Central Statistic Office (CSO). Using this classification 38 CSO towns are identified in County Limerick and 28 in County Clare. Looking in more detail, the urban profile of the two

---

[22] Smyth, W. J. (2000) 'Ireland a Colony', p. 165
[23] Aalen, F. H. A. (1978) *Man and The Landscape in Ireland*, p. 152
[24] Kelly, J. (???) 'From splendour to Famine', p. 78.
[25] Ibid.

counties are considerably different. The data show that in 1996, 61% of the population in the County of Limerick lived in CSO defined towns while 49% of the population of County Clare lived in such towns. There are 61 persons per km^2 in Limerick while Clare has 29 persons per km^2. In both counties, a considerable portion of the population lives outside the areas, which have been defined as 'town' by the CSO. Considering this, alternative methods were sought in this project, to ensure that smaller settlement foci could be identified.

The first alternative method was to examine the classification of settlements by the Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI). Examining the 1:50,000 Discovery Series maps added 15 more settlements in Clare and 14 in Limerick, while extracting settlements from the 1:250,000 Holiday Map yielded 43 in Limerick and 38 in Clare.

In order to consider sites with minor settlements which may act as community focal points, An Post (the Irish national postal service provider) were contacted to obtain a list of their branches, as post offices provide a centre for local communities, and are key elements in place-identity. Only 18 offices are in locations, which were not identified by any other means. The following table draws together the data which was extracted using the various sources results in a total of 193 sites which can be considered as focal points for present day settlement.

TABLE 4.7. : IDENTIFICATION OF SETTLEMENTS					
	CSO	50k	250k	PO	Combined Total
CSO	65				65
50k	61	90			94
250k	62	80	165		175
PO	62	82	116	140	193

This list of 193 sites may be considered as potential cases for more detailed study. As can be seen in Figure 4.7. the main focus of the larger settlements is the east Clare - Northeast Limerick area, which contains the City of Limerick, and its suburbs and also the large settlements of Shannon and Ennis. Settlement in Limerick is more dispersed, with a number of large towns scattered throughout the county - primarily throughout the central lowlands of the county. In County Clare, the trend outside this southeastern focal point is for settlements to be sited in coastal areas. A further trend is for the earlier upland locations in southeastern Limerick and northern Clare, to have very few settlements in the modern period.

Having identified potential sites, the next stage is to identify examples from within this group which are suitable for detailed investigation. These are to be chosen for primarily religious reasons, thus the evolution of Christianity in the study area is briefly examined in the following section.

Evolution of Christianity in Study Area

In order to select ecclesiastically influenced sites for investigation, it is important to understand the evolution of Christianity in the study area. It appears that there was considerable contact between Ireland and Europe as early as the mid-second century AD, as evidenced in the presence of Irish place-names in Ptolemy's *Cosmographia*. According to Mac an Bhaird there is a marked concentration in this work of sites along the Leinster and Munster coastlines.[26] This would suggest trading between Ireland and the continent.[27]

> From the first century AD, if not before then, landfalls were sufficiently frequent and intelligible contacts between traders and natives sufficiently fruitful to allow Irish place-names to pass into that much wider repertoire of sailing directions and commercial lore.[28]

If this was the case, connection with Roman Europe, and thus, Christianity, most likely existed prior to the mass conversion of the island to Christianity. Moreover, Roman influence may have been a vital element in the early establishment of Irish eremitic monasticism in the fifth century.[29]

An important element in considering the Christianisation of Ireland is the Patrician story.[30] The first reason is that it illustrates the manner in which the documentary evidence has been manipulated by hagiographers in promoting Patrick. While there is an apparently complete record of history at some sites, and other sites are rarely mentioned, it is important to be aware that this may arise from political influence on the written record. Thus, the foundations that were active in self-promotion are often the

---

[26] Mac an Bhaird, A. 'Ptolemy revisited' cited in Thomas, C. (1998) 'Early Medieval Munster', p. 9. While historically, Ireland was divided into many kingdoms and territories, at the present time the island is made up of four provinces: Munster Leinster Connaught and Ulster. The Province of Leinster contains twelve counties in the south-eastern portion of the island, while Munster contains six counties and is in the southwestern portion of the island.

[27] Thomas, C. (1998) 'Early Medieval Munster', p. 9.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid, p. 10.

ones that the written histories remember. Secondly, it is important to understand the manner in which connection to 'Patrick' was used to raise the status of individual site. As will be seen, this link with Patrick was often used to validate a site.

It has been suggested (by De Paor) that Christian communities must have existed in Munster by the beginning of the fifth century.[31] Such a conversion may have arisen either from contact through trading, or as a result of raids on the nearby Roman provinces of Britain. The geographical proximity of France to the Munster coastline, in addition to archaeological evidence for trading (particularly the importation of wine), also suggests strong possibilities that Christianity may originally have arrived via this route.[32] There is no information however, to suggest how these early Christians would have been organised.

According to tradition, four saints - the 'quatuor sanctissimi episcopi' are supposed to have brought Christianity to Munster.[33] These were Saint Ailbe of Emly; Saint Déclán of Ardmore; Saint Ciarán of Cape Clear and Saigir; and Saint Ibar of Beggery Island.[34] While none of these four saints established foundations in the geographical area being investigated in this project, they do provide a good illustration of how linkage to St. Patrick is a central theme in accounts of these saints, despite the possibility that they pre-date him. This link is used to validate the claims of the Saint in question, Patrick being the anchor point for establishing religious authenticity.

Looking forward in history, there is very little evidence on the formation of dioceses in the 12th century, but, it is unlikely a coincidence that nearly all the churches connected with the 'pre-Patrician' saints were those which were in contention for episcopal recognition. It has been proposed that antiquity (through links with Patrick) was used as a means of supporting claims for achieving diocesan status and the existence of these 'historical' *Lives* further supported such ambitions. Emly for example was under threat by Killaloe, Rosscarbery was fending off the claims of Cork and Ardmore was under

---

[30] For discussion of the Patrician controversy see De Paor, L. (1993) *Saint Patrick's World*; Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism;* Sharpe, R. (1989) 'Quatuor Sanctissimi Episcope: Irish Saints Before Patrick'; Gleeson, D.F. (1958) 'Saint Patrick in Ormond'

[31] De Paor, L. (1993) *Saint Patrick's World* in Ó Riain-Raedel, D. (1998) 'The Question of the 'Pre-Patrician' Saints of Munster', p. 18.

[32] See Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, pp 68-71.

[33] Sharpe, R. (1989) 'Quatuor Sanctissimi Episcope: Irish Saints Before Patrick' in Ó Riain-Raedel, D. (1998) 'The Question of the 'Pre-Patrician' Saints of Munster', p. 19.

[34] Ó Riain-Raedel, D. (1998) 'The Question of the 'Pre-Patrician' Saints of Munster', p. 19.

threat by Lismore/Waterford.[35] This may raise questions regarding the validity of these saints' *Lives* as sources for examining the Christianisation of Ireland. But, it does support the possibility that churches existed in the southwest region of Ireland in the early fifth century, and illustrates the intentional use (and perhaps manipulation) of documentary material for political purposes.

A number of sites in County Limerick claim links to Patrick. After he baptised Aengus at Cashel (in County Tipperary), he is supposed to have entered the eastern portion of County Limerick. He is believed to have passed through Pallas Grean (Grian) and Kilteely (Cell Tidil).[36] From here he travelled to Mullach Cae hill (known today as Knockea) south east of present day Limerick City, 'winning goodwill' and gaining access to a wide area for his 'apostolic labours'.[37] One of Patrick's most famous foundations in this region was 'Dulach na Féinne', which became known as Árd Pátraic (or Ardpatrick). From here he appears to have left Limerick, travelling into the area known as Ormond (i.e. North Tipperary).[38]

While the following comment from Begley is perhaps zealous in its tone, it conveys the overall importance of the Patrician ideal, even up to recent times:

> After spending a considerable time in the territory baptising and teaching the people, he went to evangelize other districts, leaving behind him well trained missionaries, as was his custom, to organise and minister to the spiritual wants of the newly-formed Christian community.[39]

Thus it is likely that the apparent success of Senan and other founders of sites in Clare and Limerick may be directly related to the 'propaganda' activity of their latter-day followers. Due to a major dearth of sources, accuracy in interpreting the relative importance of self-promoted early church founders cannot be realised. With this in mind, the individual case studies presented in this work outline the work of the main 'saints', while taking cognisance of the reliability of the source material.

While a connection to Saint Patrick would have been desirable by those who wrote the histories of County Clare, it was not directly attainable. The words of White appear as a

---

[35] Ibid, p. 21.
[36] Begley, Rev. J. (1906) *The Diocese of Limerick Ancient and Medieval*, p. 27; Bairead, Rev. F. (1944) 'St Patrick's Itinerary Through County Limerick', p. 68.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid, p. 72; Gleeson, D.F. (1958) 'Saint Patrick in Ormond', p. 44.
[39] Begley, Rev. J. (1906) *The Diocese of Limerick Ancient and Medieval*, p. 32

lamentation of the fact that Patrick by-passed County Clare. According to him: 'this county was not at any time blessed by the presence of St. Patrick'.[40]

The tradition, that the patron saint of Ireland did not actually set foot in the county appears to be well-established as reference is to be found in the *Vita Tripartita* referring to Patrick's non entry into Clare:

> Patrick himself did not go into the land; but he saw the land round Limerick in the West and in the North and he blessed the territories and their islands and he prophesised of the sainte (sic) who would be therein, their names and the time at which they would arrive.[41]

However, indirect contact appears to have been achieved. It is said that while St. Patrick was preaching in the county of the Hy Figcinte - which is a portion of County Limerick, he was visited by men from Thomond, (the people of County Clare), who invited him to preach and baptise in their country.[42] For some reason Patrick was unable to respond to their request, but, he consoled them by foretelling the birth of one of their own who would do for their country what he was doing throughout Ireland he then blessed these visitors and their lands.[43]

Bairead examining this tale illustrates that in the *Tripartite Life*, Patrick is reported as having met people from Tuathmumu, while in the *Life of Senan*, Corco Baiscinn is substituted for Tuathmumu. The latter version of this event appears to be carefully constructed to connect Corco Baiscinn (ancestral home of Saint Senan) more closely with Patrick. Further similar alterations occur in the *Life of Senan*, which tells that Bolc of Corco Baiscinn was baptised by Patrick while the *Tripartite* tells that Cairthen king of Déis Tuaiscirt (later known as Dal gCais) was baptised. This change in emphasis, would have been carried out to accentuate the importance of Senan's predecessors, and thus raise his own status – this exercise, referred to by Ó Maidín as blatant propaganda, is linked to Scattery - Senan's foundation – seeking episcopal status.[44] A Patrician link would help to support this claim. As a result of successful propaganda, Senan has become one of the pivotal figures in the Christianisation of Clare.

---

[40] White, Rev. p. (1893) *History of Clare*, p. 24.

[41] *Vita Tripartita* cited in Gwynn, A. (1962) *A History of the Diocese of Killaloe*, p. 3.

[42] Murphy, I. (1974) 'County Clare from Earliest Times to the Sixteenth Century', p. 6; White, Rev. p. (1893) *History of Clare*, p. 25.

[43] White, Rev. p. (1893) *History of Clare*, pp 25-26.

[44] Ó Maidín, U. (1998) 'The Celtic Monk'

The first diffusion of Christianity into Clare (Thomond) may have resulted from the aforementioned conversion of Cairthinn by Patrick. However, there is no account of any church being founded before the late fifth century by Brecan who was a disciple or co-worker of St. Enda of Aran.[45] This Enda founded a church in Corcomroe – North Clare near present day Lisdoonvarna and a church on Aranmore is named after Brecan.

FIGURE 4.8. : MAP OF LIMERICK AND CLARE, ILLUSTRATING DIOCESES

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map and OSI *Map of Monastic Ireland*.
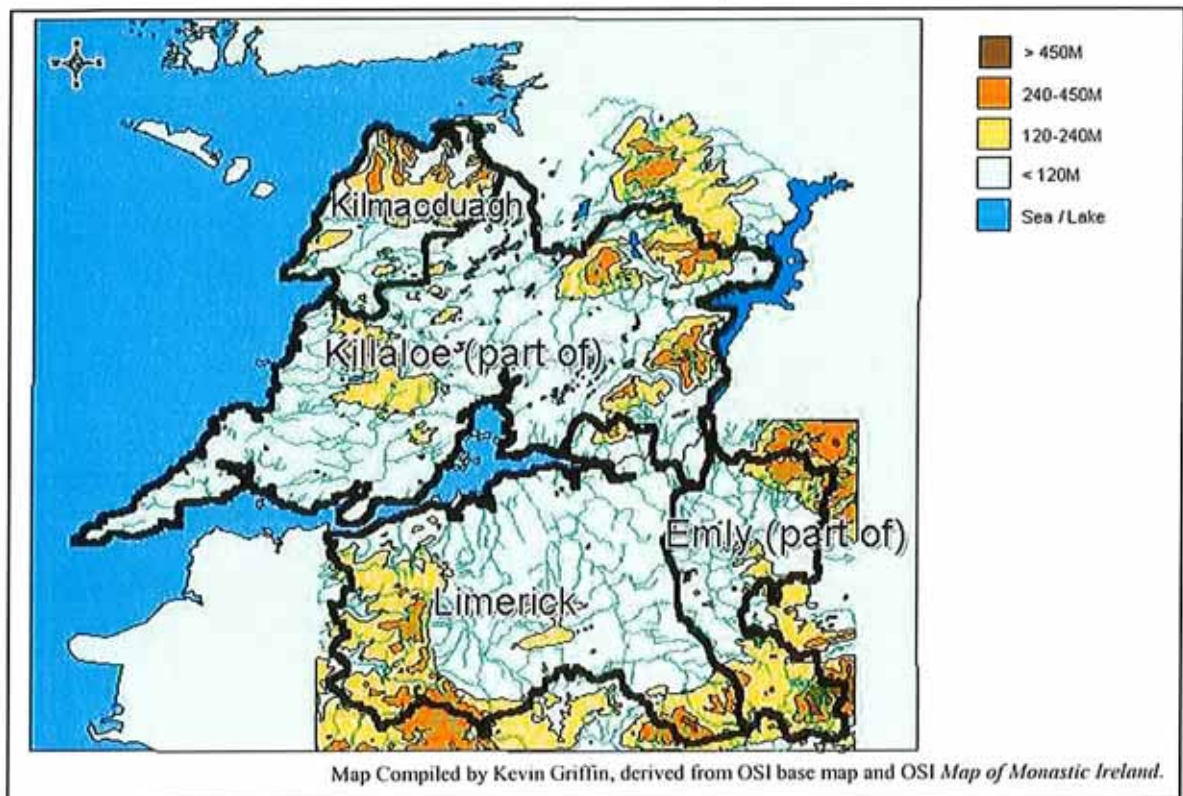
Church Organisation in County Limerick

The County of Limerick is chiefly contained in the diocese of Limerick (Figure 4.8.), with some small portions in those of Emly and Killaloe.[46] At the present time Roman Catholic parish boundaries are recognised by the local population in rural Ireland. However these are less stable than their more historic Church of Ireland counterparts.[47] For research purposes the Church of Ireland or 'Established Church' boundaries are most appropriate in examining church divisions as they approximate the 'Civil parish'

---

45 Westropp, T.J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 103.
46 Lewis, S. (1837) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* Vol. 2. p. 262.
47 Mitchell, B. (1986) *A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland*, pp 6-7.

137

divisions which are based on early medieval church divisions.[48] There are 130 Civil parishes in the County and these are primarily in the diocese of Limerick.[49]

The diocese of Limerick is one of the eleven, which form the religious province of Cashel. It is 55km in length and approximately 25km in breadth, extending over an estimated surface of 124,300 hectares of which 5,060 are in Clare and the remainder in Limerick. It is said to have been founded in the 6th or 7th century by St. Munchin, who (according to tradition) was consecrated bishop by St. Patrick.[50]

Emly is another of the dioceses, which form the religious province of Cashel. It is 55,910 hectares in size, of which 34,900 are in the County of Limerick, the remainder being in County Tipperary, there are 44 parishes in the Church of Ireland diocese.[51] Emly, or 'Imlagh' as it was recorded, according to Lewis, was one of the three principal towns identified by Ptolemy and was formerly an important 'city', which had been founded by Saint Ailbe or Alibeus, who became its first abbot, and died in the early sixth century (the present population of the entire parish is approximately 870).[52] In 1562 an act of parliament unified the bishopric with that of Cashel.[53]

Church Organisation in County Clare

As with the rest of Ireland, the earliest churches in Clare not only form the 'tide-marks' of early Christianity they have also preserved the extent of tribal lands and petty kingdoms which existed in approximately 1100AD.[54] With the exception of three parishes, which are in the diocese of Limerick, the parishes in the County of Clare are included in either the diocese of Killaloe or Kilfenora, with the whole of the latter diocese being within the county. These dioceses, as with those encompassing the County of Limerick, are all within the province of Cashel (See Figure 4.8.).

According to Lewis, Pope John IV, who consecrated St. Flannan, successor to St. Lua (or Molua) as the first Bishop, originally founded the see of Killaloe about 639.[55] It contains parts of the counties of Laois, Limerick, Galway and Offaly with a large

---

[48] See also Nolan and Simms, (1998) *Irish Towns*, p. 17.
[49] Mitchell, B. (1986) *A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland*, p. 28.
[50] Lewis, S. (1837) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. 2. p. 273.
[51] Ibid, Vol. 1. p. 598.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid. p. 599.
[54] Westropp, T.J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 101
[55] Lewis, S. (1837) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* Vol. 2. p. 122.

portion of the County of Tipperary, and the greater part of County Clare. It extends about 160 km in length, varying from 15 km to 51 km in breadth. To give an idea of the distribution of the diocese, Lewis recorded it as comprising:

> an estimated [254,550 hectares] of which [1,300 hectares] are in Queen's County (or Laois) [2,150 hectares] in Limerick, [3,550 hectares] in Galway, [20,250 hectares] in King's County (or Offaly), [54,500 hectares] in Tipperary and [172,800 hectares] in Clare.[56]

In 1837 the total number of parishes in the diocese was 108, but the number of churches was only 56, thus signifying the small Church of Ireland numbers.

The Episcopal See of Kilfenora is of very uncertain origin. It is not precisely known who was the first bishop, though many are of the opinion that St. Fachnan, to whom the cathedral of Kilfenora is dedicated, must have been the founder. His successors, who were also called Bishops of Corcomroe, are poorly recorded, and very little of the history of the see is preserved. It is the smallest diocese in Ireland and lies wholly within the County of Clare. It extends 37 km in length and 18km in breadth, comprising an estimated 14,985 hectares. In 1837 it contained 19 parishes, formed into six unions; there were only three parish churches and one other place in which divine service was performed, and three glebe houses. In the Roman Catholic divisions, this diocese is united to that of Kilmacduagh (to the east).[57]

Early Church Fabric in Study Area

The next step in this exploration is to examine the extent of church influence within the study area. In order to do this a map of early Church fabric is produced. These data (Table 4.8.) and accompanying map, suggest that the Christianisation of this landscape equates with an expansion out from the areas that were colonised in the earlier prehistoric periods, into more fertile, and accessible locations. From the map (Figure 4.9.), it appears that the main focus of the earlier church sites was the lower more fertile lands of central Limerick and Clare, with sites forming three distinct groupings:

- a distinct band from North Clare, down through the county, continuing on into East Limerick;

- a north-south band of sites in West Limerick and;

---

[56] Ibid. p. 123.
[57] Ibid. p. 92.

- a group of sites along the Shannon Estuary coastline of Southwest Clare.

The absence of sites in the uplands of West Limerick and West Clare strongly suggests a trend towards the occupation of the lowland. The focus of sites in West Clare along the coastal strip further accentuates this fact - with most of these being island sites. It is worth noting that the majority of sites in West Limerick are positioned on the banks of rivers, with the majority of foundations in this band, being sited along the river Deel.

TABLE 4.8. : CHURCH FABRIC IN STUDY AREA							
Monument Type	Cl.	Lmk	Total	Monument Type	Cl.	Lmk	Total
Abbey #	4	4	8	Font	0	1	1
Altar	3	0	3	Friary #	4	6	10
Bullaun Stone #	34	6	40	Grave Slab	4	0	4
Burial Ground #	157	66	223	Graveyard #	156	158	314
Cathedral*	3	2	5	Holy bush	3	0	3
Cemetery	0	1	1	Holy Stone	1	0	1
Chapel	2	1	3	Holy Tree	2	0	2
Children's Burial Ground	1	0	1	Holy Well #	227	154	381
Church #	162	202	364	Mass House	1	0	1
Church and Graveyard	0	1	1	Mass Rock	5	2	7
Convent	2	2	4	Monastic Grange	0	1	1
Cross #	27	2	29	Nunnery	0	1	1
Cross-Inscribed Stone #	1	3	4	Priory #	1	2	3
Cross Slab #	2	2	4	Round Tower #	7	3	10
Early Monastery (OS)#*	33	26	59	Unclassified Religious House	3	3	6
Ecclesiastical Enclosure #	24	4	28				
Ecclesiastical Remains #	70	0	70	Total	939	653	1592
# Denotes fabric which is illustrated in map.							

Source : *SMR* record, except categories indicated with *
which are supplemented with data from the OSI *Map of Monastic Ireland*

FIGURE 4.9. : MAP ILLUSTRATING CHURCH FABRIC
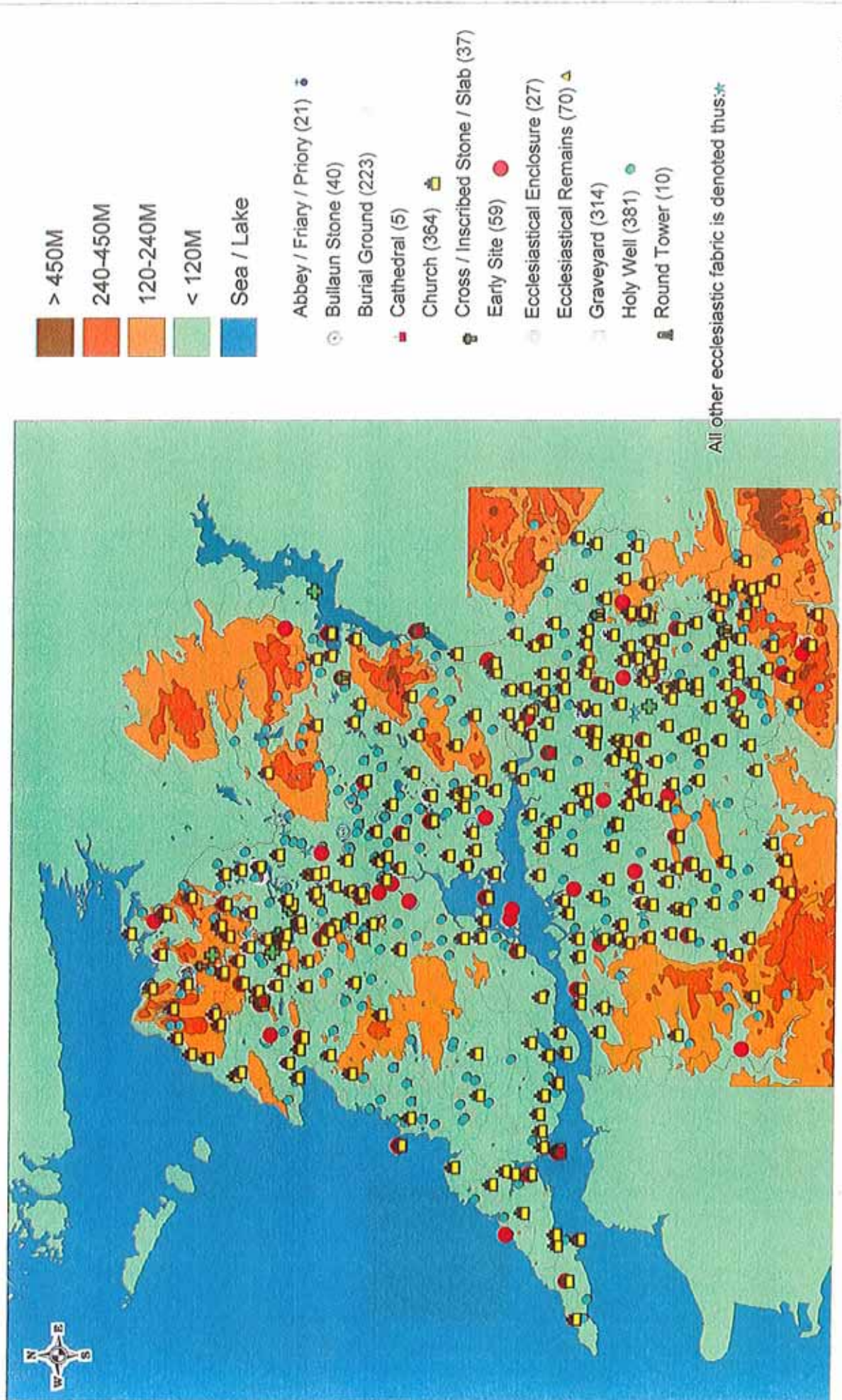
> 450M
240-450M
120-240M
< 120M
Sea / Lake

Abbey / Friary / Priory (21)
Bullaun Stone (40)
Burial Ground (223)
Cathedral (5)
Church (364)
Cross / Inscribed Stone / Slab (37)
Early Site (59)
Ecclesiastical Enclosure (27)
Ecclesiastical Remains (70)
Graveyard (314)
Holy Well (381)
Round Tower (10)

All other ecclesiastic fabric is denoted thus:

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from SMR for Limerick and Clare.

4.2. IDENTIFICATION OF SITES FOR DETAILED STUDY

Following the general examination of counties Limerick and Clare, settlements and church fabric were identified. The next step is to identify case studies for further investigation. It is important to ensure that sites identified in the evaluation process would fulfil a number of different criteria including:

- Present day settlements
- Early church sites
- High status church sites
- Survival of Topographic features
- Variation in dioceses
- Geographical distribution

These criteria ensure that consideration is given to both present day settlement sites and sites with early Christian origins.

Relating Church Fabric to Settlement using GIS

The 'buffer generation' technique in a GIS allows a user-defined region to be created in a particular location. In this project, the technique was used to create a 1km buffer around each of the 193 settlement sites to identify the items of religious fabric which lie within 1km of each site.[58] By using this cartographic function, it was possible to explore the relationship between church and settlement data. This process is illustrated in a graphic manner in the following diagram (Figure 4.10) which shows the eastern portion of County Clare.

---

[58]   http://www.kingston.ac.uk/geog/gis/intro.htm#glossary: The Kingston Centre for GIS, Kingston University, Kingston upon Thames define a Buffer as: an enclosed polygon created around points, lines or areas at an equal distance in all directions. The results represent areas at set distances from the original object. For example, the creation of buffer zones around a polluted industrial site may represent the varying extent of pollution measured at specified distances from the source of the contamination. Buffers are therefore useful for proximity analysis and environmental impact assessment.

White circles represent 1km buffer around each potential site
Symbols represent early church fabric – i.e. blue circle = holy well, yellow church = early church.
Full key to these symbols is provided with Figure 4.9.
Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from *SMR* for Limerick and Clare.

All of the 193 potential sites were examined in this manner and the relationship between the data sets was recorded. A total of 102 of the sites were identified as having no apparent church fabric within one kilometre of the site.[59]

Follow-up detailed cartographic investigation of these 102 sites supported this and reinforced that the sites appear to have no important religious fabric in their immediate vicinity. A variety of reasons can be proposed for this fact, mainly that these appear to be relatively new in origin. The following table (Table 4.9.) illustrates some examples:

TABLE 4.9. : SETTLEMENTS OF NON-ECCLESIASTICAL ORIGIN	
Settlement	Foundation
Lisdoonvarna, County Clare	Spa town
Spanish Point, Co. Clare	Seaside resort
'New' Kildimo, Co. Limerick	Settlement relocated on 'new road'
Annacotty, Co. Limerick	20th century suburban expansion
Shannon, Co. Clare	20th century planned industrial settlement

---

[59] In the case of highly dispersed settlement, identification of the 'focus' was difficult. The main criteria used were: the main junction / cross roads; a Post Office or; a modern church.
Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 give a full list of potential sites, noting, among other facts, the ecclesiastical fabric within 1km of their focus.

Resulting from this technique 91 of the original 193 sites appear to have church fabric proximate to the potential settlement.

Basic Plan Analysis- Matching Settlement Fabric to Potential Sites

All of the 193 potential sites were visually examined using Ordnance Survey six-inch maps. The maps used in this investigation were the 1936 bound volumes series - Maps of Limerick range from 1923-28 and Clare maps range from 1915-1923. Their production in the first quarter of the twentieth century pre-dates the urbanisation of the latter half of the century.

This visual examination of sites resulted in the elimination of 93 sites that do not appear to have any settlement focus (See Appendix 2 for full details of this process). In some cases the sprawl of urban centres has resulted in recent growth of settlement (i.e. Parteen, Coonagh and Castletroy – satellites of Limerick City), in others, settlement has developed around a modern focus (Shannon Town at Shannon Airport and Ardnacrusha at the hydro-electric power station of the same name). Most of the sites excluded by this process, however, are dispersed linear settlements such as Inagh County Clare, or Crecora Co. Limerick, which appear to fit into Whelan's category of 'chapel village'.[60] These form an identifiable element of Irish rural habitation, where a Roman Catholic church (usually dating from the early 1800s), a school and a Post Office form the majority of the fabric. In many cases these three elements are dispersed in a linear fashion, with little true settlement in evidence.

Identification of Valid Potential Sites

Through the use of GIS, supported by follow-up cartographic investigation a total of 102 sites displayed no evidence of religious fabric. Visual examination resulted in the elimination of a further 32 sites, which show little or no evidence of settlement fabric, resulting in 59 'valid' sites (30% of the original) containing both settlement and church fabric - 38 in County Limerick and 21 in County Clare (Tables 4.10. & 4.11. also Figure 4.11).

---

[60] Whelan, K. (1985) 'The Catholic Church', p. 235

144

TABLE 4.10. : PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION OF POTENTIAL SITES	
Original Sites	193
Excluded – No Church Fabric Absence of Church Fabric (Using GIS)	41
Excluded – No Settlement Absence of Settlement Fabric (Basic Plan Analysis)	32
Excluded – No Settlement or Church Fabric Absence of Settlement Fabric (Basic Plan Analysis)	61
Total Excluded - Settlement & Church Fabric	134
Valid Potential Sites	59

Examination of the 59 'valid' sites (Figure 4.11.) suggests that their geographical arrangement most closely follows the pattern of historical fabric distribution displayed from the pre-Christian period onwards (i.e. Figures 4.4. - 4.6.). When compared with the pattern of early church sites, it can be seen that 13 of the 'valid' sites in County Limerick and 8 of the sites in County Clare, correspond to early church sites. Moreover, the distribution of the 'valid' sample, closely approximates that of the early church fabric (Figure 4.5.).

In general terms a number of factors appear to influence the location of valid sites. A number are coastal in location, with many of the inland sites being located proximate to rivers or lakes. Secondly, the sites are predominantly in lowland areas with the only upland sites being in the southeastern corner of County Limerick. Thirdly, the two counties illustrate different densities of distribution, with the Clare sites being more dispersed, while the Limerick sites are clustered in the central plain. This distribution may relate to Viking or Anglo-Norman influences on County Limerick. Alternatively the distribution may be a reflection of agricultural productivity, with County Limerick possessing higher quality land than Clare, thus, supporting a higher population density.

Categorisation of 'Valid' Potential Sites

The next stage in the process was to undertake preliminary Plan Analysis of the 59 valid sites which are listed in Table 4.11. using the Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites as a template to guide the investigation. This involved a basic visual examination of the sites to establish overall patterns of morphology and plan structure. Following the aims of this project, the focus was on recognising the form of the central church element, and to examine how this relates to the overall settlement fabric. The examination resulted in

the identification of four distinct plan forms. These are categorised as those where the church fabric is: compound; central; adjacent or; proximate. The following sections outline the differences in layout which suggested the adoption of these classifications.

The 'compound' group contains eight valid settlements, including the four largest in County Limerick and the largest settlement in County Clare. As the term implies, the origin and evolution of these sites is complex/multifaceted, and this is reflected in the varying morphological forms evident in these habitations. The settlements posses a number of foci, and these reflect the complex evolution of the sites. Limerick City for example, displays evidence of many periods including: early Christian, Viking, Anglo-Norman, Georgian, Victorian and Industrial influences, and while it is possible to decipher many of these, to do so is beyond the scope of this work. Also included in this category are the towns of Ennis (incorporating nearby Clarecastle) Newcastle West, Rathkeale, Abbeyfeale and Askeaton, which all contain a complex street structure, an intricate structural form and assorted evolutionary influences. While it is less complex in morphological structure, Adare is also included in this category as it contains at least four church sites and a castle.[61]

18 sites are included in the 'central' category, 11 in County Limerick and 7 in County Clare. These sites most closely fit the Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites. Based on preliminary Plan Analysis the sites in this category appear to be strongly influenced by distinct church sites that are situated at their core. The survival of fabric ranges from the cathedral and high-crosses of Kilfenora, to the ancient churches of Tuamgraney and Killaloe, to possible sites at Ardagh and Doon and the suggestion of a foundation at Oola. The varying degree of fabric survival is also reflected in the survival of curvilinear enclosures, which range from the distinct curvilinear form at Tulla, to the sub-rectangular form of Ballingarry. In all cases, however, at least a church and / or a graveyard are located at a central point with present day settlement developing around the religious focus.

A derivation of the 'central' church sites is the 'adjacent' site where settlement appears to have evolved beside rather than around a religious foundation (15 sites are included in this category, 12 in Limerick and 3 in Clare). These cases appear to have developed under the influence of the church site without impinging / intruding on the clearly

---

[61]   Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, pp 214-216.

evident enclosure. In a number of cases i.e. Ardpatrick and Kilteely where the church site is on an exposed hill, or Castleconnell where the early church site is on an island, subsequent development appears to have evolved in a more practical location, beside the church site, on land which is more suitable / accessible for habitation. In sites such as Croom and Bruree, present day settlement is on the opposite bank of a small river from the early church site. Whether or not this category reflects a segregation of religious and secular function is unclear. In over half the sites, a market function is evident with a fair green or market adjacent to the church site. A number of the remaining sites have a suitable layout for such activity. This may indicate that settlement evolved from economic activity carried out beside, rather than within, the church site.

The use of a 1km buffer for the identification of early Christian church fabric in the vicinity of settlement fabric has proven to be quite revealing, particularly in a number of sites which would otherwise have been excluded from the previous categories. 18 'proximate' sites were identified using this methodology – nine in each of the study counties. From a preliminary cartographic examination of these, there appears to be a distinct evolution from early church site to a more suitable site for later habitation in a similar pattern to the 'adjacent' site, but a with greater distance between early church and settlement fabrics. In the cases of Athea and Kilmallock, the earlier church is at an elevated site (to the north in both cases), while the settlement is nearby at a more suitable location – in both these cases, at a river fording point. In the case of both Kilkishen and Corofin the clearly defined enclosure of the early church site is located beside a lake, while the subsequent settlements are further westwards and inland from the lakeside church site. O'Briensbridge, and Ballynacally are located proximate to island sites – being the mainland landing place for these foundations. While in theory, Kilrush, Killaloe and Mountshannon could also be included in this category – being proximate to Scattery, Friar's Island and Iniscaltra respectively - the distances from the church sites in each case is greater than the 1km.[62] In all of the recognised 'proximate' sites it appears that criteria of latter times resulted in relocation some distance from the original foundation. The relationship between the two forms is an elaborate one – the settlement form does not interfere with the church lands, which are spiritually and

---

[62] Kilrush and Killaloe are identified in this table as 'central' and 'adjacent' sites respectively, while Mountshannon, having no 'central' or 'adjacent' site is omitted entirely.

spatially defined by their enclosure, while at the same time remaining proximate to the church site. In some cases, this relationship is 'signposted' when the settlement adopts the name of the nearby (original) site (i.e. Athea, Kilmallock and Mungret). The principal relationship however, is that settlement benefits from the traditions, functions and focal importance of the church sites.

Having categorised the plan forms of the 59 potential case studies, it is also important to consider the selection of sites with respect to a variety of other criteria. Episcopal status, antiquity of church site, and geographical distribution were all considered.[63]

The study area contains six sites that have at one time been designated as episcopal centres: Limerick, Killaloe, Kilfenora, Mungret, Scattery and Iniscaltra.[64] Nine of the 59 sites appear to be settlements of a well-defined early church origin: Kilfenora, Killaloe, Tuamgraney, Quin, Tulla, Ardpatrick, Kilmallock, Limerick and Mungret.

The final issue to be considered in this classification is geographical distribution. This could be carried out in either by dividing the sample by county or by diocese. Of the 59 sites 38 are located in County Limerick, while 21 are located in County Clare. With the exception of Castleconnell, which is in the northeast of the county, all sites in County Limerick are either in the Diocese of Limerick (26 sites) or of Emly (11 sites). 17 of the sites in County Clare are in the diocese of Killaloe, and the remaining 4 are in the diocese of Kilfenora.

---

[63]   Episcopal status and early foundation are explored using the following sources:
Hadcock, R.N. (Ed.) (1964) *Ordnance Survey Map of Monastic Ireland*; Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*; Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*; Begley, Rev. J. (1906) *The Diocese of Limerick Ancient and Medieval*; Gwynn, A. and Gleeson D. F. (1961) *A History of The Diocese of Killaloe*.
[64]   Kilmacduagh, in County Galway is an additional episcopal site located within 1km of the Clare county border and thus, it is just outside the study area.

TABLE 4.11. : EXAMINATION OF 'VALID' SITES & IDENTIFICATION OF SAMPLE			
Category	**Limerick**	**Clare**	**Total**
Compound	Abbeyfeale (LK) Adare (LK) Askeaton (LK) Limerick (LK)*~ Newcastle West (LK) Rathkeale (LK)	Clarecastle (KL) Ennis (KL)	8
Central	Ardagh (LK) **Ballingarry (LK)** Bruff (LK) Caherconlish (EM) Croagh (LK) Doon (EM) Drumcollogher (LK) Kilfinane (LK) Knockainey (EM) Oola (EM) Shanagolden (LK)	Ennistymon (KF) **Kilfenora (KF)***~ **Killaloe (KL)***~ Kilmihil (KL) **Quin / Quinn (KL)*** Tuamgraney (KL)* **Tulla (KL)***	18
Adjacent	**Ardpatrick (LK)*** Ballylanders (EM) Bruree (LK) Castleconnell (KL) Croom (LK) Galbally (EM) Glin (LK) Hospital (of Any) (EM) Kildimo (old) (LK) Kilmeedy (LK) **Kilteely (EM)** Old Pallas Grean (EM)	Feakle (KL) Kildysart (KL) Kilrush (KL)	15
Proximate	Athea (LK) Ballyorgan (LK) Castletown (LK) Glenbrohane (EM) **Kilmallock (LK)*** Knocklong (EM) Mahoonagh (LK) Mungret (LK)*~ Pallaskenry (LK)	Ballynacally (KL) Ballyvaughan (KF) **Corofin (KL)** Doolin (KF) Kilkee (KL) Kilkishen (KL) Mullagh (KL) O'Briensbridge (KL) Whitegate (KL)	18
	38	**21**	**59**
Bold = Selected as detailed Case Study *** =** Early Site, **~ =** Cathedral Site **LK =** Diocese of Limerick, **EM =** Diocese of Emly, **KL =** Diocese of Killaloe, **KF =** Diocese of Kilfenora,			

As the focus of this research is continuity of settlement at early church sites, it was decided to focus primarily on the sites in the 'central' category as these display the clearest evidence of such morphological influence. In total it was decided to select 12 sites for close examination (six from County Limerick and 6 from County Clare), with two thirds of the sample being chosen from the 'central' group. Because Killaloe and

Kilfenora are clearly identified as early church sites and also episcopal centres, it was decided to include them as a matter of course. Quin and Tulla were chosen for their clearly defined enclosures and their early church sites. Because it is in the diocese of Kilfenora and also for morphological reasons Ennistymon was selected, despite the absence of definite early church fabric.

In Limerick the selection of sites from the 'central' category was more difficult, as no such sites possess clear evidence of early church influence. To represent the different episcopal areas, one site was chosen from the Emly diocese and two from Limerick. Ardagh, where the internationally renowned chalice was found, is the only western site in the county thus, it was selected. Ballingarry is a well documented site, with clear evidence of Anglo-Norman influence and ecclesiastical provenance, and Doon (in Emly) displays some evidence of church enclosures.

The final four sites were to be chosen from the 'adjacent' and 'proximate' categories - two from each. Two 'adjacent' sites were chosen from County Limerick - one each in the Diocese of Emly and Limerick. Ardpatrick is the only site in this classification with early church origins, and thus is an immediate choice for inclusion. Kilteely, in the diocese of Emly, displays similar layout to Ardpatrick and is the second site chosen in this group. The final two sites are taken from the 'proximate' category. While Mungret was a cathedral site, Kilmallock has a strong tradition of settlement, being an important town throughout the medieval period. Thus, Kilmallock is chosen. Corofin in County Clare was selected for morphological reasons, as the nearby site of Kilvoydan displays clear evidence of a church enclosure.

The following table (Table 4.12.) and map (Figure 4.11.) outline the selected sites, illustrating the criteria used in their selection and their geographical distribution.

TABLE 4.12. : SUMMARY OF SELECTED SITES					
County	Name on Map	Selection Criteria*			
		1996 Population	Cathedral	Early Christian	Classification
Limerick	Doon	388	-	-	Central
	Ballingarry	389	-	-	Central
	Ardpatrick	-	-	Yes	Adjacent
	Kilteely	-	-	-	Adjacent
	Ardagh	328	-	-	Central
	Kilmallock	1231	-	Yes	Proximate
Clare	Kilfenora	-	Yes	Yes	Central
	Tulla	382	-	Yes	Central
	Quin / Quinn	242	-	Yes	Central
	Corofin	418	-	-	Proximate
	Ennistymon	920	-	-	Central
	Killaloe	972	Yes	Yes	Central
* For a similar examination of all 'potential' and 'valid' sites see Appendix 1 & 2					

FIGURE 4.11. : 59 'VALID' POTENTIAL SITES & 12 CASE STUDY SITES
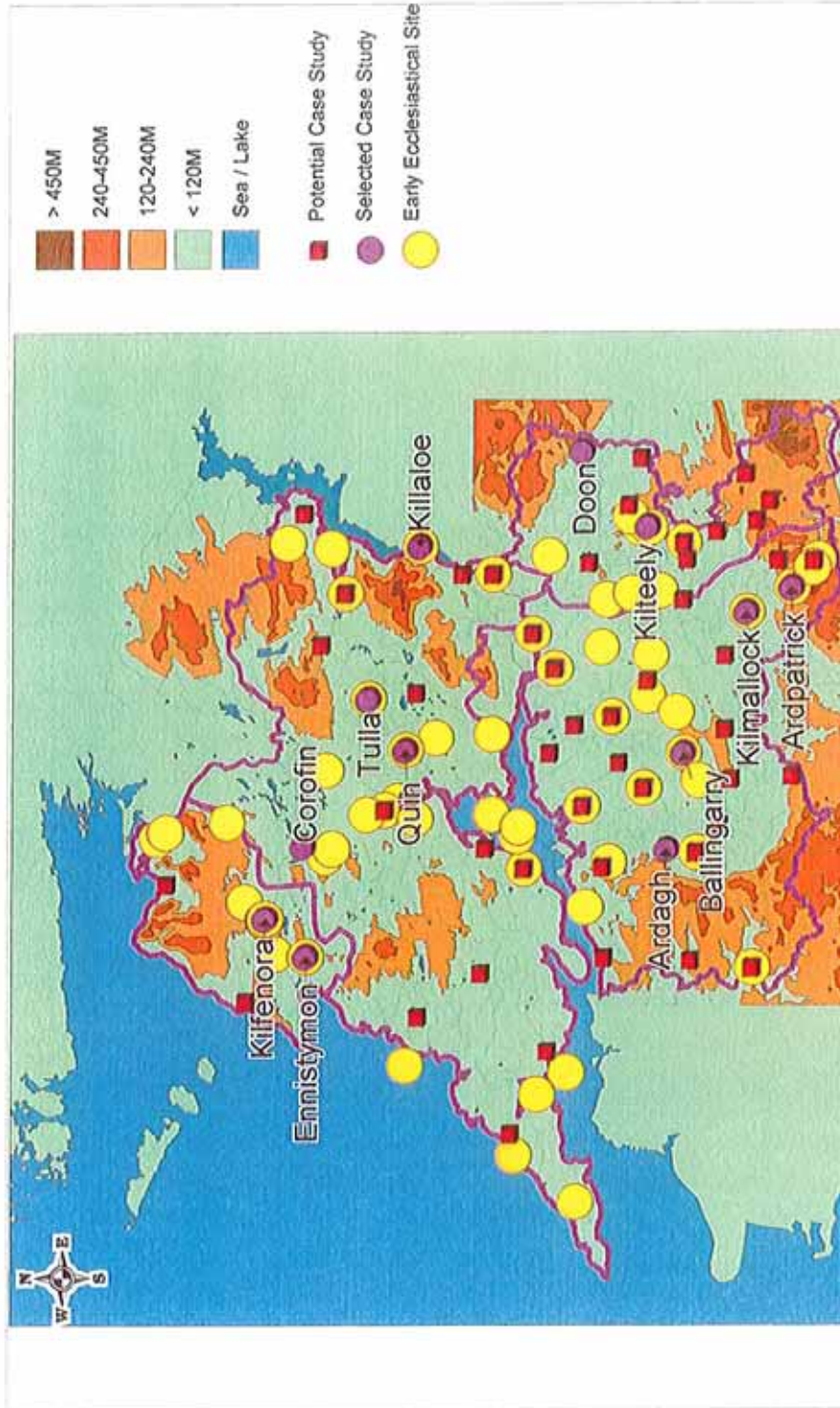
Red squares = potential sites not chosen for investigation / Named pink circles = 12 sites chosen as case studies

Yellow circles = early ecclesiastical Sites / Pink boundary = dioceses.

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from SMR for Limerick and Clare.

This next section presents the process whereby potential sites for investigation were identified, outlining the methodology used in the selection of case study sites. The result of this discussion has been the selection of 12 sites (6 in each county) for more detailed examination. Primarily, these are identifiable settlements which exist at or near church sites. The purpose of the case-study examinations which follow is to examine the form and structures of sites in detail and examine the relationship between secular and religious function and how this may be used as a tool to illustrate continuity.

At this point it is worth noting that the two Counties under investigation were chosen as it was expected that they would yield contrasting examples of settlement form. While the historical fabric and its distribution has varied through history, this has not been very evident. Other than higher density and the larger size of settlements in County Limerick (likely as a result of high quality agricultural land) no clear modern settlement distinction has been observed thus far. In the following case studies, the influence of the Anglo Normans in County Limerick, may appear more clearly than has thus far been the case.

Format and Structure of Case Studies

In examining the case studies, detailed historical investigation and Plan Analysis is employed, using a broad range of documentary and cartographic sources. Where appropriate / available, specialist resources such as aerial photographs have been examined, for more specialised examination. These can prove useful in the identification of features both documented and otherwise unidentifiable. Sites were visited to carry out on-the-ground visual examination, recording and surveying of ecclesiastical characteristics and features. Field observation was accompanied by photographic recording of church and related fabric.

The purpose of the detailed analyses is to explore the development of each individual site and to evaluate the importance of church sites as core elements of settlement structure and development. The following are the main themes that are explored in dealing with each site:

Each site is examined to establish where it is located, both physically, and in relation to the surrounding landscape. This investigation focuses on the reasons for site selection, and examines how the meaning of placenames and other factors can be used to explore information about the origins of sites.

For many sites, there is evidence in historic documents or folklore that can provide insight into their foundation. This material ranges from historic records of the founder, to traditions such as feast-days and events associated with the founder.

Many church sites are referred to in documentary records i.e. in the *annals*. In other cases, the earliest recorded material is much later, dating from the eighteenth or nineteenth century. The range of material for each site is presented and analysed.

In order to understand the spatial arrangement at each of the sites a combination of cartographic and historical analysis is used to identify the main plan units. Having identified each of the constituent elements in the case study sites, the evolution of habitation is presented in a sequential manner. Illustrating the fabric which can be identified as relating to the main historical periods, places the key church unit in chronological context.

The presence of physical boundaries and fabric such as churches, crosses, round towers etc. is the most clearly acknowledged evidence of ecclesiastical provenance for sites. In

154

addition, research has shown that the presence of curvilinear enclosures can also indicate church influence. In each case study the various forms of physical evidence are identified and examined within the context of the identified plan units.

A variety of additional fabric, possibly related to, but not necessarily forming an integral part of the primary church unit often lends support to the ecclesiastical origins of sites. The range of material in proximity to sites is examined to further explore the importance of the church units at each site.

The main purpose of the discussion is to establish how the layout of the individual sites follows the pattern identified in the Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites which is used as an analytical for the identification, examination and evaluation of settlements which have their roots in religious foundations. This discussion brings together the historical and physical evidence and places this alongside spatial evidence. This spatial data includes: detailed evidence of enclosures and of site layout, examination of road / fieldscape patterns and establishment of reasons for site selection and tradition of occupation.

Having explored each of the individual sites, the various results are synthesised and a comparative analysis of the findings is undertaken. The main thrust of this section is to establish the overall pattern of settlement evolution at sites and propose modifications to the Spatial Model which was developed at the end of Chapter 2.

County Limerick

The following map (Figure 4.12) illustrates the distribution of settlements in County Limerick. The majority are located in the lowlands with only a small number sited in the peripheral uplands. Those which are located above the 120 meter contour are predominantly sited in valleys (i.e. valley to southeast of map containing Ardpatrick), presumably located on convenient routeways. The overall pattern is a relatively even distribution throughout the county, particularly when compared with the earlier historic fabric as illustrated in Figures 4.2. - 4.4.. From the earliest times up to the Anglo-Norman period it appears that settlement was concentrated in the south and east of the county, but from that time onwards, the demographic trend was towards population of the entire plain of central Limerick.

At a basic level, the distribution of settlement appears to be linked to altitude, with the main trend being the location of sites in lowland areas. The pattern is also linked to the

underlying rock / soil type. The central plain of Limerick is underlain by Carboniferous Limestone, while the surrounding hills are formed mainly of Armorican anticlinal ridges of Old Red Sandstone which overlie Silurian slates and grits.[65] This skeletal structure is covered with glacial drift, which is chiefly of a clayey nature, and thus forms highly fertile soils. Freeman classifies this as the western end of the 'Golden Vein' of Irish agriculture and since the Anglo-Norman period, this area has been an important agricultural region.[66] In addition, the drainage pattern of the region appears to influence site selection. Most of the settlements are located beside rivers, the majority of which, flow from south to north - draining into the estuary of the River Shannon.

FIGURE 4.12. : LOCATION OF COUNTY LIMERICK CASE STUDIES

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from analysis of settlement.
Note: Sites indicated with white box = Settlements
Sites indicated with red box = Potential Study Sites
Sites indicated with pink circle = Selected case studies
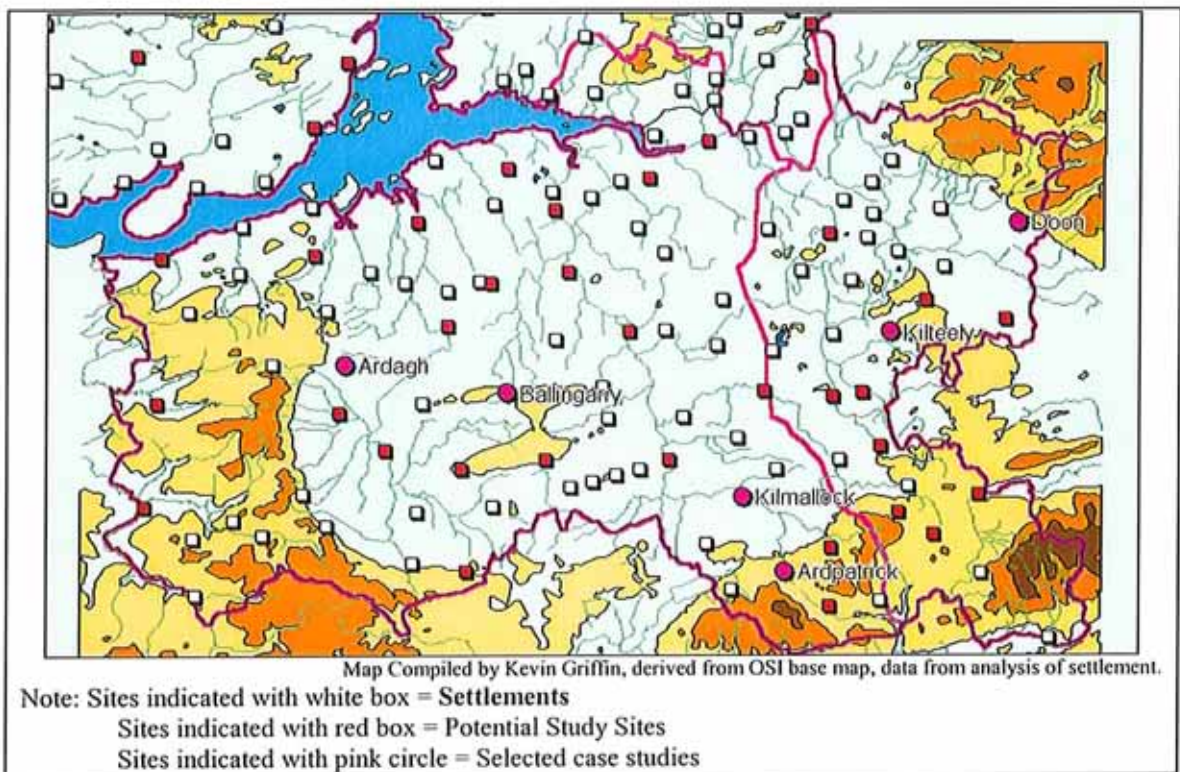
The 103 sites presented here are those, which have been classified as possessing various attributes which could be considered as identifying a settlement. The 32 sites represented by the red squares are the settlements which possess both religious and settlement evidence, and thus, were identified as being potential sites for detailed examination in this study. The sites marked by pink circles and named, are the six Limerick case-study sites which were selected.

---

[65] Freeman, T.W. (1969) *Ireland*, pp 387-391.
[66] Ibid p. 390; 406-7.

These six sites form a band across the centre of the county and from west to east, include Ardagh, Ballingarry, Kilmallock and Ardpatrick - in the diocese of Limerick, Kilteely and Doon that are in the diocese of Emly.

County Clare

From the following map the pattern of settlement in County Clare can be observed. The general distribution follows similar patterns to that of County Limerick. The three main trends observable are: an emphasis on coastal / estuarine sites (included in this can be the sites to the east of the county on Lough Derg and the river Shannon); settlements are predominantly sited in lowland locations and; proximity of sites to water - with almost all inland sites being located beside a river or lake. All three of these characteristics are similar to those observed in County Limerick.

In Clare all of the 21 settlements identified as being potentially suitable for detailed investigation (red boxes & pink circles) are situated in lowland locations. The absence of settlement in upland areas is striking, even more when one considers the evolution of settlement in the county as presented in Section 4.1. (Figures 4.2. & 4.3.) - i.e. upland areas illustrate abundant evidence of earlier habitation.

FIGURE 4.13. : LOCATION OF COUNTY CLARE CASE STUDIES

Map Compiled by Kevin Griffin, derived from OSI base map, data from analysis of settlement.
Note: Sites indicated with white box = Settlements
Sites indicated with red box = Potential Study Sites
Sites indicated with pink circle = Selected case studies

157
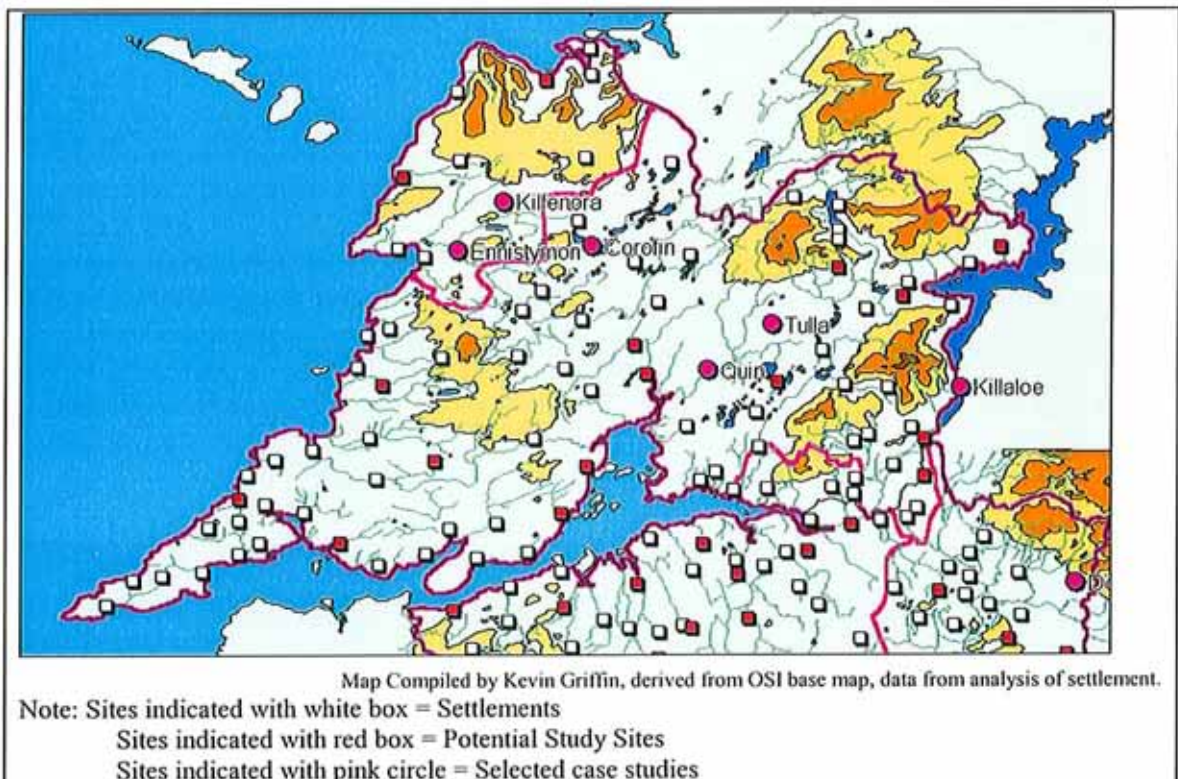
The 90 sites presented in this map (Figure 4.13) are those, which have been classified as settlements. The 15 sites represented by red squares are those which display both religious and settlement evidence, and thus, were identified as being potential sites for detailed examination in this study. The six settlements marked by pink circles and named, are the case-study sites which were selected in County Clare.

These six sites form an east-west band across the centre of the county and include Ennistymon and Kilfenora - which are both in the diocese of Kilfenora, while Corofin, Quin, Tulla and Killaloe are all in the diocese of Killaloe. All of the settlements are sited between 30 and 70 meters above sea level, with Quin, Corofin and Killaloe being sited at 20-30 meters OD. Ennistymon lies at an altitude of approximately 40 meters, while Tulla and Kilfenora are sited on hills at an altitude of 60 meters, thus while some sites are on minor eminences, none occupy truly upland sites.

In the following sections a detailed examination is undertaken of each of the twelve case study sites. These are examined in order to assess many factors, including their origins and history, continuity of placename, evidence of antiquity etc.. The primary goal in this investigation, however, is to examine the evidence of continuity at each location. There are two specific forms of continuity being assessed:

- Religious continuity
- Settlement continuity

As stated at the beginning, the purpose of this study is to assess the level to which settlement has been influenced by religious forces. Thus, the interplay between these two elements is paramount to this study, and therefore are given particular attention in each study.

4.3. COUNTY LIMERICK CASE STUDIES

Doon

The parish of Doon is situated partly in the baronies of Kilnemanagh and Owneybeg in County Tipperary, but chiefly in that of Coonagh, County Limerick, 22.5km southeast of Limerick City. While it crosses county boundaries, the entire parish is in the Diocese of Emly.[1] Some alternative spellings and derivatives of the name 'Doon' include:

Dún; Dun; Doone; Doon; Dunbleschiae; Dun Bleisc/e.[2]

The Irish of the name Doon or 'Dún' means 'fort'. This name is not of ecclesiastical origin but its origins derive from the townland in which the original church was built. The earthen 'dún' from which the townland derived its name was still extant in the time of O'Donovan (i.e. 1840).[3] It is not clear however, from the Ordnance Survey maps of the area which of the ringforts in Doon North and Doon South townlands gave rise to this appellation. O'Donovan was certain that this is the 'Dun Bleisce' described by the ancient Irish writers as being situated in the territory of Cuanach and as having taken its name form a celebrated harlot of the name 'Blesc'. According to him, there is no other church in the Barony of Coonagh beginning with the name Doon and he claims that any possible ambiguity is further removed by the existence of 'Toberfiantan' - the well of the patron saint, Fintan (i.e. St. Fintan of 'Dun Bleisce' or 'Dunbleschiae').[4]

Doon, which has a present-day population of 388, is thus a settlement of antiquity. Surprisingly for such an ancient centre, it has no evidence of a market function. In place of commercial activity, it displays strong evidence of church influence in its layout and function, albeit of relatively recent origin. The dominant present-day structures are the Roman Catholic church, a Christian Brothers' school and a convent school. Comparison between the 1840s and 1927 Ordnance survey maps supports the relatively recent establishment of these structures (Figures 4.3.1.2. & 4.3.1.3.). Their development at this

---

[1]   O'Donovan, J. (1939/41) *Antiquities of the County of Limerick*, p. 127; Lewis, S. *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* Vol. I, p. 483.

[2]   Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 427; O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 127; Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 438.

[3]   O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 127.

location does however, suggest that the apparent reasons for the original siting of settlement still holds, i.e. as a nodal communication centre at the foot of the Slievefelim mountains. The modern expression of this service provision is in the form of an education centre for the surrounding countryside.

According to Westropp, a holy man named Fintan was the original founder of a church in Dun Bleisce circa 580.[5] He was reputed to have been a disciple of the celebrated St. Comgall of Bangor and in the *Leabhar Breac* a 'quatrain' is given as a prophecy by St. Comgall that his pupil would settle at 'Dun Bleisce':

> Geabhaid mo dhaltán in múr
>
> Fintan las fagebther dún
>
> Is í a chathair Comall n-glé
>
> Dia m-ba Comh-ainm dún Bleisce[6]

Which O'Donovan translated literally as:

> My little foster son shall obtain the fortress
>
> Fintan by whom the dun will be obtained
>
> His city of sacred protection shall be
>
> That which shall (is) be called Dun-Bleishe [sic].[7]

Taken literally this suggests that Fintan would found a church at Doon - possibly on the site of the ancient dún. Fintan, usually called Fintan of Dunbleische / Dunbleschiae, is well documented. He flourished in (the time of Colmcille) the sixth century. He was of the son of Pipan, of a noble family and the brother of St. Findlugan of 'Tamlaght Finlagen', thus fitting the social profile of an important church founder.[8] After his training, he is to be found at a place called after him - Kill-Fintain, which O'Donovan suggests, may be Kilfinnan in County Limerick. From there, he moved to Dunbleische (Doon is 30km northeast of Kilfinnan) where, with some companions, he seems to have spent the greatest part of the remainder of his life.[9]

---

[4]   Ibid; Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 381.

[5]   Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 438.

[6]   O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 127.

[7]   Ibid.

[8]   Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 381; O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 128; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) Limerick: The Rich Land, p. 135.

[9]   O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 128.

This Fintan, the patron saint of the parish, died on the third of January and according to *The Book of Saints* compiled by the Benedictine monks of St. Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate, his feast-day was observed on that date (This feast-day is also mentioned in the *Feilire Aenguis*).[10] His holy well was the scene of devotions into modern times.[11]

According to Spellissy, like many other early Irish church sites, St. Fintan's sixth century foundation ceased to exist some time before the eleventh century.[12] There is no record of why this may have happened, nor written evidence describing or documenting the site in any detail.

The main church activity recorded in this area was the union of the dioceses of Cashel and Emly (in which Doon is located) but this is a comparatively recent event. The Church of Ireland amalgamation occurred in 1568, as the diocese of Emly was 'not competent of itself to support a bishop'.[13] The Roman Catholic dioceses remained separate until 1651.[14]

Very little ecclesiastical information has been recorded for this site before or after this amalgamation, apart from mentions in documents such as Papal lists. The earliest list of parishes in the diocese of Cashel and Emly are the Papal Taxations of 1291 and 1302, and another partial list of parishes exists for 1437.[15] Despite the absence of other information, Doon is one of the only parishes which is mentioned by name in all of these lists.[16]

With such a paucity of written material, exploration of this site needs to reach beyond traditional historical approaches and extract information using other methodologies. The approach employed is the aforementioned Plan Analysis technique as discussed earlier.

Site Description and Plan Analysis

Traditionally 'Dún Bleisce' was an important site of secular power. With the adoption of Christianity, the importance of the site may have been assumed by the church. While the site of the original Dún is not identifiable, it is likely that the central churchyard is

---

[10] Ibid; *The Book of Saints* cited in Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 135.
[11] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 135.
[12] Ibid p. 135.
[13] Fitzgerald, S. (1980) *Cappawhite and Doon*, p. 25.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

the location of the initial church site. This rectangular central unit is identified in Figure 4.3.1.5. as Plan Unit 1. It is likely that this central feature was surrounded by a curvilinear enclosure which is represented by Plan Unit 2. The subsequent settlement at Doon, focusing on the two junctions to the west is identified here as Plan Unit 3. The surviving settlement fabric is predominantly 18th or 19th century in origin and its proximity to Units 1 and 2 illustrates the influence the central church site has had on settlement at this location. As with many other sites, a distinct R.C. plan unit exists. In this case the church, presbytery and school, built in the Victorian period, lie to the north of the settlement and are identified as Plan Unit 4.

Two additional anomalous plan units may be suggested at Doon. Plan Unit 5 lies to the western end of the settlement, and is formed predominantly by a curvilinear property line to the east of Kilmoylan House. Within this unit lies Toberfantan, a holy well dedicated to the saint associated with the religious origins of Doon. Perhaps this curvilinear feature is a relic of an early curvilinear enclosure - could it be a religious constituent of the landscape? Plan Unit 6 at the centre of the settlement (Unit 3) is formed predominantly by curvilinear townland boundaries to the northwest and southwest. While there is no distinct fabric - religious or otherwise - associated with this unit, with the major road junction at its centre, this forms a tantalising juxtaposition to the recognised church site.

Plan Unit 1 - the old graveyard standing to the east of the settlement is the earliest identifiable church site in Doon. The possible enclosure surrounding this site (Plan Unit 2) is most clearly identifiable in the 1903 25-inch map (Figure 4.3.1.4.). This feature has a diameter of approximately 400 meters (Table 4.13), with the church/graveyard located at the western extremity. The western portions of the curved enclosure are identifiable in the roadway to the north and a property boundary to the south of the graveyard. The northeast quadrant is identifiable in a northwest-southeast aligned segment of curvilinear property boundary and to the southeast further property boundaries define the limits of the circuit. The segments between these portions are unclear - most likely due to the alteration of this landscape over time, which is evident by comparing the various map extracts (i.e. Figures 4.3.1.2. - 4.3.1.4.). The intermediate portions of the enclosure are taken to be connecting lines between these segments – completing the curvilinear circuit.

TABLE 4.13. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT DOON			
Measurement N-S*	392.7	Measurement E-W*	399.8
Average Radius Length	198.1	Area of Enclosure	12.33 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

From these observations it can be suggested that Doon represents a site where there is some topographical suggestion of a curvilinear church enclosure. The resultant enclosure is 393 meters north-south and measures 400 meters east-west. It is circular in shape, has an average radius length of 198 meters and encloses land of approximately 12.33 hectares in area.

The church fabric which survives within the central plan unit at Doon is sparse, consisting of just:

- A church site
- A burial ground.

Throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there appears to have been much confusion over the parish church at Doon.[17] An Ecclesiastical Commission of 1837 notes that the church in Doon was capable of containing 120 persons and had been built about 1796 by a gift of approximately four hundred and sixty one pounds by the late Board of First Fruits.[18] This church was described by Lewis as being a small plain edifice with a low square tower.[19] Neither Lewis nor O'Donovan make reference to any structures older than this, which they comment had been 'rebuilt' in 1800.[20] It appears however that the church had in fact been renovated rather than rebuilt at this time.[21] Local evidence supports the existence of an earlier church which it is proposed may have been the east-west aligned building shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map in the graveyard (Figure 4.3.1.2.). The earliest reference to a church in Doon is a copper alms dish which was presented to the church in 1747.[22]

---

[17] Hewson, A. (1995) Inspiring Stones, p. 43.
[18] Carew-Hynes, G. (1990) Dún Bleisce : A History, p. 43.
[19] Lewis, S. (1937) A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, Vol. I, p. 484.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Carew-Hynes, G. (1990) Dún Bleisce : A History, p. 45.
[22] Lewis, S. (1937) A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, Vol. I, p. 484.

The building to the west of Doon, marked as 'Christ Church' in Figure 4.3.1.3. is the 1857 Church of Ireland church.[23] The siting of this church is interesting, peculiarity as it is outside the settlement core. This is not a usual development of this period and displays an atypical break in church continuity. In contrast however, the settlement fabric has maintained a strong level of continuity with Roman Catholic church fabric developing proximate to the central focal point.

The central graveyard at Doon is rectangular and measures approximately 70 meters by 45 meters. A visit to this burial ground results in disappointment, with little or no historical material of a religious nature (See Figure 4.3.1.6.a.). In an desperate attempt to provide some information on the site, the only point of historical importance or interest which Lewis recorded in this graveyard was that a noted outlaw known as 'Emun-a-Cnoc' (translated as Edmund/Ned of the Hill), was interred here in 1724.[24]

Two wells - Toberfantan and Rag Well - stand outside the proposed enclosure. 'Tobar Fionntain' or Fintan's Well - likely of religious origin - is situated in the east corner of the townland of Kilmoylin Lower and west of the road which runs through the same townland approximately 530 meters west of the church site.[25] Presumably this is the same Fintan who is credited with founding the site. A religious link for the origins of Rag Well, which lies 640 meters south of the Roman Catholic church is less certain. However, Logan in his analysis of holy wells comments that small pieces of cloth were the most common form of votive offering at holy wells - thus the name 'rag' may allude to an abundance of such offerings at this site - hence inferring religious provenance.[26]

A range of routes converge on the cross roads to the west of the church site of Doon. It is interesting to note that other than one northern and one eastern road, these routeways do not encroach upon the possible enclosure identified above. Perhaps this indicates the presence of a church enclosure. The fieldscape surrounding the site is highly varied (See Figure 4.3.1.6.b.). Curvilinear trends are discernible northwest and southwest of the church at a distance of approximately 300m (Figure 4.3.1.3.). To the northeast and directly east of the early church site, at a distance of approximately 500m, curvilinear field boundaries would also appear to form a curved boundary. To the north and

---

[23] Carew-Hynes, G. (1990) *Dún Bleisce : A History*, p. 49.
[24] Ibid.
[25] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 127.
[26] Logan, P. (1980) *The Holy Wells of Ireland*, p. 116.

northeast there is an overall curvilinear tendency in the fieldscape (Figure 4.3.1.3.), with some further indication on the 1843 map to the southwest (Figure 4.3.1.2.).

Plan Development

The following table (Table 4.14) is a suggested chronology of site evolution at Doon, noting the periods during which the key elements of the site appear to have been established. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that the eastern church site (Plan Units 1 & 2) is the key element in the settlement form, establishing a focal point for subsequent development.

It has been proposed that Doon is a site with origins in the pre-Christian period, however, there is no physical evidence from this period. Evidence from the Christian period is also scant, but through the methodology proposed here a suggested layout of a church site is proposed. Cartographic evidence (Petty's Map - Figure 4.3.1.1.) dates the settlement at Doon to at least the 1700s, with much of the settlement fabric being later in date. All of the proposed plan units - Georgian, Victorian, 20th century etc. - are important elements in the evolution of settlement at Doon, but, the focal point has been the primary church unit.

While there is only limited fabric evidence for an early church site at Doon, it is proposed here that this influenced the subsequent secular settlement. Attracted by a church-based power centre, settlement developed in the vicinity of the church, evolving in a linear fashion at the western focal point of the enclosure.

TABLE 4.14. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT DOON			
Historical Period	**Topographical Features**	**Plan Unit**	**Evidence***
Pre-Christian	Original Dún	-	T
Early Christian	Church & Enclosure	1 / 2	D / C
Anglo-Norman			
Plantation (16th 17th Century)	Settlement	3?	C
Georgian (18th Century)	Settlement	3	D / C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	R. C. Church	4	D / C / P
20th Century	Settlement Consolidation	4	D / C / P
Potential Units	Possible Curvilinear Enclosure	5 / 6	C
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

The placename evidence in Doon points to a secular rather than religious tradition, the name deriving from 'dún', meaning fort. While the site of the original dún is unidentifiable, this settlement has long associations with religious traditions. With the establishment of a church site, the conversion of the fortress's inhabitants would have been likely (perhaps the original secular site was occupied by the church founders). The present day settlement of Doon appears to have grown around this early church site.

In this examination of Doon, use of the Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites developed in Section 2.6. suggests that Doon (despite the absence of strong physical remains) does in fact fulfil many of the criteria expected at church sites. Considering the landscape changes over time it is not surprising that there is an absence of church fabric. There is documentary evidence however for an individual known as Saint Fintan, and cartographic evidence of an early church building in the old graveyard at Doon. While there is a major hiatus in the medieval period, there is the suggestion of topographical continuity at this historically important settlement up to the present day. Thus, it may be suggested that Doon is a settlement which displays evidence of settlement continuity since the early Christian period.

Ballingarry

In 1837 Ballingarry was described as 'a market and post-town, and a parish in the barony of Upper Connello, County of Limerick, and province of Munster, 16 miles [circa 25 km] south southwest from Limerick [City]'.[1] The settlement, which is situated on the road from Rathkeale to Charleville, is sited 'in a pleasing and sheltered valley which opens towards the west'.[2] In an early document (a 1452 rental), the boundaries of the old parish of Garth or Ballingarry, 'coincided with those of the ancient tribal division of Gortcolgyn or Gortculligon'.[3]

Yet earlier - in records dating from before 1300 - Ballingarry was called 'Ville de Garth', 'Garth' or 'le Garthe' and, due to its central location in the O'Connell country it was sometimes referred to as Garthocconnyll.[4] The site was known as Garthbiboys in 1228 when it was the seat of the Biboys family who appear to have been Anglo-Norman settlers here.[5] In the Papal registers the name was latinised as 'Villa Horti'.[6] Over time, therefore, the parish / settlement has been referred to under a wide variety of names; Gare, Garre, Gorth, Garry, Garrystown and nearly a dozen other minor variations.[7]

The name Ballingarrie appears to have been first used in 1492, being abbreviated to 'B gary' in Petty's 1685 map of County Limerick (Figure 4.3.2.1.).[8] This name may be derived from the Irish 'Baile an Gharraí / Gharraidh' 'the town of the garden' or 'Gardenstown' or 'the town of the enclosed garden'.[9] Some alternative spellings and derivatives of the name 'Ballingarry' include:

[1]   Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 113.
[2]   Ibid p. 114.
[3]   Hamilton, G.F. (1928) *Records of Ballingarry*, p. 12.
[4]   Ibid.
[5]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 112.
[6]   Hamilton, G.F. (1928) *Records of Ballingarry*, p. 12.
[7]   Ibid p. 17.
[8]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 112.
[9]   O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 164; Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*, p. 19; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 112.

Baile an Gharraí / Gharraidh; Ballingarrie; Ballingarry; Garra; Garthocconnyll; Gare; Garre; Gorth; Garry; Garrystown; Garthbiboys; Garth.[10]

In 1837 Ballingarry consisted of one long irregular street and several smaller ones, and contained 276 houses.[11] The present day settlement has changed little in structure and now has a population of 389.[12]

Located in the centre of County Limerick, this is an important strategic site in settling the plains of Limerick. This territorial focal point has been the centre of an ancient land unit from a very early period, and with the Anglo-Norman colonisation, became a site of importance with a tower-house. While there are hints of earlier importance, O'Connor states that its recorded history is dominated by strong Anglo-Norman overtones.[13]

The early history of the site is unclear and there is no record of a founder apart from a possible association with a Saint Eoganus (Eugainus, Eoghan etc.) which appears in a 1410 manuscript referring to the dedication of the parish church. The only other saint associated with the central church site is Saint John.

Despite an absence of material in the early period, from the point of view of religious administration, Ballingarry appears to have been important from at least the thirteenth century. At this time, the diocese of Limerick was divided into six deaneries; these were Limerick, Adare, Rathkeale, Ardagh, Kilmallock and Garth.[14] The Deanery of Garth - i.e. Ballingarry - comprised twelve parishes at that date.

The major church information which survives refers to several Anglo-Norman influenced religious houses which appear to have been founded between c.1200 and c.1400. There is much misunderstanding regarding these sites which have been greatly confused with each other by various writers.[15]

---

[10] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 442; Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*, p. 19; Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 403; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 112.

[11] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 113.

[12] *Census of Ireland 1996*

[13] O'Connor, P. (1987) *Exploring Limerick's Past*, p. 19.

[14] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 112.

[15] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. 1, p. 113.

One such site is Kilshane Abbey, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, which was founded in 1198 on the outskirts of the village to the east.[16] Many authors have disputed the details of this site, questioning which religious order was involved and in addition disagreeing over the identity of the founder – Donough Cairbreach O Brien (who founded 'Curumro' (Sic.) and 'Kilsane', Co. Clare) or the Fitzgerald (Geraldine) Lord of Clenlis.[17] Some of the confusion over this site may arise from the fact that the abbey appears to have failed almost at once.

It is said that a preceptory of Knights Templars was founded here in 1172, which was granted to the Knights Hospitallers after the suppression of the Templars in 1304.[18] This may be a structure, in Rylanes townland which was discussed by Westropp.[19] There is also mention of a convent for sisters of the order of St. Augustine, of which no vestiges can be traced.[20] This is probably the nunnery that Hewison mentioned, though the dedication is unknown and there are no traces of it.[21]

Despite its administrative importance and the multitude of early sites, by 1837, the Church of Ireland church was described as a small neat edifice. There was also a new Catholic church in the village and two more outside it, one near 'Cnoc na Fírinne', and the other at the south-eastern extremity of the parish.[22] By 1930 the once important Church of Ireland administrative centre contained only seven parishes in the Union, including the original parish of Garth or Ballingarry.[23] Thus, while the recent church history of Ballingarry is unspectacular, and documentation regarding the original foundation is scant, it has been an important centre for a considerable period of time and is still an important focal point - clearly illustrating religious continuity.

Site Description and Plan Analysis

The earliest evidence of a church site in Ballingarry is the east-west aligned church, which is situated in a sub rectangular enclosure at the heart of the settlement. In Figure 4.3.2.6. this is marked as Plan Unit 1. The possible presence of an enclosure at

[16] Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 138.
[17] Lenihan, M. (1866) *Limerick its History and Antiquity*, p. 31; Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses* : Ireland, p. 138.
[18] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 114.
[19] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', pp 408-9.
[20] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 114.
[21] Hewison G.J. (1890) 'Kilmallock &c.', p. 322.
[22] Ibid p. 113.
[23] Ibid p. 112.

Ballingarry is suggested by the curvilinear line of the main street. This potential unit is identified here as Plan Unit 2. The wedge shaped plot to the southwest of Plan Unit 2 is identified as the Fair Green. This market function may pre-date the Anglo-Norman period, appearing to be locationally linked to the church site (as in Kildare, Kells Armagh etc.). This feature is identified as Plan Unit 3.

Ringforts and earthworks surround the Ballingarry, particularly in Rylaans townland to the north. North of the church site a large earthwork is indicated on the various Ordnance Survey maps. No description of this feature is given other than the hatching indicated on the cartographic records. The oval shape and the scale of the feature are somewhat more typical of Anglo-Norman earthworks than of early Irish ringforts.[24] Typically sited where it overlooks the primary church site (situated in the valley below it), perhaps this feature (Plan Unit 4), was an early Anglo-Norman fortification. Plan Unit 5 identifies the more permanent Anglo-Norman fortification in the area - an impressive tower-house and surrounding buildings. While the *Sites and Monument Record* for Limerick proposes the former existence of a castle at Ballingarry, this tower-house is the only defensive feature surviving to the present day.

Identified as Plan Unit 6, the 18th and 19th century built fabric at Ballingarry suggests a planned arrangement which has evolved along a north-south street axis - located between secular (tower-house) and church (central church) foci.

The completion of a Roman Catholic church in 1879 (Plan Unit 7) coinciding with this practice throughout the country, is the most recent identifiable phase in the development of the site.[25] The final Plan Unit discussed here is Kilshane Abbey (Plan Unit 8) which is located to the east of the settlement.

A further plan unit could be proposed, based on the curvilinear lineament of Well Lane. Anomalous curvilinear topographical features such as this appear to exist in a number of sites (i.e. Ardagh, Doon & Ardpatrick). While there is little evidence other than topographical layout, this feature, which is identified as Plan Unit 9, may be an early structure – religious or secular. It is possible - considering the location - that this was the original church enclosure which expanded at a later stage to the plot identified as Plan Unit 2.

---

[24] McNeill, T. (1997) *Castles in Ireland*, pp 56-74
[25] Limerick Diocese http://www.limerickdiocese.org/parishes/ballingarry/

The key church fabric at Ballingarry is clearly the centrally located Church of Ireland (Plan Unit 1). As can be seen (Figures 4.3.2.2. & Figure 4.3.2.4.), the surviving structure (Figure 4.3.2.7.a.) lies parallel to a much earlier building, and thus, supports the presence of religious fabric at an early stage in the development of this settlement.

Unlike some of the clearer case studies in this investigation, the boundary of an identifiable enclosure in Ballingarry is tenuous. Examination of the extensive plot pattern in the 1864 Valuation Map of Ballingarry (Figure 4.3.2.5.) suggests one possible reason for this - i.e. an earlier curvilinear boundary would have been eliminated with the formation of the extensive rectilinear property units visible in this map.

The curvilinear enclosure which is proposed (Plan Unit 2) follows the line of the street to the northwest, west and southwest of the church. To the north this boundary abuts Plan Unit 4, and to the south has a common boundary with Plan Unit 3 - the Fair Green. In this proposal, the boundary encloses an extensive property plot, with an approximate diameter of 486m - the church lying within and to the western edge of this feature. While the eastern portions of this enclosure are highly speculative, there is some evidence with the presence of an ancient church and ancillary fabric to support this proposal.

TABLE 4.15. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT BALLINGARRY			
Measurement N-S*	481.9	Measurement E-W*	492.7
Average Radius Length	243.7	Area of Enclosure	18.65ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

These measurements scaled from the 1901, 25-inch map suggest an enclosure which is 482 meters north-south and which measures 493 meters east-west. The overall shape of the enclosure is circular with an average radius length of 244 meters, enclosing approximately 18.65 hectares.

The church fabric surviving at this site includes:

- An ancient church site.
- An ancient burial ground.
- The holy well of SS Peter and Paul.

Ballingarry Church of Ireland parish church: 'a small but very neat edifice in the early English Revival style, with a lofty square tower', stands near to, and parallel with, the foundations of an older parish church which it replaced in 1812 (or 1820).[26] The older church was founded before 1292, and was converted to Church of Ireland worship after the Dissolution.[27] In 1800 the parishioners decided to rebuild it, and work had actually commenced by 1810 when it suddenly collapsed.[28] By 1840 all that remained of this early structure was part of the east gable with two round-headed cut-stone windows and a section of the north wall.[29] O'Donovan noted that the foundations of this building and parts of the north wall and tower were apparently used as the McCarthy Vault which still stands today - see Figure 4.3.2.7.b..[30]

By 1930, the older building had all but disappeared. The section of the north wall, had been incorporated into the boundary wall between the old disused graveyard (to the south) which had been closed around 1900 and the newer one, opened about the same time.[31] The 'new' church (built in 1820) has been closed since the 1970s and Spellissy commented that many of its windows were broken by 1989.[32] On visiting in 1999 the 'new' church building had passed into private hands and was being sympathetically restored for use as a private dwelling. However, no traces of the older building could be discovered to explore the possibility of ancient features.

The rectilinear graveyard surrounding Ballingarry Church is approximately 90 meters from east to west, and approximately 100 meters in breadth. This burial ground is divided into a number of separate areas, with the portion surrounding the earlier church ruins being marked as 'disused' in the 1901, 25-inch map (Figure 4.3.2.4.). This portion contains old funerary monuments, with many of the gravestones dating from the eighteenth century. The adjoining plot to the north appears to contain more recent fabric.

[26] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 114; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 115.

[27] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 115.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 409.

[30] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 164; Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 409.

[31] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 115.

[32] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 409; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 115.

In 1895 Westropp recorded the well of SS Peter and Paul which he stated was near to the parish church.[33] There is no such well named on the Ordnance Survey maps, however, the 1864 Valuation Map does label the curvilinear lane to the east of the church as Well lane (Figure 4.3.2.5.). In addition, the 1901 25-inch map (Figure 4.3.2.4.) does identify a well in this vicinity, to the east of the graveyard boundary, and this may mark the site of the feature. The curvilinear nature of 'Well lane' produces a curious feature which may form a small enclosure as suggested in Plan Unit 9.

Despite rich documentary evidence, the landscape surrounding Ballingarry does not contain much fabric that is definitely of religious provenance. The elements noted in this research are:

- A possible outer enclosure
- Two holy wells: Sunday's Well and John's Well.
- An Abbey (Kilshane)
- A Priory / Friary (Ard Eaglais)
- A Fair Green

The present townland of Knightstreet may be an important element in the original layout of Ballingarry (Figure 4.3.2.3.). With some smoothening of the northeastern portion, this townland boundary would form a circular enclosure at a distance of approximately 500m, around half of the site. A curvilinear boundary of this size would also enclose most of Cloontemple townland, Sunday's Well and John's Well.

Sunday's Well, or 'Tobar Rí an Domhnaigh', 'the Well of the King of Sunday', was located to the east of the church site at a distance of approximately 300 meters. According to Spellissy, this well is still remembered in the locality and its name is inscribed on the E.S.B. sub-station which was built over its site.[34] St. John's well, which is located near the southeastern boundary of Rylaans townland, (and also near the abbey of Kilshane) was once the scene of a local pilgrimage or 'pattern'.[35]

While it is located outside the main settlement area as defined in this examination, Kilshane Abbey is discussed here as it lies close to the site. In 1840, O'Donovan observed Ballingarry Abbey (called the Franciscan House of Kilshane, by Westropp)

[33] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 409.
[34] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) Limerick: The Rich Land, p. 115.
[35] Ibid p. 116.

The complex roadscape in the Ballingarry area reflects the topography of the district, with the overall tendency being roads from the north and south converging on the junction to the northwest of the graveyard - at the western extremity of Plan Unit 2. The overall fieldscape in the area is varied and has been altered considerably over time. This is particularly evident in comparing the 1864 valuation map (Figure 4.3.2.5.) which shows a multitude of property boundaries, with the 1901 25-inch map in which property plots are much larger (Figure 4.3.2.4.). The landscape to the northeast of the central church was extensively planted in the 1840s, (Figure 4.3.2.2.) and field alteration appears to have been carried out in the Cloontemple townland as it presents a different arrangement in the various maps (Figures 4.3.2.2. - Figure 4.3.2.5.). The pattern in the Knightstreet townland, however, appears to be less interrupted with the road and field layout radiating from the old church site, particularly in southwestern sector.

Plan Development

The planned nature of settlement at Ballingarry is clearly evident in the Valuation Map of 1864 (Figure 4.3.2.5.). While of a relatively late date, this illustrates the overall structured nature of the habitation. Examining the various cartographic examples and placing them alongside historical evidence, it is likely that the main form of this settlement dates from the pre-Norman period.

Despite the strongly planned appearance in Figure 4.3.2.5. through time the overall pattern of the religious plan unit has survived somewhat, with Plan Unit 1 - the central church - acting as the main focal point for the settlement process. Many suggestions can be made regarding the evolution of settlement. The pattern appears to have begun with the establishment of a church prior to the arrival of the Normans. Initially perhaps, this was a small church site with an enclosure in the region of 100 meters in diameter - as suggested by Plan Unit 9 - which later developed and expanded to the enclosure defined by Plan Unit 2. Perhaps however, this was originally a planned site with a double concentric pattern being established from the outset. Either way, it was to this landscape feature (and the inherent strengths of the site) that the Anglo-Norman colonisers were attracted. The establishment of a castle / tower house (Plan Unit 5) and an abbey (Plan Unit 8) at opposite sides of the enclosure illustrates the survival of initial inner and outer enclosure features. The distance of the abbey and tower-house from the central church suggests that the intermediate land was not available for occupation - thus supporting the presence of a well-recognised church enclosure.

175

Over time secular settlement developed in its present location, and while the abbey and castle fell into ruin, the central church site retained its importance. From this we can see that the central church site has from the earliest times been a key element of the fabric of Ballingarry, forming the main focal point for subsequent settlement.

TABLE 4.16. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT BALLINGARRY			
Historical Period	Topographical Features	Plan Unit	Evidence
Pre-Christian	Ringforts surrounding settlement		-
Early Christian	Central Church & Enclosure	1 / 2	T / C
Anglo-Norman	Earthwork & Tower-House	4 / 5 / 6	T / D / C / P
Plantation (16th-17th Century)	Settlement		C
Georgian (18th Century)	Settlement		C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	R. C. Church	7	C / P
20th Century	Settlement		C / P
Potential Units	Market - Possibly linked to Unit 2	3	T / C
	Friary/Abbey to East	8	D / C
	Central anomaly - possibly religious	9	C
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

With its ancient fabric, enclosures, placenames and wells Ballingarry suggests the former existence of an early church. Christian habitation was succeeded by Anglo-Norman colonisation, as is evident in the tower-house and the friary/abbey. The central church site - Plan Units 1 & 2 (possibly developing from Unit 9) appears therefore to form the cornerstone for subsequent settlement.

There is abundant evidence of Anglo-Norman, Georgian, Victorian and latter-day influences on Ballingarry. These are reflected in a formal street layout, the formalising of a Fair Green and the building of a courthouse to the south.

In spite of the many changes, continuity is evidenced in the survival of a curvilinear enclosure to the present day. The core element of this settlement is a graveyard containing an east-west aligned church. This unit has been the focal point of all activity at Ballingarry, including trade (Market Green) religious continuity (building of a new church parallel and beside the old ruins) and settlement. Settlement - has been (and still is) focused on the central church, thus, illustrating the high levels of religious and settlement continuity at Ballingarry.

Ardpatrick

In 1837 Lewis described Ardpatrick as formerly having been a parish, but then 'forming part of the parish Kilquane, in the barony of Costlea, County of Limerick, 4½ miles (i.e. 7.2km) southeast from Kilmallock'.[1] As will be seen, this small settlement, which lies in the south east of County Limerick was once one of the most important church sites in this region.

The settlement of Ardpatrick is located at an altitude of 150 meters, while the nearby church site from which it takes its name is 225m above sea level. From the summit of this hill one can see as far north as buildings on the shore of the Shannon at Limerick City and even beyond, to the Cratloe Hills and Bunratty Castle, in County Clare.[2] The name Ardpatrick is thus, very appropriate, coming from the Irish 'Árd Pádraig', which means 'the high place of Patrick' - Patrick in the name being the patron saint of Ireland. Some alternative spellings for Ardpatrick include:

Árd Pádraig; Ardpatrick; Ard Patricke.[3]

The history of settlement at Ardpatrick is intrinsically linked to the fortunes of the early church foundation. Physical evidence of habitation ranges from the ecclesiastically influenced ancient field pattern surrounding the hill-top church site, to the small present day settlement at the foot of the hill. The historical records show that this was formerly an important administrative centre, thus, it may be inferred that it was a site of importance since the early Christian period at least.

Figure 4.2. which illustrates the distribution of earlier prehistoric fabric in Limerick and Clare shows that there is evidence of megalithic structures in the vicinity of Ardpatrick during this period (c.2000BC). This is followed by evidence of occupation in the immediate area in all subsequent historical periods.[4] Thus, while surviving early settlement fabric at Ardpatrick is sparse, the overall pattern of evolution in Limerick suggests that this area was important in the pre-Christian period. This significance

---

[1] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 56.
[2] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 198.
[3] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 415; Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*, p. 6; Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 426.

continued to more recent times. For example, despite the absence of settlement fabric from the period, cartographic sources from the 17th century clearly identify Ardpatrick (Figure 4.3.3.1.). In referring to the continuity of habitation at Ardpatrick, Spellissy (without substantiating his claims) states that pagans, Christians, Vikings, Anglo-Normans and English have known this ancient settlement.[5]

According to tradition, St. Patrick's Hill or Height, owes more than its name to the legendary saint, the first church on this hill reputedly being founded by Patrick himself.[6] In addition, it appears that this was the administrative centre for the collection of contributions for Armagh from the entire province of Munster.[7] Not all researchers have been so convinced of the site's importance. According to Lewis for example: 'while no historical record exists for the site, there is sufficient evidence that a religious foundation was established here in the earliest ages of Christianity'.[8] Lewis, however, is somewhat mistaken in his dismissive vagueness in relation to the site, which it appears, was a very important early foundation.

There is some evidence to suggest that Ardpatrick was a centre of power at the time of Patrick.[9] As Cashel was not yet the capital of Munster, it is likely that this, being a claimed Patrician site, and also being politically prominent (sited in the territory of a powerful dynasty - the Deis Becc), was perceived as the primary church in Munster.[10] Fleming, in exploring Ardpatrick, comments that while the site held episcopal importance at the time of Patrick, as with all other early sees (Armagh excepted) this status was short-lived. He claims that when the Irish Church adopted a monastic organisation, the original early diocesan system declined, and thus, Ardpatrick declined in importance.[11]

One of the many events recorded is the great plague of the 650s during which the monastery was severely hit by death and some of its treasures were lost. Between the sixth and tenth centuries the church system here changed from an episcopal to a

---

4   Mitchell, F. (1998) *Reading the Irish Landscape*
5   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, pp 198-199.
6   Ibid p. 198.
7   Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 216; Archdall, M. (1786) *Monasticon Hibernicum*, Vol. III, in Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 29..
8   Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 56.
9   Fleming, J. (1979) *Ardpatrick*, p. 13.
10   Ibid.
11   Ibid.

monastic one and by the tenth century, the monastic tradition at Ardpatrick was firmly established. Fleming surmises that during this time the monastery may have been rebuilt, replacing what were probably wattle and daub or timber structures with stone buildings. It is possibly the remains of these latter structures which, stand today.[12]

The real rise of Ardpatrick to prominence occurred in the eleventh and twelfth centuries when the church of Armagh actively moved to establish a 'Paruchia Patricii' or league of churches under their jurisdiction, which claimed Saint Patrick as founder. Central to the foundation of this league in Munster was the appointment of Ardpatrick as the representative church of Armagh.[13]

Following an arrangement with the nearby foundation of Emly in 973AD, control of the Ardpatrick community passed from the local Deis Becc faction into the hands of Armagh, with the Abbots of Ardpatrick being referred to as the Coarb of Patrick in Munster.[14] This would have removed Ardpatrick from local politics and placed it directly under Armagh.

The Synod of Cashel in 1101 signified the turning point for the prominence of this site. First, this council which was established to rehabilitate the Irish Church, formally accepted Cashel as the key reforming church in Munster. Secondly, it identified Cashel as the chief ecclesiastical centre in the new diocesan system which was set up in the Synod of Rathbreasail.[15]

As Fleming comments, 'the reform movement bypassed Ardpatrick' and the establishment of a new church system in Ireland left it even further out of the picture, in fact 'signifying the end of an era'.[16] 1129 signalled the end of its significance in the Irish Church. While it had already been undergoing a process of laicisation, in this year an individual called Ceallach died and with his death the prominence of Ardpatrick as a centre of learning ended.[17]

> [in 1129] 'Cellach, successor of Patrick . . . sent forth his spirit into the bosom of angels and archangels in Ard Patrick in Munster . . . His body was then carried . . . to Lis Mór . . . according to his own will and

---

[12]   Ibid p. 14.
[13]   Ibid pp 15-17.
[14]   Ibid p. 17.
[15]   Ibid pp 19-20.
[16]   Ibid pp 20-21.
[17]   Ibid p. 24.

it was waked with psalms and hymns and canticles. And it was buried with honour in the tomb of the bishops'.[18]

According to the Annals of Ulster:

'following the death of this Cellach, Ardpatrick was immediately subject to Armagh. Its superiors were the stewards, or custodians of the primatial cess in Munster'.[19]

In commenting on the decline of Ardpatrick, Fleming notes that the church declined from 'the position of a great monastery' in the eleventh century, to that of 'a great church of note' in the thirteenth century, to that of a 'chapel' by the fifteenth century'.[20]

Numerous citations from the annals (*Annals of Inisfallen*, *Annals of the Four Masters*, *Annals of Ulster*) illustrate some of the points made above and emphasise the size and importance of this church site. Important individuals died in 1079 and 1113.[21] In 1114 the site was burned, it was plundered in 1127.[22]

The office of 'coarb' (overseer or keeper of the church lands - who was more often a layman rather than priest) was carried out by the O'Longáins or Langanes 'from time immemorial'.[23] The earliest written record of this family's involvement with the site is the above reference from 1113 when Diarmait O'Longáin the 'coarb' of Ardpatrick, died.[24] In the recording of monastic lands in 1590 and 1597 they were still coarbs and this lasted until the end of the sixteenth century when the family were dispersed throughout Limerick, Kerry and Cork.[25] This familial continuity is very important as it highlights the level of stability at Ardpatrick.

Site Description and Plan Analysis

The development of Ardpatrick appears to have taken place in two distinct, yet spatially linked phases. The initial site of development is the hill-top church site identified as Plan Unit 1 (Figure 4.3.3.5. & Table 4.19). This unit contains a church and graveyard,

---

[18] Mac Carthy, B. (1893) *Annals of Ulster*, 1129AD.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid p. 27.
[21] MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1079AD; 1113AD.
[22] O'Donovan J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1114AD, Vol. II, p. 99; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 199.
[23] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 56; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 199.
[24] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 199.
[25] Archdall, M. (1786) *Monasticon Hibernicum*, Vol. III, in Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 29; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 199.

with a round tower situated close by. Surrounding the churchyard is a curvilinear enclosure, which is identified as Plan Unit 2.

Located to the northeast of these units is Plan Unit 3 which is most likely a nineteenth century chapel village with a Roman Catholic Church as its core. This forms the second phase of settlement evolution. Unit 4 - a southern extension of this - lies close by and contains the parochial house and school. This fabric most likely arose from the establishment of Unit 3.

Plan Unit 5 lying to the south of the religious core is a curious and distinct feature of the landscape. With Toor house at its centre, this curvilinear enclosure displays topographical characteristics that are typical of a church site. However, there is no religious fabric (other than placename evidence) associated with this location. In the absence of fabric it is difficult to propose that this may be of religious origin, but considering the history and importance of Ardpatrick, this possibility must not be totally discounted. Surrounding Units 1, 2 and 5, and forming the boundary between them and Units 3 and 4, is Plan Unit 6, which is a suggested outer enclosure of the site. This is a large feature, but an important church may merit an enclosure of this scale. It's size and shape is well supported by the presence of curvilinear lineaments on the landscape.

The area immediately surrounding the central foundation of Ardpatrick (Plan Unit 1) provides an outstanding example of a well preserved early landscape. Fieldscape survival, possibly from the early Christian period, is discernible from the ground but strongly visible from the air (Figure 4.3.3.6.d. - Figure 4.3.3.6.f.). Tracing the lines of the surviving field boundaries provides a classic example of early church property layout. The comparison between the earthworks at this site and the illustration of similar boundaries by Bartlett's (c.1602) in his *Map of Armagh* (Figure 2.14) are strongly suggestive of strong parallels between the sites.

Surrounding the church itself is a rectangular graveyard (with curvilinear western-wall), outside of which, to the northwest, stands the stump of a round tower. A strongly curvilinear trend is evident in many of the surviving boundaries, particularly to the south, east and north. The ancient field lines which have been accentuated on the 1924 Ordnance Survey six-inch map (but, entirely absent from the 1843 edition) suggest an oval enclosure surrounding these elements. The vertical Cambridge aerial photograph (Figure 4.3.3.5.b.) suggests that this may follow a much more circular shape. The

following table (Table 4.17.) illustrates the measurements of this enclosure, scaled from the 1903, 25-inch map (Figure 4.3.3.4.).

The clearest survival of the inner enclosure is to be found in the southeastern quadrant. Directly to the east of the church a distinct curvilinear line lies at a distance of 146 meters. This line forms a quarter circle which is 167 meters from the church at a southeastern angle and 169 meters to the south. The next distinct line which may form part of the circuit is a very short northwest-southeast section of boundary which lies westsouthwest of the church at a distance of 202 meters. Other than this southern circuit, the remaining lines of the inner enclosure are highly speculative. However, through combining information from the Cambridge University aerial photographs (Figure 4.3.3.6.e. & Figure 4.3.3.6.f.) with Figure 4.3.3.3. it is possible to suggest a boundary. As can be seen in Figure 4.3.3.3. and Figure 4.3.3.6.e. a portion of the already discussed enclosure follows the 700 foot contour line. It is logical to propose that the remainder of this circuit could follow this topographically influenced line. Furthermore, the aforementioned photographs suggest that the majority of the early fieldworks lie within the area of land that would be enclosed by such a structure. Thus, while a definite identification of enclosure is not possible without excavation, the line of the 700-foot contour is proposed here as being the line of the inner enclosure. While this appears to be highly speculative, the parallel between the proposed enclosure and the visible earthworks is strong enough to merit such a conjecture.

TABLE 4.17. : MEASUREMENT OF INNER ENCLOSURE AT ARDPATRICK			
Measurement N-S*	285.6	Measurement E-W*	328.4
Average Radius Length	153.5	Area of Enclosure	7.40 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

This results in an enclosure which is 286 meters north-south and which measures 328 meters east-west (Table 4.17.). The overall shape is circular with an average radius length of 154 meters. From these observations the hilltop site at Ardpatrick presents a clear example of a bounded early church fieldscape.

Harbison commenting on this site states: 'all that remains of the old monastery is the stump of a round tower (outside the cemetery wall) and a church with antae and a plain

182

round-headed south doorway, built probably around 1200'.[26] According to him, the monuments at this superb hill top site, are not interesting in themselves, but the climb to the top is worth it for the panoramic view of Co. Limerick.[27] This manner of viewing the structures in isolation would be a mistake as the true value of the fabric lies in the integrated survival of church fragments, round tower, impressive fieldscape, topographical location and historical evidence.

The surviving church fabric within the inner enclosure at Ardpatrick includes:

- Ardpatrick Church
- Burial ground.
- Round tower.
- St. Patrick's Well

Ardpatrick Church, or at least the first church on this site, may have been founded as early as the fifth century. Fleming claims that the initial monastery developed on the side of the hill, and then moved to the top (Could this be the site of Toor House -Plan Unit 5).[28] The present east-west aligned ruin, is from a later period and probably dates from about 1200.[29] Its northern and southern walls project beyond the gables to the east and west, forming antae - 'curious reminders of an earlier period when walls such as these were made out of wooden logs'.[30]

On the summit of the hill, near the northwest angle, of the church ruins are the remains of an ancient round tower (Figure 4.3.3.6.a.). The *Down Survey* (1685) describes this building as a 'watch tower', which apparently had 3 storeys and a broken top at that time (in 1657).[31] The tower was 17 meters in circumference, made of good masonry and according to Lewis (1837), 'the greater portion [of this tower] fell down a few years since' (possibly 1824).[32] Spellissy claims that the round tower which is now only a

---

[26] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 216.
[27] Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. *(1977) The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 122; Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 216.
[28] Fleming, J. (1979) *Ardpatrick*, p. 15.
[29] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 198.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 426.
[32] Ibid; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 56; Fleming, J. (1979) *Ardpatrick*, p. 14.

stump, is probably older than the ruined church.[33] Leask proposes, however, that the masonry in the tower is 'similar in character' to that in the church.[34]

The graveyard at this site is rectilinear in overall shape, with a slight curvilinear western wall. It is approximately 60 meters from east to west and approximately 50 meters in breadth and is still used for burials. It is disappointing and somewhat surprising that despite the antiquity of this site, no funerary fabric of notable antiquity has been found within this burial ground.[35] A curious observation worth noting here is that unlike most other examples (Glendalough, Kells, Kildare etc.) the graveyard boundary wall does not contain the round tower, suggesting perhaps, that the present enclosing wall is relatively late in origin.

Spellissy states that St. Patrick's Well which was enclosed by stonework 20 yards southwest of the church in 1840, was once resorted to by people seeking cures for lameness, rickets and rheumatism.[36]

The additional church features which survive in the vicinity of the site are extensive:

- A possible outer enclosure
- An impressive ancient fieldscape.
- Holy Wells (St. Anne's/ St. Fhionain's holy well -and Tobergirtaun).
- Toor House Site
- Leaba Rian Bó Phádraig
- Boithrín an Chlochair

A number of boundaries surrounding the hilltop site of Ardpatrick suggest the existence of a very large outer enclosure. To the northwest, north and northeast the northern boundary of Ardpatrick townland could be seen as the line of an enclosure with radii of 296, 222, and 475 meters respectively from the church site. It is proposed here that an outer enclosure does exist and that it continues in a clockwise direction along the boundary between Toor and Sunville Upper townlands. While this produces a very large enclosure, the fact that the line follows both a townland boundary and road, and continues an unbroken circuit around the church site, supports the proposal. Southeast

---

[33] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 199.
[34] Leask, H. G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. I, p. 72.
[35] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 199.
[36] Ibid.

of the church site this roadway / boundary ceases to follow a curvilinear pattern, focussed on the hilltop church. At this point a short roadway runs westward, and a series of property boundaries run between this point and a roadway labelled 'Boithrín and Chlochair'. West of this point the line of the enclosure is unclear. It appears likely that it runs in a curvilinear fashion running through Rian Bó Phádraig – approximately 300 meters west of the church site.

TABLE 4.18. : MEASUREMENT OF OUTER ENCLOSURE AT ARDPATRICK			
Measurement N-S	1203.1	Measurement E-W	928.2
Average Radius Length	532.8	Area of Enclosure	89.19 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

While in places this proposed outer boundary is speculative, examination of the landscape suggests such a structure. To the north and east these lines could be explained as being topographically influenced as the roads follow the contours of the surrounding landscape. To the south, however, the curve of the road is continued in a series of field boundaries which form an oval with an east-west measurement of approximately 900 meters centred in the vicinity of Toor house, with the historical church site in the northwestern portion of the oval.

Unlike the other editions of Ordnance Survey, the 1924, 6-inch map (Figure 4.3.3.3.) suggests the existence of earthworks in the vicinity of the hill-summit church site at Ardpatrick. On approaching the site from the north, these structures are visible as patterns on the landscape (Figure 4.3.3.6.c.). Examination of the site using aerial photography provides much clearer evidence of a highly intricate pattern of mounds, ditches and embankments surrounding the central church fabric. Figure 4.3.3.6.d.-f. illustrate the extent of these features, which suggest the presence of early enclosures. The curvilinear and rectilinear enclosures, may represent field boundaries but perhaps they represent the sub-division of church lands. In fact a parallel may be drawn between the image presented in Figure 4.3.3.5.e. and Bartlett's Map of Armagh (c.1602 - Figure 2.14.), with both showing the use of earthworks to delineate the landscape surrounding the central church site. As discussed in Section 2.4. Bartlett's illustration has been an important document in the academic recognition of now vanished early church enclosure. Perhaps the comparable structures at Ardpatrick represent the survival of enclosing boundaries up to the present day.

Similar extensive and complex earthworks are found at 'Inis Cealtra' (Co. Clare), Liathmore (Co. Tipperary) and Killabuonia (Co. Kerry). The proposal that these internal divisions may define areas of specialised activities such as worship, housing and crafts, could only be answered through archaeological investigation / excavation.[37]

Not enclosed by the proposed outer enclosure, other wells exit in the vicinity. Alternatively labelled St. Anne's Well and St. Fhionain's Holy Well in the 1843 and 1924 maps respectively, a well of apparently religious origin stands approximately 850 meters east of the church site. It is unclear whether or not Tobergirtaun which is located at the road intersection to the north of the site, has any religious links.

A curious element of the landscape at Ardpatrick is the siting of Toor House (Plan Unit 5) to the centre of the proposed outer enclosure. Examination of the contours and property boundaries in Figure 4.3.3.3. illustrates that this building and complex is located on a prominent spur, with a series of curvilinear boundaries to the northeast and southwest. There is little reference to this site in any of the literature consulted, however, the topographical layout suggests that this could be an integral part of the religious landscape at Ardpatrick. Perhaps this curvilinear unit represents an outlier of the central church site, or perhaps the original focal point. This set of buildings is close to the junction of a river which is named as 'Gleann Naomh' (glen of the saint) one of many features in the area whose name suggests ecclesiastical overtones. Close by, a road/pathway runs from east to west through the proposed outer enclosure. The quality of this routeway appears to have deteriorated over time. It is represented as a road in the first edition ordnance survey map (Figure 4.3.3.2.), while the western end has been reduced to a track by the 1924 edition (Figure 4.3.3.3.). It is the latter edition which draws attention to the religious significance of this road, which is labelled 'Boithrín an Chlochair'. A literal translation of this name could be 'little roadway of the convent'. While no physical remains exist, circumstantial evidence suggests the presence of church features in this vicinity.

To the west of the church and round tower is 'Rian bó Phádraig' or 'the track of Patrick's cow's horn' - referring to Saint Patrick. This is an ancient entrenched roadway which runs westwards from the central church site.[38] According to tradition, this was

[37] Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. *(1977) The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 56.
[38] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 199.

'trenched by the horns of St. Patrick's cow', thus presenting a further link to the national apostle.[39]

A number of roads meet at Ardpatrick, converging to the northeast of the church site in the vicinity of the present day settlement. A now minor footpath (indicated in Figure 4.3.3.4.) links the main road junction at Ardpatrick with the hilltop site.

Both the road and field network to the north of the site are modern. The new east-west road mirrors the highly regular grid-like pattern of the adjoining field layout. This suggests relatively modern landscape alterations, and thus probably eliminated an earlier landscape which could have further supported the proposed curvilinear enclosures. To the east, south and west the field layout supports the influence of an early enclosure on the fieldscape, which has resulted in a radial pattern, focused on the church site.

Plan Development

Having outlined the various plan units and focused on the church elements it is important to highlight the relationship between the early church site (Units 1, 2 and 6) and the Victorian settlement (Units 3 & 4) at Ardpatrick. The religious chronology outlined in previous sections illustrates continuity from the sixth to the fifteenth century. As mentioned, the eclipsing of this foundation resulted in its decline into obscurity. Thus, for approximately four centuries, Ardpatrick lay dormant. This resulted in a hiatus in settlement development which was only broken in the nineteenth century. This is a similar pattern to many Irish settlements, where the building of churches accompanying Catholic emancipation in the mid nineteenth century, resulted in the rejuvenation of many settlement foci. Following this pattern, the selection of the crossroads site northeast of Ardpatrick Hill was not a coincidence. Despite the absence of settlement, this site maintained its tradition of church prominence, and thus, was an ideal choice for the foundation of a church at this period. The revival of religious function thus illustrates continuity of worship at this site.

The juxtaposition of the original enclosure (Units 1, 2 & 6) and this newer plan unit (Unit 3) which does not impinge on the traditional church land, illustrates the influence of the original church landscape on subsequent settlement. Despite the decline in

---

[39] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 427.

importance of the site, the communication and property lines established by the early church still permeate the modern landscape, resulting in modern settlement developing on the fringes of the original enclosure.

TABLE 4.19. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT ARDPATRICK			
Historical Period	Topographical Features	Plan Unit	Evidence
Pre-Christian	-		T / D
Early Christian	Church and Enclosures	1 / 2 / 6	T / D / C / P
Anglo-Norman	-	-	-
Plantation (16th-17th Century)	-	-	C
Georgian (18th Century)	-	-	-
Victorian (19th Century)	Chapel Village / Parochial Hse. / School	3 / 4	C / P
20th Century	Settlement Consolidation	3 / 4	C / P
Potential Units	Enclosure	5	C / P
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

This table suggests a chronology of site evolution at Ardpatrick, noting the periods during which the key elements of the site were established. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that the central church site - Plan Units 1 & 2 - is the key element in the settlement fabric at Ardpatrick, forming the focal point for subsequent settlement. While all of these plan units are important elements in the evolution of settlement, this study suggests that within the primary church unit may be found the genesis of Ardpatrick.

The proposal in this discussion is that settlement at Ardpatrick began with the establishment of a church, and evolved into the present day settlement. The spatial arrangement of the original church foundation followed a strict pattern of organisation and this can also be examined by comparing Ardpatrick with the Spatial Model.

The local traditions of this region propose Ardpatrick as a Patrician foundation. While the presence of Patrick in Munster has been long doubted, association of the site with the national Apostle and Armagh - which promoted the Patrician concept - illustrates its early prominence and the local acceptance of this status.

The early origin of the church site is evident in many ways ranging from the physical buildings to earthworks surrounding the church site to the local placenames. The early church appears to have been founded on the summit of Ardpatrick hill - a site that provides startling views of the surrounding countryside for a distance of over 30

kilometres. Its location on an outcrop of the Ballyhoura mountains (which rise to 528m), means it is located at the northwestern end of a valley between these and Keale Mountain (349m) to the east.

While Fleming, citing Colgan, proposes that the initial church may have been on the side of the hill, this claim remains unsubstantiated (despite the tantalising suggestions of an enclosure surrounding Toor House).[40] The spiritual and political visibility / importance of such a physically dominant hilltop site is clear, and this is supported by the historical importance of Ardpatrick.

In conclusion, the layout of Ardpatrick represents the survival of an ancient landscape derived from an early church of importance. The small scale of the present day settlement belies the historical importance of the site, and the survival of fabric does little to illustrate the once impressive sight of the hilltop church and round tower. Despite a possible 18th century break in habitation, there is evidence of continuity at the site from the earliest times of human habitation. The tantalising evidence provided by the low mounds surrounding the churchyard is mirrored in the stump of the round tower. Despite this, with due consideration of the historical sources, and careful placing together of the physical, historical and documentary evidence, the former religious importance and settlement continuity at Ardpatrick can be clearly recognised.

---

[40] Fleming, J. (1979) *Ardpatrick*, p. 14.

Kilteely

The Parish of Kilteely which is in the diocese of Emly, is situated partly in the baronies of Clanwilliam and Small County, but chiefly in that of Coonagh, in the, County of Limerick, 5km southwest from Pallas-Grean, on the old road to Bruff, and 7km from the episcopal seat of Emly.[1] The name Kilteely is straightforward in origin and comes from the Irish 'Cill Tíle' which means 'the church of Tíle'.[2] Some alternative spellings and derivatives of the name include:

Cill Tíle; Cell Tidil; Kyltyle; Kilteely; Listeely; Killteely.[3]

Kilteely is not recognised in the census as a settlement, but it is represented as a settlement on a number of maps dating from at least 1685 (Figure 4.3.4.1.). It is sited to the east of County Limerick 3km from the border with County Tipperary on land which is 130 meters above sea level. The gentle hills of the surrounding landscape provide little deterrent to communication and agriculturally, the land is among some of the most productive in Ireland. The large Fair Green west of the settlement suggests that this has been the centre of an agricultural hinterland for many generations. Like Ardpatrick, the history of settlement at Kilteely is sparse, with the emphasis being placed on the religious provenance of the site

The present Catholic Church – which was opened on 13 November 1960, is dedicated to Saints Patrick and Bridget.[4] From the valuation map (Figure 4.3.4.5.) it appears that this is constructed on the site of a large earthwork. It is proposed here that this may be a former Anglo Norman motte and bailey. Scaling the structure from its surviving plot features on the 25-inch map, the enclosure appears to have been approximately 50 meters in diameter (Figure 4.3.4.4.).

---

[1] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 123; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 288.

[2] Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*, pp 104-5.

[3] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 288; Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*, p. 108; Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 446.

[4] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 188.

According to tradition the original hilltop church at Kilteely was built for two individuals called Muin and Lommchu, who were buried here by St. Patrick.[5] O'Donovan, however, claims that this Kilteely had nothing to do with the national apostle.[6] He based this theory on the translation of 'Kill Teidhill', which Patrick reputedly visited, as 'the Foot of the Mountain'. He reckons that this is a reference to another Kilteely in County Tipperary, as Limerick's Kilteely (he says) appears to have no mountain nearer to it than the Galtee Mountains which are 14.5km away.[7] This, therefore, Spellissy claims could not be the 'Kill Teidhill' mentioned in the *Tripartite Life of St. Patrick*.[8] Thus, the only clue to the foundation of Kilteely lies in its name and the mysterious 'Tíle'.[9]

Site Description and Plan Analysis

The present small village of Kilteely is at the foot of a conspicuous hill. While topographically this hill could not be considered as a mountain, like nearby Ardpatrick, the view from the church site at the top belies the short (if steep) climb to the summit (Figures 4.3.4.7.a. & 4.3.4.1.b.). O'Donovan does not believe however, that this was ever called a mountain.[10] If O'Donovan's supposition regarding the site was incorrect, however, and we take a more metaphorical translation of the term mountain, this could make Kilteely an important establishment of the Patrician period.

Despite all this hypothesising, there is very little historical information related to Kilteely. Westropp notes official records from as early as 1321, but little of this throws light on the church site.[11]

As with Ardpatrick (and sites such as Cashel and Downpatrick), the settlement of Kilteely appears to have evolved on low ground proximate to a hill-top church site. As with these others, over time the hill-top religious functions were transferred to the lower, more accessible and more habitable land. The absence of fabric at this hill site

---

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Having visited the site, this low hill belies the scenic vistas available from the summit. Notwithstanding any technical definitions of the term 'mountain', a church at this hilltop site could easily claim to be on the top of a mountain - particularly if the use of the term was in a literary context rather than a literal one.

[8] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 188.

[9] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 446.

[10] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 123.

[11] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 446.

suggests that the transfer to the lowland occurred at an early stage. Arising from this, the present-day (low-lying) graveyard is of some antiquarian interest, while any remnants of the hilltop structure have totally disappeared.

Despite the absence of physical fabric, there is sufficient cartographic and topographic evidence to propose that the primary unit at Kilteely (Plan Unit 1) is that surrounding the hilltop church site (Figure 4.3.4.6.). While there are no traces of the central building at the present day, the 1904 25-inch Ordnance Survey map (Figure 4.3.4.4.) suggests that the original church stood at the centre of this distinctly curvilinear hilltop landscape unit.

The second element at Kilteely is the aforementioned curvilinear plot identified as Plan Unit 2. While this may be a large early ringfort, the curvilinear boundary integrated with a rectangular western extension bears strong resemblance to an Anglo Norman motte and bailey structure. This may be the case as settlement at Kilteely follows a similar church – Anglo-Norman relationship as that identified by Dargan at Nobber, Co. Meath.[12] Thus, it is proposed that this unit represents the selection of this site by the Anglo Normans.

Plan Unit 3 contains the majority of the settlement fabric at Kilteely. While this unit contains Georgian and Victorian structures, it may in fact date to an earlier period - perhaps even to the Anglo Norman phase of settlement. Again, the parallel between the wedge-shaped street structure here and at Anglo-Norman Nobber is worthy of note.[13] The final plot (Plan Unit 4) is composed of the Fair Green lying adjacent to both the settlement fabric of Unit 3 and the religious features of Unit 1.

The following table (Table 4.20.) illustrates the measurements of a clearly identifiable enclosure scaled from the 1904, 25-inch map (Figure 4.3.4.4.). The line of the enclosure is clearly evident in the curve of property boundaries surrounding the hilltop site. The circuit is predominantly formed by the southern boundary of the fair green, a strong northwest – southeast property boundary lying to the east, and a further boundary to the south and southwest of the church. These form an oval enclosure 300m east-west, and 220m north-south. The average radius length is 138 meters, enclosing land of approximately 1.12 hectares in area. While portions are absent - to the west and

---

[12] Dargan, P. (1998) 'Nobber: An Anglo-Norman Village', p. 30.
[13] Ibid.

southeast, sufficient boundaries survive to propose a reconstruction of an enclosure with a degree of confidence.

TABLE 4.20. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT KILTEELY			
Measurement N-S*	260.6	Measurement E-W*	292.7
Average Radius Length	138.3	Area of Enclosure	6.01
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

As with the documentary evidence, church fabric at Kilteely is scarce. The only element which survives within Plan Unit 1 at Kilteely is an early church site. Local legend mentions a church on the hill of Kilteely, the site of which, is marked on the 1928 Ordnance Survey six-inch map (Figure 4.3.4.3.) and the 1904, 25-inch map (Figure 4.3.4.4.), though it is absent from the earlier 1843 edition (Figure 4.3.4.2.). In addition, there are the local beliefs regarding the burial of Saint Patrick's followers on the summit.[14] Scaling the representation of the original church on the summit - as illustrated in the 25-inch map - suggests a structure which is roughly 9 meters by 5 meters.

While an inner enclosure is clearly discernible, there is little evidence of an outer structure. To the north, a composite road / townland boundary forms a generally curvilinear enclosing line 422 meters northwest and 412 meters north of the church site. To the west the central site is bounded by a short segment of townland boundary at a radius of 211 meters. Other than these, any semblance of outer enclosure is difficult to identify with certainty. The religious features in the area are not very substantial but do include:

- Miscellaneous church features & burial grounds.
- Holy wells
- Glebe land
- Market area

None of the original Roman Catholic church in the village of Kilteely remains. In 1840 its site was occupied by a large cruciform edifice, erected in 1803 or 1816.[15] This church served the local community until it was dismantled in 1960 and replaced with

---

[14] O'Dea, P. (1999) Pers. Comm.

[15] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 188; O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 123; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 288.

another church on a new site.[16] The foundation stones of the cruciform structure are preserved in the graveyard and from measuring them the church was 24.8m long by 6.5m wide, and the transept was 24.5m in width (Figure 4.3.4.7.a.).

The only record of the local Church of Ireland church was that it lay in ruin by 1837.[17] On enquiring locally in 1999, no memory of a Church of Ireland church existed.[18]

Further religious features to be noted include a large rocky outcrop on the southwestern side of the hill of Kilteely, which is marked with a modern plaque as the location of a 'mass-rock'. According to local tradition, this was the site where Roman Catholic priests said mass during the time of the penal laws (18th century), thus displaying the continued identification of the site with religious activity. In addition to this, nearby is a small graveyard called Ballinlough, within which, stand the apparently ancient remains of a small church (Figure 4.3.4.3. & Figure 4.3.4.7.b.).

To the east of the site (Figure 4.3.4.4.) southwest of Kilteely House a well is indicated. No name is available for this, thus its importance - if any - is unclear. The only significance is that this well lies proximate to the boundary of the inner enclosure. Further to the east a second well exists. St. Patrick's Well stands to the north. Other than its name, no information exists. Another well exists in the field to the west of Ballinlough Church.

A small glebe land exists to the north of St. Brigid's Roman Catholic church (shown on the 1843 map (Figure 4.3.4.2.). According to the Oxford English Dictionary, 'glebe land' is defined as a piece of land which served as part of a clergyman's benefice and provided income. According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* it is 'land permanently assigned for the maintenance of the incumbent of a parish, and is the oldest form of parochial endowment'.[19] The survival of this suggests religious continuity at the site up to recent times - at least until 1843, after which the 'glebe' status of the plot is not noted on the maps.[20]

Adjoining the inner enclosure to the north is a distinct and sizeable Fair Green, which is identified as early as 1843 (Figure 4.3.4.2.). Market areas are frequently associated with

---

[16] Foundation Stone in new R.C. Church
[17] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 188.
[18] O'Dea, P. (1999) Pers. Comm.
[19] *Catholic Encyclopedia* http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06582a.htm

the post Anglo-Norman period, but the juxtaposition of trade and religious function is noted here to be similar to many other sites. Thus, while this market may be a 19th century creation, it may also be influenced by the church site.

In addition to its early church site, Kilteely is also reputed to have been the site of a Templary.[21] In 1837 Lewis was able to identify remains of the church of Kildromin, founded by the Knights in 1291 (perhaps this is the friary located 1.3km north of the church site).[22] These were to be found on an eminence near the village.[23] Spellissy was unable to locate these remains and stated that no remains of this church existed in 1989.[24] This was confirmed on visiting in 1999, when the owner of the land in which the structure once stood, stated that it had been demolished 'for a number of years'. To his knowledge, the only remnant of this structure was a stone water font, which survives locally - though he was unsure/unwilling to state where.[25]

A large number of roads criss-cross the landscape in the vicinity of Kilteely. The antiquity of these roads varies, as does their importance. The main junction in the vicinity of the hilltop church site, is the focal point around which the village formed. This is a meeting point for communication routes, which, and in their present layout, do not appear to impinge on the church lands. The southern fork of the western road connects nearby Ballinlough church with Kilteely and suggests that this indeed is a road of ancient origin.

The landscape surrounding the hill and settlement of Kilteely has been altered substantially over the years. The drainage work (visible in Figure 4.3.4.3.) on the portion of land to the south of the hill - indicated on the 1928 map as being liable to flood and marked as the 'Site of a Battle 1599' - illustrates the changes which have been carried out to this highly productive farmland. Thus, one would expect little evidence of the original ecclesiastical form. However, various possibilities do survive, including radiating fieldscape to the north and east, a curvilinear townland boundary to the southeast of the settlement and further survival of curvilinear boundaries to the east - particularly an organic line 800m east of Kilteely cross-roads.

---

[20] As noted in other sites in Tulla and Corofin, glebe land appears to reflect some tradition of ecclesiastical land ownership.

[21] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 446.

[22] Ordnance Survey 6-inch maps of County Limerick, Sheets nos. 33 and 24.

[23] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 288.

[24] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 188.

The following table (Table 4.21.) is a suggested chronology of site evolution at Kilteely, noting the periods during which the key elements of the site were formed. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that the hill-top church site - Plan Unit 1 - is the key element, forming the focal point for subsequent settlement. Plan Unit 2 may represent either an early settlement form (i.e. large ringfort) or an Anglo-Norman site. Subsequent development focused on the junctions to the north (Unit 3), with a market function represented by the presence of a Fair Green. All of these plan units are important elements in the evolution of Kilteely, however, the focus of this study is continuity, and it is proposed here that the church unit is a major influence on the siting of settlement at Kilteely.

TABLE 4.21. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT KILTEELY			
Historical Period	Topographical Features	Plan Unit	Evidence
Pre-Christian	-	-	-
Early Christian	Original Church Site / Market	1 / 4	T / D / C / P
Anglo-Norman	Possible Motte & Bailey / Settlement	2 / 3	C
Plantation (16th-17th Century)	Map	3	C
Georgian (18th Century)	Fabric	3	C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	Fabric	3	C / P
20th Century	Fabric	3	C / P
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

While the similarities to Ardpatrick, the primary Patrician site in the vicinity, may be inferential, the presence of St. Patrick's Well to the north of the site and tradition of direct linkage with Patrick further supports such a suggestion. The placename 'Ballyvouden' which may be derived from 'Bally Vaighdean' or 'town of the Virgin', suggests dedication to the Virgin Mary, or the presence of nuns / virgins. While of a comparatively late date, the identification of a mass rock on the southwestern slopes of the hill, illustrates continuity in more recent times and lends further weight to the proposal of religious continuity at the site.

There is insufficient evidence to suggest that the settlement at Kilteely may have followed the same pattern of evolution as that of Ardpatrick. Present-day settlement

---

[25] O'Dea, P. (1999) Pers. Comm.

displays Georgian or Victorian characteristics with hints of Anglo-Norman influence. Whether the sequence proposed here - transfer of importance from hilltop to lowland site was coincidental or intentional is not possible to discern from current information and evidence. Unlike Ardpatrick however, Kilteely developed as a more substantial settlement, but this is likely the result of 18th / 19th century economic / agricultural forces and market function rather than historical events, however this development at the site of a recognised church is clear evidence of settlement continuity.

Ardagh

Ardagh, the westernmost case study being examined in County Limerick, is located at the western edge of the rich farmland which is the central of County Limerick. Not only is Ardagh a settlement, it is also the centre of an ancient parish, in the Shanid Division of the barony of Lower Connello in the County of Limerick. It is located 5km northwest of the Newcastle, on the road to Shanagolden.[1] If one looks to toponymic study, unlike some of the more complex placenames, the meaning of Ardagh is very straightforward - in Irish the name is 'Árdach' which means 'high field'.[2] There are many derivatives of this, and some of the alternative spellings include:

Árdach; Ardach; Ardachadh.[3]

The town which had a population of 328 in 1996 is located at approximately 90m above sea level, on land that rises to the west.[4] Considering the relative absence of present day settlement further west, (also historical absence of settlement - Section 4.1.), this could be considered a frontier town for the County and Diocese of Limerick. This shortage can be seen west of Ardagh in Petty's 1685 map of County Limerick, which is illustrated in Figure Figure 4.3.5.1.a..

The early origins of settlement at the site is evidenced in the presence of earthworks, particularly Ardagh / Reerasta fort to the west. This secular site was paralleled by the foundation of a church and subsequently the development of settlement between these two foci. Interestingly, the religious landscape - illustrated by the presence of an early church, townlands with religious names, and glebe or church lands - developed to the east, while ringforts appear to be more dominant on the landscape to the west (see Figure 4.3.5.2.). Between these two contrasting landscapes is located the present day settlement, of which there is a record since at least 1710.[5]

---

[1] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 39; O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 2..

[2] Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*, p. 3; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 89; O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 22.

[3] Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*, p. 3.

[4] *Census of Ireland 1996*.

[5] O'Connor, P. (1987) *Exploring Limerick's Past*, p. 113.

Despite the absence of historical information, according to custom, St. Patrick is reputed to have visited Ardagh when he toured through the southern half of Ireland.[6] Tradition relates that he visited Knockpatrick and journeyed to Ardagh where he decided not to cross the Sliabh Luachra Mountains (to the west), and turned back eastwards instead.[7]

Westropp gives Molua of Clonfert as the patron of Ardagh, but makes no claim that this saint may be the founder.[8] In 1840, O'Donovan stated that a Feast-day was 'still resorted to' at a well at this location on the 3rd of August, the eve of the saint's festival, for the cure of various diseases.[9] According to him, this shows that the church was founded by Molua whose principal church was at 'Cluain Fearta Molua'.[10]

The early documentation of Ardagh is indeed sparse. Any latter-day ecclesiastical status of the site was negated in 1872 when the Church of Ireland parish was joined to that of Newcastle.[11] A number of references to a site called 'Ardagh' in the *Annals of the Four Masters* and other documents appear to refer to the settlement of the same name, in County Longford. However, references apparently related to the Limerick site include record of a mill in 1238 and a manor in the possession of a bishop in 1336.[12] Other than this latter comment, there appears to be little or no historical evidence of an ecclesiastical nature (other than the presence of a holy well) to supplement the shortage of recognisable fabric at the site. However, one must look beyond the traditional approach to achieve a full picture of religious Ardagh.

Site Description and Plan Analysis

The development of Ardagh appears to have occurred at a number of distinct periods (Figure 4.3.5.5. & Table 4.24.). The primary settlement units appear to be Units 1 & 2 - the original church site at Ardagh and Unit 3 Ardagh Fort, which lies 650 meters to the west. The first of these - Plan Unit 1 - is a curvilinear plot which was formerly identified as glebe land. It is suggested here that this may have formed the western portion of a curvilinear enclosure. To the west of this lies a rectilinear plot (Plan Unit 2) which contains the ruins of Ardagh church.

---

[6] More likely to have been Palladius - See discussion on Christianisation of Ireland..
[7] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 89.
[8] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 402.
[9] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, pp 22-23.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Hewson, A. (1995) *Inspiring Stones*, p. 158.
[12] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 401.

At an early period (c. 1199), Ardagh was identified as a territorial unit in the Anglo-Norman organisation of county Limerick, however, the more strategic site of Newcastle (to the southeast) attained much more prestige, becoming a walled town with a castle by 1298.[13] Thus, despite the existence of medieval references to the manor of Ardagh which was under the control of the Bishop of Limerick, there is little physical evidence of direct Anglo-Norman influence at this site. In the absence of secular fabric, perhaps this Anglo-Norman interest was focused on the church site (Plan Unit 1).

The Courtenay Estate map of 1710 (Figure 4.3.5.1.b.) discussed by O'Connor, shows that the linear pattern of Ardagh village was well established by this time.[14] This suggests that the overall pattern of the main street (Plan Unit 4) dates to before this period. Perhaps this unit has origins in the Anglo-Norman period, being overlain in later periods by its current pattern.

The final unit indicated in Figure 4.3.5.5. contains the railway station and the nearby creamery (Plan Unit 5). These nineteenth and early twentieth century developments lie to the southeast of the settlement. A curious triangular feature is evident in the vicinity of Unit 5. While there is neither documentary or cartographic evidence, the form and survival of this landscape feature is synonymous with market spaces.

The ruins of Ardagh church (Plan Unit 2), which are the earliest surviving church fabric, lie to the south of the present Roman Catholic church of Saint Molua. A rectangular enclosure surrounding the church ruins, contains the present-day church yard (Figure 4.3.5.4.). To the south of this plot lies St. Molua's well. However, the original central enclosure may in fact be located to the east of the church ruins. The curvilinear shaped plot of land to the east of the church which according to the 1843 Ordnance Survey, six-inch map (Figure 4.3.5.2.) was 'glebe land' appears to form the western portion of a curvilinear enclosure (Plan Unit 1).

TABLE 4.22. : MEASUREMENT OF CENTRAL PLAN UNIT AT ARDAGH			
Measurement N-S	114.2	Measurement E-W	124.9
Average Radius Length	59.8	Area of Enclosure	1.12 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

[13]   O'Connor, P. (1987) Exploring Limerick's Past, p. 11.
[14]   Ibid p. 113.

The reconstruction of this feature, based on the surviving portions, results in an enclosure which is 114 meters north-south and measures 125 meters east-west. The overall shape of this enclosure is sub-circular and it has an average radius length of 60 meters.

No church fabric survives within the proposed central plan unit at Ardagh. However fabric in the vicinity - i.e. the graveyard to the west, includes:

- Ardagh church
- A burial ground.

Also within close proximity of the central unit there is cartographic evidence to suggest the presence of:

- St. Molua's holy well.
- Glebe lands

In 1837 the village of Ardagh contained the ruins of an old east-west aligned parish church which had been destroyed in the Insurrection of 1641 and never repaired.[15] This old church (i.e. the ruins in Plan Unit 2 - indicated on the various OS maps) which was situated on level ground in the townland of Minister's Land was 6 meters in breadth, but its length could not be ascertained as the west gable had totally disappeared. It appears, however, from what remains that it was a church of considerable length, as 22 meters of the south wall still remain.[16] The remains of a number of windows survive, and these cut limestone features suggest a well-built church of antiquity.[17] The doorway which was on the south wall is destroyed, except for a flat 'splay' arch.[18] The side walls of the church are built 'of stones of a good size irregularly laid and cemented with lime and coarse sand and mortar' (Figure 4.3.5.6.c.).[19]

The rectangular graveyard which is 70 meters in length by approximately 45 meters in breadth is still used, and the modern nature of monuments within this burial ground belie the ancient character (and perhaps importance) of the church at the centre.

---

[15] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 89.
[16] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 22.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid; Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 402.
[19] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 22.

O'Donovan, judged the graveyard to contain 'no monument worthy the attention of the antiquarian'.[20]

About 150m to the southwest of the church is a holy well - 'Tobar Molua' - dedicated to the patron of the parish.[21] In 1840 an aged ash tree grew over the well.[22] As stated above, this was an important point of pilgrimage in former times.

While the line of an inner enclosure is tentative, traces of outer enclosures at Ardagh are discernible in a number of locations, 240m to 490m from the church site. To the north an enclosure is identified in the southern boundary of Cross townland (Figure 4.3.5.3.). To the south, the boundary of Dromrahnee townland and to the east, the western portion of Kilreash townland all suggest a curvilinear boundary with a potential western extremity suggested by the line of two roadways which have been removed since the creation of the 1843 OS map.

Directly to the north of the church a segment of the proposed enclosure may be identified in the southern boundary of Cross townland at a distance 327 meters north of the church. At the southwest - northeast aligned roadway to the east a property boundary - contiguous with a stream (Figure 4.3.5.4. & Table 4.23.) appears to form the next segment, and this line continues in a southeastern direction. East of the church site, this boundary connects with the western limit of Liskilleen townland, which it follows in a southwesterly direction. This boundary is approximately 274 meters from the church site. The southeastern portion of the enclosure appears to have been disrupted with the construction of the railway line. The only feature to have survived this major re-working of the landscape is a small stream, which could be considered as the southeastern limit of the enclosure - lying 306 meters from the church. Following the line of this stream the southern limit of the enclosure appears to be formed by a segment of townland boundary at the western end of which, the stream rises. The western limits of this circuit are based on a composite of features from various maps. The southwestern extremity is taken to be the junction of Dromrahnee, Ardvone and Ardagh townlands. This appears to be an important boundary point. In addition to being the junction of townland boundaries, the first edition map shows that an earlier curvilinear road ran northwards from this point. This point forms the southwestern limit of the

[20] Ibid.
[21] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 402.
[22] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) The Antiquities of County Clare, pp 22-23.

enclosure - at a distance of 493 meters. Following the now removed curved roadway, and linking it with two short segments of northeast - southwest aligned property boundary appears to complete a major portion of the western boundary.

There are numerous other townland and field boundaries of a curvilinear nature, surrounding Ardagh - suggesting the existence of multiple enclosing features surrounding the site. While it is highly speculative that it represents an enclosure, the western portion of Reerasta North, and the eastern boundary of Liskilleen (Dickson) townlands illustrate curvilinear tendencies centred on the primary church site - a curvilinear enclosure with such boundaries would be over two kilometres in diameter (Figure 4.3.5.3.).

TABLE 4.23. : MEASUREMENT OF OUTER PLAN UNIT AT ARDAGH			
Measurement N-S*	738.9	Measurement E-W*	703.3
Average Radius Length*	360.6	Area of Enclosure*	40.84 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

The measurement of the proposed enclosure illustrates a feature which is 739 meters north-south and 703 meters east-west. The overall shape is circular and it has an average radius length of 361 meters. This proposal suggests a sizable plot of land measuring approximately 41 hectares in area.

The outer enclosure as defined in this examination does not appear to contain any Additional features of a clearly religious nature. However, one of Ireland's most famous church treasures was found at Reerasta Ring Fort, (Noted as Ardagh Fort on the OS maps) which lies to the west of the outer enclosure.[23] In September 1868 Ardagh Chalice and a brooch were found at this location.[24] The chalice, which can now be seen, in the National Museum, Dublin, dates from the eighth century and is made of gold, silver, and bronze, with a rich decoration of enamel, amber, glass and crystal.[25] The construction of such an elaborate object would have taken months of work and years of skilled practice. The work of craftsmen who produced it would, in turn, have required

---

[23]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) Limerick: The Rich Land, p. 89.
[24]   Harbison, P. (1992) Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland, p. 216; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) Limerick: The Rich Land, p. 89.
[25]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) Limerick: The Rich Land, p. 89.

sponsorship or patronage. Thus, such an item was either produced by a wealthy monastery, or retained in the vicinity of a church site for safekeeping.[26]

The absence of church fabric other than the church site and well and the discovery of the Ardagh chalice, does not strongly support the thesis that Ardagh evolved from an early church site. However, to fully consider the site, one must note the curvilinear boundaries surround the church site - sometimes at considerable distances - proposing the presence of curvilinear influences.

In addition there is strong placename evidence supporting the theory of religious origins for Ardagh. To the north lies the townland of Cross which demarcates the northern extremity of the enclosure - this would have been an ideal location for a boundary cross. East of this lies Minister's-land, within which lies the church of Ardagh. Minister's-land is bounded by two more townlands whose names also suggest church influence; Liskilleen (translated as 'fort of the little burial ground') and Kilreash (Church of Reash). Further church features are found to the east - outside the proposed outer enclosure: the townlands of Liskilleen and Minister's land contain glebe lands (first edition Ordnance Survey map - Figure 4.3.5.2.).

Plan Unit 5 - a curious triangular plot of land (Figure 4.3.5.5.), suggests the possible existence of a market area. While there is no documentary support for this feature, the line of Kilreash townland boundary suggests such a feature. The siting of the train station and creamery in this vicinity suggests continuity of trade function close to the central church site - although this may be coincidental.

According to O'Donovan, in the Townland of Kilrodaun about 1.5 kilometres to the south of the Village of Ardagh, there was once a little church and burial ground dedicated to St. Rodan. Both had been destroyed in his time (1840) and the spot that they occupied had become a meadow.[27] In 1840, according to him, there were no other remains of antiquity in this parish.[28]

A highly complex road pattern surrounds the settlement and suggests the central importance of the church site (Figure 4.3.5.6.a.). The many roads converge in two locations that lie close to the church site, yet just outside the proposed inner enclosure.

---

[26] Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 13.
[27] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 23.
[28] Ibid.

In addition, examination of the 1843 map illustrates the curvilinear nature of earlier roadways, which did not impinge on the church site.

Despite the complexity of the road network, the multitude of streams and indeed the construction of a railway, the overall pattern of the surrounding fieldscape still focuses on the early church at Ardagh. The entire landscape between the eastern boundary of Liskilleen Dickson and the western boundary of Reerasta and Ardagh townlands illustrates the trend of the fieldscape towards church-centred curvilinear structures.

Plan Development

The following table (Table 4.24.) is a suggested chronology of site evolution at Ardagh, noting the periods during which the key elements of the site were established or constructed. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that while Ardagh Fort may either pre-date or be contemporaneous with the church site, it is the latter which has been the key nodal point for subsequent settlement. While there is little physical evidence, it appears that the settlement developed throughout the Anglo-Norman period and evolved into the settlement to be seen today, the central church site - Plan Units 1 & 2 - being the key element of this continuity.

TABLE 4.24. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT ARDAGH			
Historical Period	Topographical Features	Plan Unit	Evidence
Pre-Christian	Ardagh Fort (may pre-date church)	3	T / D / C / P
Early Christian	Glebe Land / Church in Ruins	1 / 2	D / C / P
Anglo-Norman	Possibly underlying Unit 4		D
Plantation (16th-17th Century)	Settlement Core	4	C
Georgian (18th Century)	Settlement	4	C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	Cross Roads / Settlement Expansion	4	C / P
Late 19th / Early 20th Century	Train Station & Creamery	5	C / P
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

Throughout the world the name Ardagh is synonymous with early Ireland, as a result of the chalice unearthed at Reerasta / Ardagh fort. As can be seen from the dearth of physical evidence, the outstanding standard of workmanship on the chalice and additional items far surpasses the recorded status of this church site.

The evidence for church influence on the evolution of Ardagh is not immediately obvious. However, through the use of Plan Analysis, the identification of a core church

unit is possible. In addition to this, the survival of enclosing features supports the existence of an early church. The combination of these plan units presents a persuasive argument regarding the origins of Ardagh.

It has been proposed that Ardagh may have been a frontier settlement which stood at a transition zone to the west of the Limerick plain (Figure 4.12. illustrates the location of Ardagh, Figure 4.3.5.6.b. illustrates the fertile land to the east of the site). Physically this is a transition point between the lower, heavy, fertile soils to the east, and the poor lighter soils, favoured by earlier civilisations, on the slopes of the Mulaghareirk Mountains to the west. However, this is more than a topographical transition. Figure 4.5. illustrating the early church fabric and Figure 4.6. illustrating medieval fabric, clearly demonstrate the abrupt discontinuance of settlement at this point.[29] As such, the settlement / church site may indicate the western extent of Limerick's diocesan power.

These various hypotheses do not attempt to explain the issue of the Ardagh Chalice, which may or may not have been produced by a church at this location. The discussion does, however, propose that settlement at Ardagh was strongly influenced by the presence of a church. In addition, it is proposed that the foundation may have been quite extensive, and thus there is the possibility that the Ardagh Chalice may indeed have been manufactured in the locality.

Linkage between the church and subsequent plan units is paramount to understanding the settlement fabric at Ardagh. The dual cores of church and early ringfort mentioned above were subsequently supplanted by settlement which focused on the religious centre. This settlement (identified as Plan Unit 4) which appears to date from the 18th / 19th century, is closely related to the church site and thus indicates a high level of continuity at the site, particularly in the concentration area between church and secular foci. This continuity illustrates the stability of human habitation at Ardagh.

---

[29] Dúchas *Sites and Monuments Record*; O'Keeffe, T. (2000) Pers. Comm.

206

Kilmallock

The parish and settlement of Kilmallock are in both the County and Diocese of Limerick, about 30km to the south of Limerick City.[1] It is an ancient settlement, located on the old (high) road from Limerick to Cork, 'pleasingly situated' on the western bank of a small stream called the Lubach.[2] It was an Anglo Norman walled town, with its walls enclosing a spacious quadrilateral area, in which there were several 'castellated mansions', 'beautifully and elegantly built of hewn stone'. inhabited by 'noble and wealthy families'.[3]

Known in former times as 'Killocia', Kilmallock derives its name from the original Irish 'Cill Mocheallóg', or 'Cill Dacheallog' which signifies the cell or church of St. Mocheallóg.[4] This Mocheallóg was the original patron of the parish, but after the arrival of the Anglo-Normans it was placed under the patronage of Saints Peter and Paul and 'old Mocheallóg was laid aside'.[5] Some alternative spellings and derivatives of the name 'Kilmallock' include:

> Cill Mocheallóg / Mo-Cheallóg / Mochelloc / Dacheallog; Cell-Mochelloc; Cell-Dacheallog; Killochy; Killocia; Flacispaghe.[6]

There is a long record of settlement which dates from the early church period through the Anglo Norman period when the town was walled, up the present day, now having a population of 1231.[7] Although called after a monastery founded by St Mocheallóg, the Anglo Norman town of Kilmallock was founded by the Fitzgeralds and was fortified in 1375. Its former importance can be seen in the quality and quantity of medieval building

---

[1] MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1027AD; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 173.

[2] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 171.

[3] Ibid p. 172; O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 95.

[4] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 206; MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1027AD; Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*, pp 104-5.

[5] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 90.

[6] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 206; MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1027AD; Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 441, O'Donovan J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1028AD, Vol. II, p. 817; O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 95; Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*, pp 104-5.

[7] *Census of Ireland 1996*

remains.[8] However, its early history is shrouded in great obscurity, and little is now known 'of its progress to a state of importance, which, long after its decline, obtained for it the appellation of the 'Balbec' of Ireland'.[9]

O'Donovan in describing the town says:

> It was surrounded with a stone wall of great strength, fortified with mounds of earth, and having four gateway towers of lofty and imposing character, called respectively St. John's gate, Water gate, Ivy gate, and Blossom's gate.[10]

Some time prior to the nineteenth century, (possibly after its plundering in 1570) the town fell into disrepair.[11] Apparently it was 'totally ruined and uninhabited' in 1657.[12] Despite this Petty's map of county Limerick in 1685 indicates that the town was walled (Figure 4.3.6.1.b.) This continued for over a century and a half, resulting in Lewis commenting in 1837 that 'till lately the town . . . remained in such a state of decay as to present only the appearance of a rural village'. According to him, however, since 1816, several good houses of stone had been erected in the principal street, which was 'a handsome thoroughfare, inhabited by respectable tradesmen'.[13]

Examination of the various maps illustrates the wealth of Anglo-Norman historical fabric surrounding Kilmallock. Castle Coote to the west of the southern approach road and Millmount Castle - to the east of the southeastern approach road typify these structures. The presence of Glenfield Mills, Kilmallock Mill and Mullenside Corn Mill (all in Figure 4.3.6.2.) which all lie on the Loobagh River attest to the level of industrial activity in the region. The presence of a Fair Green to the south (Figure 4.3.6.2.) further illustrates how a trading function, in this wealthy agricultural region, aided the development of the settlement. According to Westropp, 'Cill Mocheallóg' is to be counted among one of the earliest and few noteworthy monasteries in County Limerick founded before the twelfth century.[14]

Some ruins of church buildings exist on the south side of rising ground, about a kilometre northwest of the town of Kilmallock. It is acknowledged by the researchers

---

8   Harbison, P. (1992) Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland, p. 220.
9   Ibid.
10   Lewis, S. (1937) A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, Vol. II, p. 171.
11   Harbison, P. (1992) Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland, p. 220.
12   Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 420.
13   Lewis, S. (1937) A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, Vol. II, p. 172.
14   Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 349.

that these are the remains of the earliest church at this site.[15] The date of the foundation is not so clear-cut however. Archdall claims an 'abbey' was founded here by St. Mocheallóg who died between the years 539 and 556, while Colgan states that St. Mochelloc, abbot and bishop, built the church of 'Kill-Mochelloc' in the first half of the seventh century.[16] Westropp supports Colgan's date, stating that this site was founded, c.610.[17] Lewis also, concurs, commenting that St. Mocheallóg, or St. Molach founded an abbey at the beginning of the seventh century.[18] According to Spellissy, however, Mochelloc founded the original monastery in 749.[19]

It is said that Mocheallóg was a relative of St. Finan of Kinnity and Lannigan who O'Donovan quotes, finds him honoured with the title of bishop, but, suspects it to be on weak authority.[20] O'Donovan refutes this claim and states that he does not find the title Bishop being used at all.[21] Lannigan says that the foundation of the church of Kilmallock is usually attributed to him and the name Kilmallock 'is supposed to be a contraction of Kill Mochelloc' - O'Donovan says 'it's a certainty'.[22]

Westropp, in dealing with the history of Kilmallock, makes the startling claim that 'Magolicon', (or Μαγολικον) referred to in Ptomley's early map of Ireland could possibly be 'Cillmocheallog' rather than Cashel which it is usually interpreted to mean.[23] He comments that 'Mag' is evidently a plain not a high rock like Cashel, and while 'Mo Cheallog' or 'Da Celloc' is evidently a clerical name, based on a 'somewhat misty legendary saint', the name could be derived from a pre-Christian site.[24]

Very little sound early evidence exists for an early church at Kilmallock, with the emphasis of material focussing on the latter day walled town rather than the church. In 1015 'Cell Mo-Chellóc' was plundered and the *Annals of the Four Masters* record many

---

[15] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 173; Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 39; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 206.

[16] Archdall, M. (1786) *Monasticon Hibernicum*; O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 96;Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 39.

[17] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 349.

[18] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 171.

[19] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 206.

[20] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 99.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid pp 99-100.

[23] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 419.

[24] Ibid.

subsequent references throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[25] The secular importance of the town in the sixteenth century can be seen in the following record from the Annals of Inisfallen

1599   *Sir Thomas Norris (President of the two provinces of Munster) came from Cork to Kilmallock to wait on the Earl of Essex, before they should go to Limerick. In an attempt to scour the surrounding hills for 'any of the Queen's enemies' the President was 'mortally wounded' in a 'determined and dexterous attack' upon Thomas Burke and nearly one hundred Irish soldiers. His followers collected around him and carried him back to Kilmallock, where he died six weeks later.*[26]

Documentary information for Kilmallock, including deeds, becomes more available from approximately 1200BC onwards.[27] Thus, to examine the site thoroughly we must turn to Plan Analysis techniques.

Site Description and Plan Analysis

From documentary and physical evidence it is clear that settlement at Kilmallock has a long and prominent history. There is solid documentary evidence that this was the site of an early church site. However, it was as an important Anglo-Norman settlement occupying a central location in the fertile plains of Munster between Limerick and Cork that Kilmallock came to prominence.[28] With the Ballyhoura Mountains to the south and expansive farmland dotted with smaller settlements to the north, Kilmallock rivalled any town in the country for importance.

Two church sites appear to form the primary plan units in the area. The first is the ruins of an early church standing at the centre of the primary plan unit on Kilmallock Hill. The second is a church site forming the core of Kilmallock town. The historical evidence suggests that the sequence of settlement evolution commenced with the hillside church site to the north, leading subsequently to the development of the riverside settlement. If this is indeed the case, the transition occurred early with Petty's 1685 map (Figure 4.3.6.1.b.) illustrating this as a walled town, while making no reference to the hillside site.

[25]   MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1015AD.
[26]   O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1599AD, Vol. VI, pp 2115-2117.
[27]   Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 419.
[28]   Thomas, A. (1992) *The Walled Towns of Ireland*, p. 132.

Looking at Kilmallock Hill first, Table 4.27. and Figure 4.3.6.5.a. suggest two main plan units. Plan Unit 1 is the proposed church enclosure, surrounding the ancient northern church site. East of Plan Unit 1 is a varied landscape composed of small fields and a scattered, varied group of houses Figure 4.3.6.4.a.. North of Kilmallock Hill cottage a curious curvilinear lineament formed by a roadway and a segment of townland boundary suggests the presence of a curvilinear element on the landscape. In Figure 4.3.6.5.a. this element, which may represent a secondary enclosure, is labelled as Plan Unit 2. The settlement fabric in the vicinity of this site is insubstantial and on its own would not qualify for inclusion in this study. It is because this appears to have acted as a catalyst for the religious foundation and substantial settlement of Kilmallock town that this site is considered here.

Looking at Kilmallock town, according to some sources, the site was walled as early as 1171, however, Thomas claims that it is more likely to have occurred by the end of the thirteenth century and Harbison states it was in 1375.[29] While the current townscape is strongly influenced by this fortifying and its subsequent importance, there is clearly evidence of earlier church inspiration. The characteristics of the site which resulted in the Anglo-Normans establishing a strong base here - low lying riverside site amidst good quality land - are the same ones that influenced the early ecclesiastics. It is suggested here that some features of an original church core remain on the landscape to the present day.

The earliest evidence of settlement at the riverside site would therefore appear to be the religious unit identified in Figure 4.3.6.5.b. as Plan Unit 1. Possibly having early origins, this site evolved into the structure which later became known as the Church of SS Peter and Paul (Unit 1). This early church was subsequently enclosed/absorbed by the town walls.

A full and detailed discussion of Kilmallock's Anglo-Norman and Medieval evolution is beyond the scope of this study. A brief investigation however, reveals that the walling of Kilmallock most likely took place in two distinct phases, initially the southern unit (Plan Unit 2) was walled. This block of walled town extended as far as the river, and enclosed the church site. A subsequent linear extension comprising of a walled single-

---

[29] Ibid pp 32-34; Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 220.

street block extends to the north.[30] This unit has a distinctly different layout and form (Plan Unit 3).

Outside the town walls to the south stands the site of the Fair Green (Plan Unit 4). This appears to be a modern structure, as it is not annotated on the first edition Ordnance Survey map. Thomas notes that an early map (1600) identifies a market cross at the junction of Orr Street and Sarsfield Street - presumably this was the original market area.[31] Perhaps this is the same cross as is indicated on the 1923 map (Figure 4.3.6.4.b) - but in this case located further to the north. This more northerly location may represent a 'town square' - possibly the site of an earlier market space. Taken together, the wedge shaped main street, market cross and latter-day Fair Green all suggest the importance of trade at Kilmallock.

To the southern end of the extensive walled town, suburban expansion - possibly originating in the Georgian or Victorian period - continues the line of the main street, and extends to the Workhouse at its southern extent (Plan Unit 5). From the site of Ivy Gate i.e. the southeastern gate of Kilmallock, on Lord Edward Street, this street widens out, as does the extra-mural extent of Emmett Street (Figure 4.3.6.4.b.).[32] These alterations in street width further suggest that the extra-mural settlement fabric is indeed of a later date.

The final Plan Unit in the vicinity of Kilmallock town is the northern abbey. Clearly of Anglo-Norman origin, this unit (Plan Unit 6) has little bearing on the town morphology as it is to the north of the river and outside the walled town (See Figure 4.3.6.6.d.).

Following the identification of plan units at Kilmallock Hill and Kilmallock town the following sections examine the church features at each of the two sites.

Examination at Kilmallock Hill suggests that the hillside ruins (Plan Unit 1) are older than the present riverside site, and thus, it is from this elevated foundation that Kilmallock takes its name. While there is clear documentary and archaeological record for the site, there is only suggested evidence of enclosure. A very small churchyard is evident around the church - this is more clearly visible on the first edition Ordnance Survey map. The possibility of larger enclosures is less clear. The curvilinear roadway

---

[30] Thomas, A. (1992) *The Walled Towns of Ireland*, pp 134-137.
[31] Ibid p. 135.
[32] Ibid p. 133.

north of the church, which follows a townland boundary, may form a portion of an outer boundary. A further possibility is a rectilinear boundary following the eastern portion of Kilmallock Hill townland.

The extent of this enclosure is based on cartographic evidence of boundary survival - particularly townland boundaries. The following table (Table 4.25. & Figure 4.3.6.5.a.) gives detail of an enclosure scaled from the 1923, 25-inch Ordnance Survey map. The proposed structure lies predominantly within the wedge shaped boundary of Kilmallock Hill townland. To the north the curvilinear roadway and matching townland boundary lie 202 meters, 78 meters and 53 meters respectively to the northwest, north and northeast of the church ruins. The remainder of the circuit to the south and west may be formed by the line of Kilmallock Hill townland, however, with the adoption of an oval form, stemming from the southwards turn of the townland boundary (south of the church), a more typical religious form may be suggested.

TABLE 4.25. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT KILMALLOCK HILL			
Measurement NE-SW*	189.2	Measurement NW-SE*	328.4
Average Radius Length	129.4	Area of Enclosure	5.26 ha
* = In most cases summary measurements are based on maximum distance N-S and E-W. In this case maximum distance is actually NE-SW and NW-SE.			

This proposed enclosure is 189 meters northeast - southwest and measures 328 meters northwest-southeast. Overall this enclosure is an elongated oval with an average radius length of 129 meters enclosing approximately 5.26 hectares.

Despite the antiquity of the site, the church features which survive at Kilmallock Hill are basic. They include:

- St. Mocheallóg's Church ruins
- Burial ground.
- Possible curvilinear boundaries.

There is only about half a meter (in height) of the walls of St. Mocheallóg's church now remaining and they were described by O'Donovan in the 1840s as 'nearly covered with earth and grass'. This structure was 6.8 meters by 3.7 meters in plan, and the thickness of its walls was 0.9 meters. The few stones of the foundation, which can now be seen, are large and no lime mortar can be observed between them. Westropp cites references that imply the church of 'St. Myhallok at Kylmehaloc' was extant in 1380, and

according to him, in 1410 the same building was referred to as 'S. Mathologus, on the hill of Kilmallock'.[33] There is a small graveyard (approximately 25 meters east-west, and 25 meters north-south) surrounding the church. It appears however, that it was not used for many burials - O'Donovan in the 1840s stated that it is 'scarcely ever used'.[34]

The landscape surrounding Plan Unit 1 at Kilmallock Hill contains many curvilinear field boundaries, centred on the church site. Examples of these property lines lie 338 meters to the northwest and 422 north of the church. Following the river Loobagh in a curvilinear circuit, the boundaries of Kilmallock and Ardyoul townlands, lie to the southeast, south and southwest respectively from the church. Despite the suggested survival of these curvilinear lineaments the landscape surrounding Kilmallock Hill has been subjected to much change over time. Comparison of the various maps illustrates the manner in which the fieldscape and even the roadscape has been altered - particularly the field boundaries north of the church, and the road network immediately to the east. Even the townland boundaries have changed between the 1843 and 1923 maps as can be observed by comparing the eastern boundary of Kilmallock Hill townland in Figures Figure 4.3.6.2. & Figure 4.3.6.3.. It appears that despite the alteration of fields, townlands and road structures, the original approach road to the site was from the east. Other than this primary approach, the only other element of potential early church origin in the vicinity is a well that lies to the east of Kilmallock Hill cottage. Nothing is mentioned in the literature regarding this feature, which thus, may be presumed to be of secular origin.

On either bank of the Loobagh River at Kilmallock stand the east-west aligned ruins of churches. Of these, the southern collegiate church of Saints Peter and Paul is the more ancient. Investigating the enclosure surrounding this church is difficult. Some evidence suggests that this structure pre-dates the Anglo Normans, however, the construction of a town wall and the related settlement fabric appears to have all but obliterated traces of this structure. Notwithstanding this, there are hints of an inner enclosure.

It could be suggested that an enclosure follows the line of the original town wall (Plan Unit 2 - Figure 4.3.6.5.b.) to the north, east, south and southwest. This could be somewhat justified as this circuit is coextensive with that of Kilmallock townland

---

[33] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 421.

[34] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) The Antiquities of County Clare, p. 105.

boundary. It is more likely however that the extent of the inner enclosure was more limited, being formed by the central graveyard and the plot to the east marked '.570' (Figure 4.3.6.4.b.). The following table (Table 4.26.) examines this enclosure with measurements scaled from the 1923, 25-inch map (Figure Figure 4.3.6.4.b.). The wall of the graveyard forms the northwestern and northern extent. Following the line or the river, this boundary is 81 meters east of the church. To the north of the bridge, the southeastern limit of this plot (marked '.570') turns to the southwest. The circuit is discontinuous, but is picked up by property boundaries on the western side of Wolfe Tone Street. The former glebe land is taken to be the southeastern extent of the overall enclosure at a distance of 91 meters. The southwestern limit is the graveyard boundary and lies approximately 61 meters from the church. It is not possible to identify the southern limit of the enclosure but a distance of 76 meters can be suggested.

TABLE 4.26. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT KILMALLOCK TOWN			
Measurement N-S*	114.2	Measurement E-W*	125.0
Average Radius Length	59.8	Area of Enclosure	1.12 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

This resultant enclosure is 114 meters north-south and 125 meters east-west. The overall shape is sub-rectangular with an average radius length of 60 meters. These observations suggest a curvilinear enclosure surviving within the town walls at Kilmallock.

The religious features surviving within Plan Unit 1 at Kilmallock include:

- The Collegiate church of SS. Peter and Paul
- A possible round tower.
- Burial ground.
- Glebe Land

The church of Saints Peter and Paul occupies a central position in the town, to the northeast of Sarsfield Street. This was a collegiate church in the thirteenth century and unlike the Dominican Priory, was enclosed within the walled town.[35] This 'ancient and spacious structure', was probably begun in the thirteenth century using a number of successive styles of architecture. It has a single aisle to which a transept was added in

---

[35] Westropp, T. J. (1916) '1916 Proceedings', p. 197; Lewis, S. (1937) A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, Vol. II, p. 173; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) Limerick: The Rich Land, p. 210.

the fourteenth century.[36] The chancel of this building is 'spacious and lofty' and contains a fine east window, combining five lancet-shaped lights which, according to Harbison, is 'one of the most exquisite in the country'.[37] This portion of the church was used as the Church of Ireland parish church into the 1940s or 1950s, but the rest of the structure has been roofless since 1657, when it was nearly destroyed by Cromwell.[38]

The nave and transept were much altered in the fifteenth century, including the addition of a porch with what Harbison describes as a richly carved door.[39] Lewis, Spellissy and Leask, however, date this as a fine thirteenth century door.[40] The church contains some fine decorative stone-carving of thirteenth and fourteenth century date, flower-buds and heads being particularly well executed. The south transept also contains some fine stonework, and a very fine window inserted in the fifteenth century.[41]

To the west of the church is a belfry or round tower which, it has been thought, could belong to an earlier monastery on the site. If this were the case, these truncated remains of a 'much modified but ancient round tower' (Figure 4.3.6.6.a.) would pre-date the arrival of the Anglo-Normans.[42] The structure is 'pierced with numerous windows, [and differs] greatly from others of that class'.[43] O'Donovan claimed that its style seemed to be a modification of the ancient Irish 'clogas', and intermediate between it and the Norman tower of subsequent ages.[44] Harbison, however states that it is a fifteenth century addition.[45]

There is a small building at the southeast corner, of the church, formed by the south wall projecting approximately 7 meters. It is separated from the main body of the church by a pointed arch.[46] Little is know of this structure and while it appears ancient,

---

[36] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, pp 220-221.

[37] Ibid, p. 221.

[38] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 210; Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 220; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 173.

[39] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 220.

[40] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 173. Leask, H.G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. II, p. 121; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 209.

[41] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 221.

[42] Ibid p. 220; Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 39; Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 420.

[43] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 173.

[44] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 105.

[45] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 221.

[46] O'Donovan J & Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 105.

it is not considered by any of the antiquarians to be of importance. Could this be an earlier structure dating to the pre-Norman period - absorbed into the later building?

The burial ground surrounding the church is approximately 80 meters east-west by 85 meters north-south. While this is well tended, it does not appear to contain any burials of antiquity.

In the surrounding landscape a number of features suggest religious continuity:

- St. Saviour's Priory.
- Glebe land
- Holy Wells
- St. John's Chapel

The remains of the St Saviour's Dominican Priory, situated on the northern bank of the Lubach river 'are extensive and beautifully picturesque' (Figure 4.3.6.6.b.). They consist of a lofty square central tower 'in a great state of dilapidation' and a choir which is 'tolerably perfect'.[47] The choir of the church which is 'unrivalled for symmetry and elegance of design' may date from 1291.[48] In the early 1800s Sir Richard Hoare described the architecture here, as 'surpassing in decoration and good sculpture any he had seen in Ireland'.[49]

The foundation of this priory is ascribed to Gilbert, second son of John of Callan, Lord of Offaly, in 1291. It was completed by his son Maurice, the first White Knight.[50] Gwynn and Hadcock cite Colman who contradicts this and points out that no lay individual was founder. He says the Fitzgeralds may have become patrons at some date after the foundation.[51] This apparently Anglo-Norman structure does not preclude the existence of an earlier structure at this site, however, the likelihood is that this was a foundation introduced by the Anglo-Normans, built on an extra-mural green-field site. Thus while it is a fine example of church architecture and illustrates continuity of religious function, it sheds little light on the origins of settlement at Kilmallock.

A small rectangular plot of land, to the east of St. Saviour's is marked as glebe land on the 1843 First Edition Ordnance Survey. While its boundaries have survived, until at

---

[47] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 173.

[48] Ibid; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 209; Leask, H.G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. II, p. 120.

[49] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, p. 209.

[50] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 173.

least 1923 (Figure 4.3.6.2. & Figure 4.3.6.4.b.) there appears to have been changes to the surrounding landscape and its glebe status is omitted from later map editions. Two additional portions of glebe land include a plot east of Glenfield Mills, and the other is south of the mill (Figure 4.3.6.2.). Again, neither of these are indicated on the latter map editions (Figure 4.3.6.3.).

Also standing proximate to the enclosure is the R.C. Chapel which is a spacious building, erected in 1814, and subsequently enlarged.[52] As with the priory, this church sheds little light on the history of Kilmallock, merely reinforcing the level of religious continuity, as this structure lies within the town walls.

Two named wells exist in the area. The first is Toberkinangle (possibly 'Tober an Aingeal' - Well of the Angel) which is located north of Glenfield mills and proximate to the Loobagh River (west of Kilmallock). Also located on the banks of the Loobagh, is Toberreendouen to the east of the town. This latter may derive from 'Tober Iníon' - Well of the Daughter. This would link this feature to holy wells in County Clare.[53]

The only other element of church fabric for which mention is made, is a church (called St. John's Chapel) which, it appears, stood in the town of Kilmallock in 1410. According to Westropp, this structure stood between the bridge and St. John's Gate.[54] As St. John's gate is the northern gate, this description is not very clear for identification of the site - but yet again stresses continuity.

Roads converge on Kilmallock from a number of directions, linking the town with other Anglo-Norman settlements such as Limerick, Tipperary Mallow and Newcastle (West) (to the north, east, south and west respectively). There are two foci for these roads, the first is in the vicinity of the earliest site at Kilmallock Hill, and the second is to the south, at the centre of the walled town, south of the church site, and proximate to the river crossing point. (Figure 4.3.6.6.c.) A number of routes appear to be ancient, for example the Fermoy and Mitchelstown roads to the southeast follow natural valleys through the mountains. It must also be noted that some of the routeways are relatively new, for example, the curving road, south of Kilmallock Hill, does not appear on the

[51] Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses* : Ireland, p. 226.
[52] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 173.
[53] Tobereen could be toponomically likened to Toberinneenboy which is dedicated or the saint Inghin Bhaoith - See section in Quin case study on 'Toberinneenboy' and Mac Mahon, M. (2000) 'The Cult of Inghin Bhaoith' for further discussion on this topic.
[54] Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 421.

1840s Ordnance Survey map. The converging of such major routeways does however indicate that this is a nodal site of importance.

The fieldscape around the sites appears to be modern in layout. There is still, however, a hint that these radiate from the church sites. This is particularly apparent to the northeast and southwest of the hill site.

Plan Development

The following table (Table 4.27. and Figure 4.3.6.5.b.) is a suggested chronology of site evolution at Kilmallock, noting the periods during which the key elements of the site were established or constructed. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that the original site was the hillside church of Saint Mocheallóg. Possibly having homologous origins, but more likely superseding the hillside site, the central church site - Plan Unit 1 - is the key element in the settlement topography, forming the focal point for subsequent settlement. While all of these plan units are important elements in the evolution of settlement, this study suggests that the church units are the primary elements in the continuity of settlement at Kilmallock.

TABLE 4.27. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT KILMALLOCK SITES					
Historical Period	Kilmallock Hill		Kilmallock Town		Evidence
	Topographical Features	Plan Unit	Topographical Features	Plan Unit	
Pre-Christian	-		-		
Early Christian	Church Ruins	1	Church Site	1	C / D / T / P
Anglo-Norman	-		Walled Town / Extension / Abbey	2 / 3 / 6	C / D / T / P
Plantation (16th - 17th Century)	-		Settlement		C / D
Georgian (18th Century)	-		Settlement		C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	-		Town Renewal / Expansion	5	C / P
20th Century	-				C / P
Additional Unit	Possible Curvilinear Encl.	3	Fair Green	4	C
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.					

Intrinsically the name Kilmallock is of ecclesiastical provenance and its usage throughout the area indicates the universal importance of the placename. It is the name of both the town and the townland in which it stands. It is also the name of the hill to the

north. In addition, the townland to the east of the town is called Abbeyfarm - most likely linked to the Anglo-Norman foundation, and further to the northeast lies the townland of Ardkilmartin (translated as 'the high church of Martin').

In addition to the use of religious placenames the history of the site is linked to the evolution of the churches. While the presence of a round tower at the Collegiate church is much debated by academics (though locally well accepted), the importance and antiquity of the whole site is not. The history of Kilmallock, though strongly influenced by the Anglo-Normans who established walled fortifications, displays evidence of church forces. While there was a definite assumption of power by the Anglo-Normans, the overall influence of the original church site in the establishment and development of the settlement has remained strong and its survival on the landscape reinforces the concept of settlement continuity to the present day.

4.4. COUNTY CLARE CASE STUDIES

Kilfenora

The settlement and parish of Kilfenora lie in the Barony of Corcomroe, County of Clare.[1] In 1837 Lewis described Kilfenora as:

> a decayed market-town and parish and the seat of a diocese. This place
> called anciently Fenabore and Cellumabrach, though evidently of great
> antiquity, has not been much noticed by the earlier historians.[2]

This succinct statement by the nineteenth century antiquarian brings together much about this ancient settlement - particularly the fact that it has been ignored by early historians.

The name Kilfenora is partly of religious and partly of topographical origin, the first part, 'Kill', meaning 'church', and the second being a name given to several localities in Ireland, which are generally found to be fertile elevations; and 'if this be the origin of the name, no part of Ireland can lay a better founded claim to it than the place now under consideration'.[3] According to Frost, Kilfenora is called 'Cill an Abhraoidh'. The word 'Abhraoidh' meaning eyebrow - this name arises from the shape of the hill on which the church stands, which has some resemblance to an eyebrow.[4] Another explanation is given for the Irish derivation 'Cill Fionnabhrach', the church of the white brow or meadow.[5] The official Irish name, as used on Ordnance Survey maps and on road-signs, is 'Cill Fhionnúrach', but, no such person as a St. Fionnuir has ever been associated with Kilfenora.[6]

In ancient times it appears to have been important being known as 'Ye citie of the Crosses'.[7] Other names which have been used are 'Fenebore', 'Kilfenorag'h,

---

[1] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1839/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 81.
[2] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 92.
[3] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1839/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 81.
[4] Frost, J. (1906) *County of Clare Irish Local Names Explained*, p. 43.
[5] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'Excursions of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland', pp 393-394.
[6] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 113.
[7] Ibid p. 115.

'Finneborensis', 'Cill Fhionabhrach' and 'Collumabrach'.[8] Some of the many alternative spellings and derivatives of the name include:

> Kilfenora; Kilfenoragh; Cill an Abhraoidh / Fhionabhrach; Cell-Fionnabrach / Findabrach / Fhinnabrach / Umabrach; Finneborensis; Fynabore; Fenebore; Fenabore; Fhionnabhrach; Finnabrach; Cellumabrach; Cullumbrach; Collumabrach.[9]

Of all the sites under investigation in this work, the Episcopal site of Kilfenora is perhaps one of the most clearly identifiable as an early church site. The three main early cartographic references which are being used in the study of County Clare - the 1610 map by Speed, Petty's 1685 Down Survey map of County of Clare and the Grand Jury county map of 1787 all illustrate Kilfenora as an important settlement (Figure 4.4.1.1.). Of these, the Grand Jury map is perhaps the most emphatic about the religious features of the site, showing the cathedral with high crosses standing to the northeast, northwest and south, each one highlighted by placing it on a hill overlooking the settlement.

Examination of aerial photographs (Figure 4.4.1.7.a.) illustrates one of the reasons why this site was selected as the location of a church site, and also perhaps the naming of the site. In the image the variety in land quality can be seen, with the church site in the centre of a fertile eminence surrounded by poorer quality land.[10] Arising from the suitability of site, this settlement has survived from its early origins up to the present day. This is an ideal site for a number of reasons. First, it appears that anciently, Kilfenora was a well populated place of importance, hosting markets and fairs and being mentioned in the *Book of Rights* (as 'Fhionnabhrach') from 450AD.[11] In addition to this, the chief of the local tribe resided here, which resulted in Kilfenora being the mother church of a diocese.[12]

According to Ware, the history of the see which he calls Fenabore, was so obscure and vague that he was not able to decide by whom it was founded.[13] At one stage he says it may be that Saint Fachnan of Ross (or Rosscarbery) was the founder, while, in another

---

[8] Ibid.
[9] Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 438, 83; Frost, J. (1906) *County of Clare Irish Local Names Explained*, p. 43; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 115; Flanagan, J. (1992) *Kilfenora*, p. 16; O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 83; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 92; MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1055AD..
[10] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 81.
[11] Flanagan, J. (1992) *Kilfenora*, p. 16.
[12] Ibid.
[13] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 88.

place he merely states that the cathedral was dedicated to his memory. Curry says that it is more probable that there were two different Fachnans.[14] Lewis just reports that St. Fachnan may have been the founder, as the cathedral is dedicated to him.[15] Harbison is in little doubt, stating that 'the cathedral is on the site of a monastery founded by St Fachtna' and Gwynn and Hadcock comment that Kilfenora, Co. Clare, was founded by St. Fachnan possibly in the sixth century.[16] Flanagan, who calls the saint Fachtnan, gives 560AD as an approximate date of his founding of Kilfenora and gives 590 as the date of his death.[17] This uncertainty is reflected in Curry's nineteenth century observation of local people who:

> 'have no remembrance of a Patron Saint here but the name, and that only as being borne by his Well, which however, is no longer looked upon as a Holy Well but is used for domestic purposes as well as if it never had received sanctification from the blessed hands and words of the Holy Saint Fachtna, whose name it bears and whose festival was formerly kept there on the 14th of August'.[18]

Flanagan, in attempting to draw together the various conflicting reports states that we will never know if there was one or two saints of the name, but, concludes, from drawing together the evidence that it was probably one individual.

The Synod of Rathbreasail in 1111 ignored Kilfenora's claim to separate episcopal government.[19] This rejection briefly united the O'Connor and O'Loughlin clans whose chieftains preferred to maintain their own independent bishopric rather than submit ecclesiastically to the O'Brien-dominated diocese of Killaloe.[20] In 1152 the Synod of Kells, under Cardinal Paparo, included 'ep. de Celliunabrach' (i.e. the Bishop of Kilfenora) among the suffragan bishops of Cashel as a separate entity. 'Finnabrensis ep.' was one of the Irish bishops who did fealty to Henry II in 1172.[21]

---

[14] Ibid.

[15] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 92.

[16] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 64 Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 38; p. 83; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 114.

[17] Flanagan, J. (1992) *Kilfenora*, pp 17-19.

[18] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 81.

[19] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 113; Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 83.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 83; Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 64.

The Pope is currently the bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Kilfenora while the bishop of Galway, is its apostolic administrator.[22] Within the Church of Ireland jurisdiction, however, the diocese of Kilfenora has been united since the Reformation with Limerick (1606-1607); Tuam (1617-1742); Clonfert (1742-1752); and Killaloe (1752), before its eventual reunion with the Limerick diocese in 1976.[23] No Church of Ireland bishop has been appointed solely to Kilfenora since the beginning of the seventeenth century, as it was so poor - Lord Stafford described it in 1638 as 'being not worth above four score pounds to the last man'.[24] This See (of Kilfenora, or Fenebore, or Cullumbrach) was described by Wilson, as being: 'the least and poorest in the Kingdom' and according to him 'we are not to wonder the accounts of it are so imperfect'.[25]

The church building at Kilfenora was first mentioned in 1055 when it was burned and many of the inhabitants were killed by Murtough O'Brien.[26] Repairs were carried out between 1056 and 1058 but the building was plundered in 1079 and accidentally burned in 1100.[27] Little detailed history of the site is known, but the first bishop dates to 1189, the period in which the church was built.[28] Nothing is known of the organisation of the diocese at this early period.[29]

Some thirteenth and fourteenth century references exist for Kilfenora, mainly lists of bishops, their papal duties and mundane happenings at the site.[30] One event worthy of note is a record from the *Annals of the Four Masters*, in 1434 which states:

22   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 113.
23   Ibid pp 113-4.
24   Ibid p. 114.
25   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 83.
26   Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 92; MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1055AD.
27   Blake Foster, C. *Annals of Kilfenora*, cited in Flanagan, J. (1992) *Kilfenora*, p. 26 - These dates are not supported by any other source, yet Flanagan seems confident of Blake Foster's reliability. Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 114.
28   Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 64.
29   Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 84.
30   MacCaffrey, J *Black Book of Limerick* cited in Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 84; Bliss, Johnson & Twemlow, (1893-1933) *Calendar of Papal Registers*, Vol. I, p. 36; 50; 97 and 110; 'Mélanges', p. 84 cited in Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses* : Ireland, p. 84; d'Arbois de Jubainville, (1886) H. 'Chartes donnees en Irlande en faveur de l'ordre de Citeaux', p. 84; Sheehy, M.P. (Ed.) (1962-5) *Pontificia Hibernica: Medieval Papal Chancery Documents concerning Ireland, 640-1261*, ii. 244-5 in Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 84; O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1434AD, Vol. IV, pp 896-897; Ibid 1510AD, Vol. V, p. 1305; Ibid 1572AD, Vol. V, p. 1657; Ibid 1591AD, Vol. VI, p. 1907

> *The Bridge of Port-Croisi upon the Shannon (in the parish of*
> *Castleconnell) was erected by O'Brien i.e. Turlough, the son of*
> *Teige, the son of Torlough; Donnell, his brother; the Bishop of*
> *Killaloe; and the Bishop of Kilfenora.[31]*

This illustrates the linkages between the two dioceses at this point in their history, almost 200 years before their formal amalgamation.

The central location of the site in North Clare is evidenced in the following extract from the *Annals of the Four Masters*:

> 1599   *'O'Donnell remained that night encamped at Cill-Inghine-*
> *Bhaoith, and left it before noon on the following day; and he*
> *then proceeded to Kilfenora in the cantred of Corcomroe'. He*
> *used Kilfenora as a base for his raiding parties, and returned*
> *northwards, avoiding the monastery of Corcomroe.[32]*

Site Description and Plan Analysis

The various illustrations of Kilfenora (Figure 4.4.1.2. - Figure 4.4.1.4.) display a compact settlement. The main church fabric lies within a sub-rectangular area bounded by roads to the east (well lane) south (main street) and west (Figure 4.4.1.4. & Figure 4.4.1.6.). Comparison of the 1842 first edition Ordnance Survey map (Figure 4.4.1.2.) with a 1974 aerial photograph (Figure 4.4.1.7.a.) shows the level of continuity at this site. There has been some expansion of the settlement in recent years, with the construction of new houses at the main approach roads, other than that, there is little change.

The origins and development of Kilfenora are clearly the result of religious influence. The layout of the site would suggest that the centrally located cathedral which forms Plan Unit 1, is also the original church site (Figure 4.4.1.5.). This structure dominates Kilfenora, being the focal point of all subsequent development. The episcopal core is surrounded by an oval curvilinear enclosure, which is identified here as Plan Unit 2. Adjacent to the southeastern boundary of the enclosure is a triangular market area (Plan Unit 3). The convergence of roads here suggest that as the site evolved it adopted economic functions, including the development of a market standing on the periphery of the enclosure. Following the east-west trend of the ridge upon which the church is sited, settlement focused to the south of the church enclosure (Plan Unit 4). This does not

---

[31]   O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1507AD, Vol. V, p. 1289.
[32]   Ibid 1599AD, Vol. VI, p. 2103.

encroach on the central plan unit. Instead settlement locates proximate to the dual focal points of market area and cathedral. The scale of the Fair Green (Plan Unit 5) to the northeast suggests an important trade function. As with the settlement fabric, this Unit is located proximate to the central church unit. It is likely that the existence of nearby Kilcarragh church (Plan Unit 6), is related to the development of the cathedral, as perhaps, is Kilcameen further to the east (Figure 4.4.1.3.).

The east-west aligned cathedral church lies within a well demarcated graveyard (Plan Unit 1) which contains burials of an apparently early age. The line of a curvilinear enclosure is evident in the curve of the road to the south and west of the site (Plan Unit 2).

The following table (Table 4.28.) summarises the dimensions of the proposed enclosure scaled from the 1897, 25-inch map of the settlement (Figure 4.4.1.4.). East of the cathedral the boundary is formed by the north-south roadway which bisects the fair green. Directly east of the cathedral church this lies at a distance of 118 meters. Southeast of the cathedral the boundary turns westwards, cutting through the wedge-shaped market area. A short distance west of this a road from the south intersects with the boundary. From this point the road follows a distinctly curvilinear pattern, turning gradually northwards. A short roadway connecting the western end of the cathedral with the surrounding circuit meets the enclosure close to the junction with a road from the southwest. Northwest from the cathedral the enclosure runs through the meeting point of Kilcarragh, Ballykeel South and Kilfenora townlands - 236 meters from the cathedral. The northern portion of this enclosure is highly speculative, however, reference to the Geological Survey of Ireland aerial photograph of Kilfenora (Figure 4.4.1.7.a) suggests the existence (albeit faint) of a curvilinear lineament northwest of the cathedral. This appears to connect the aforementioned curvilinear western road to the short east-west portion of townland boundary which lies north of the cathedral. The final segment of the enclosure would cut through the fair green - rejoining with the northern roadway.

These measurements enclose a circular space of approximately 9.0 hectares in area, measuring 328 meters north-south and 349 meters east-west also having an average radius length of 170 meters.

226

TABLE 4.28. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT KILFENORA				
Measurement N-S*	328.4	Measurement E-W*	349.9
Average Radius Length	169.6	Area of Enclosure	9.03
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

The church features which survive at Kilfenora are extensive. The elements located within the enclosure (Plan Unit 2) include:

- A twelfth century cathedral church

- Crosses both extant and disappeared

- A burial ground

- Toberdane & Toberfaughtna holy wells

- A triangular Market Area

The cathedral church of Kilfenora is dedicated to St. Fachnan, and the western portion is still used as the Church of Ireland parish church. The present structure dates from between 1189 and 1200 and was built in the transitional style with a nave and chancel.[33] It has been described as 'a very ancient and venerable structure' with a massive square tower, 'commanding a very extensive and interesting view' (Figure 4.4.1.8.a.).[34] The tower has provoked a lot of comment from various historians over the years. Lewis mentions 'a massive square tower' while others, being less favourable have described it as 'a pile of emigrants' luggage, with a rabbit hutch or birdcage overhead,' which 'defies every order of architecture'.[35]

The roofless chancel of the church is 10.9 meters long and 6.4 meters in breadth with walls 0.9 meters thick.[36] It has a fine three-light window with interesting figures carved on the capitals, which dates to around the beginning of the thirteenth century.[37] It is decorated by some thirteenth and fourteenth century effigies of bishops, and a good triple sedilia in the north wall. The south doorway and some of the south windows were inserted in the fifteenth century and the chancel was roofed with an oak ceiling, or so

---

[33]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 114.
[34]   Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 92.
[35]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 114.
[36]   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 81.
[37]   Leask, H.G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. II, p. 54.

tradition says, until the end of the eighteenth century.[38] This ceiling was supposed to have been painted blue with gold stars.[39]

In the northeast corner of the church is a carved stone, level with the ground, having the figure of a tonsured, bareheaded cleric with arms folded across the chest, clasping a book. This carving may date to the thirteenth century. There is another such carving in the north wall, nearly opposite, in the same style showing a bishop with his hand raised in blessing. A wall tomb which is surmounted by a head and mitre, stands close by and in front of this, level with the ground, is a grave stone having the figure of a bishop in costume.[40] Various memorials from the seventeenth century exist throughout the building.[41]

A chapel projects from the northeast angle of the church to the north, measuring 9.5 meters in length and 5.7 meters in breadth and is entered by a low pointed doorway and a pointed archway now closed up. This 'Lady Chapel', sacristy or chapter room, appears to be of the same date as the main building and may even have served as a transept of sorts.[42] In her history of Kilfenora Cathedral, Swinfen mentions the possibility of this being the O Brien Chapel often mentioned by earlier historians.[43] Two lancet-type windows and a ruined two-light one are left in the eastern wall. There are fragments of a high cross beside the west wall.[44]

During renovations which were carried out in 1837, the nave and chancel were separated - the nave forming the present Church of Ireland church.[45] There is a mitred head over the pointed door leading into the cathedral, and beyond the second doorway there is a large square stone-baptismal font which may date from around 1200 as its decoration matches that on the chancel's east window.[46] Other than the Bishop's throne,

[38]   Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 64.
[39]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 114.
[40]   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 81; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 114.
[41]   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, pp 81-2.
[42]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 114.
[43]   Swinfen, A. (1992) *Forgotten Stones*, p. 41.
[44]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 114.
[45]   Ibid.
[46]   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 82; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 114.

donated in 1981, the pulpit, and desks for clerk and parson, the interior is devoid of ornamentation.[47]

The central rectangular graveyard is approximately 70 meters east-west by 30 meters north-south (Plan Unit 1). In addition to the cathedral, the graveyard contains a number of ancient crosses which are Kilfenora's most prominent features. Opposite the door of the present church is the stem of a narrow thirteenth or fourteenth century High Cross with interlacing. (Figure 4.4.1.7.c.)

To the west of the church stands a cross, which, until restoration work was carried out in the early 1950s existed in two parts (Figure 4.4.1.7.b.). The shaft was laid as a slab on the grave of a family of the name Doorty (hence its name - the Doorty Cross), and the upper part stood under the arch in the sacristy.[48] Near the northwestern corner of the graveyard is another cross with interlacing. This is a rather simple cross dating from between 1300 to 1500. This is unusual insofar as it has no ring and may have been a trial piece.[49] In a field, one hundred meters west of the church, is a tall and slender High Cross with a Crucifixion on the east face and a variety of geometrical and interlacing motifs (Figure 4.4.1.7.b. & Figure 4.4.1.8.b.). This cross is about 4.5 meters in height, 91cm wide at bottom, and 25cm thick, but tapering somewhat up to the arms.[50]

According to Curry, there were three other fine crosses here, one at each of the other cardinal points from the church, but two of them fell down and were broken and the third was carried away to Killaloe in 1821 by Dr. Mant, Bishop of that see (see examination of fabric in Killaloe).[51]

To the north of the church site lie two wells which are most likely of religious origin - Toberfaughtna (the well of Fachtna) and Toberdane (Figure 4.4.1.4.). The former, which is situated a little distance north of the church has a small stone roofed building over it.[52] This is also known as Buallán Fachtna - Bullan according to Curry, being a general name throughout the upper part of this county for circular small springs that

[47] Ibid pp 114-115.
[48] Flanagan, J. (1992) *Kilfenora*, p. 77.
[49] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 115.
[50] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 82.
[51] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 64; O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, pp 82-83.
[52] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 88.

spout up out of the limestone rocks.[53] There is no documentary evidence for Toberdane, but its name and proximity to Toberfaughtna may suggest ecclesiastical provenance. In the valuation map of Kilfenora, the laneway leading past the entrance to the church site is called well lane, further supporting the importance of these features (Figure 4.4.1.6.).

While many elements of the landscape have changed over time, the presence of the Fair Green in the northeastern quadrant of the outer enclosure displays possible continuity since the 1842 Ordnance Survey map. It appears likely that the relationship between market places and church site represents a linkage between secular and religious function. This is maintained despite the expansion or shift of use from the southern triangular market area (which adjoins the enclosure) to the more spacious northern site for fairs.

Further church features survive in the landscape surrounding Kilfenora. Some of the key elements include:

- Glebe Land
- Kilcarragh church 500m to the west
- Sites of crosses and standing stones
- A number of wells, some of religious origin: Tobersheenaun; Tobercumeen; Spawell
- Kilcameen church 1.5km to the east
- Caherermon

To the southwest of the cathedral is located a plot of glebe land. While this is not indicated on the 1916 map, it is indicated on the 1842 edition. Thus, while the glebe status may have been lost between the map editions, it is possible that the earlier labelling of this plot displays continuity from a period of religious ownership.

Half kilometre west of Kilfenora is the site of 'Kill-Cathrach' church, of which only 4.3 meters of the south walls remains. These are 2.7 meters high and 0.7 meters thick. The extent of the original building may still be traced by the foundation - it appears to have been 7.9 meters long and 4.4 meters broad. There was a burial ground here of which all appearance has vanished, except one un-inscribed tombstone, which lies within the

---

[53]   Ibid.

church. No historical reference to this place appears to exist.[54] Perhaps this was an outlier of the central church site.

Directly to the north (650m) is the site of a cross, and 300 m to the east of this location is Tobersheenaun. Continuing clockwise from this is Holy Well House, and further to the east, in the townland of Caherminnaun West, is located the site of Kilcameen (church of Cameen) church, graveyard and Tobercameen.

Northwest of the cathedral at the curve of the western road is a ringfort with the name Caherermon. Considering the meaning of this placename - the prefix 'caher' or 'cathair' means castle or stone ringfort, while 'ermonn' may be derived from the word termonn - which refers to the most sacred part of a church site. If this is in fact the case it would further support the presence of an important church site at Kilfenora.

The layout of the fieldscape surrounding the site is further evidence of antiquity, with small, and thus, possibly ancient fields in the immediate vicinity of the cathedral particularly to the north and east. The fieldscape at about 1km southwest from the site illustrates landscape change, with commonage land in the 1840 map which has been enclosed into fields by 1916.

Apart from the straight road which comes to the site from the north, (and the northeastern road which is absent from the 1842 map), the routeways which converge on Kilfenora, meander across the landscape in an organic, haphazard manner, following the topography of the land. These roads meet to the southeast of the cathedral after they have completed a circuit of the church site. The point where they meet appears to be a market space.

Plan Development

The following table (Table 4.29.) is a suggested chronology of site evolution at Kilfenora, noting the periods during which the key elements of the site were established or constructed. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that the central church site - Plan Units 1 & 2 - is the key element in the settlement, forming the focal point for subsequent settlement. This is followed by development of settlement and trade function, with satellite centres to the east and west. All of the plan units are important

---

[54] Ibid.

elements in the evolution of settlement, however, the focus of this settlement is the primary church unit.

TABLE 4.29. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT KILFENORA			
Historical Period	**Topographical Features**	**Plan Unit**	**Evidence**
Pre-Christian	-		
Early Christian	Cathedral / Crosses	1 / 2	C / T / D / P
Anglo-Norman	Cathedral Church	1 / 2	D / P
Plantation (16th-17th Century)	Settlement Fabric	4	C
Georgian (18th Century)	Settlement Fabric	4	C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	Settlement Fabric	4	C / P
20th Century	Settlement Fabric	4	C / P
Additional Features	Market Areas	3 / 5	C
	Adjacent Church	6	C / P
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc.			
D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc.			
C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc.			
P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

From this evidence, it may be confidently suggested that Kilfenora is a settlement of religious origin which fits the pattern under investigation. The continuity of settlement at this fifth century church is evident from many elements, including the location of crosses at the cardinal points. This continuity is further evidenced in a cathedral church constructed in the late twelfth century and settlement fabric which dates from that time to the present period - particularly housing and related fabric from the eighteenth century onwards. Despite the absence of a clear documentary chronology, there is strong evidence for the religious origins of this 'city of the crosses', with settlement evolution continuing to the present day.[55]

---

[55] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 115

Tulla

In 1837 Lewis described Tulla (or Tulloh), as a 'market town', 'post-town' and a parish in the barony of Tulla Upper, County Clare: 'The town is pleasantly situated on a hill, and is surrounded with highly interesting scenery, enlivened with numerous elegant seats and pleasing villas' (Figure 4.4.2.7.b.).[1]

The name Tulla is generally translated as 'Tulach', meaning a 'hill', but apparently this East Clare village is more correctly named 'Tulach na nAspal' / 'Apstaíl', 'the hill of the apostles'.[2] It has also been proposed that the name may be 'Tulach na nEaspag', 'the hill of the bishops' as it is written in the *Wars of Turlogh*, but Curry (in 1839-1841) took this to be a transcribing error.[3] Some alternative spellings and derivatives of the name 'Tulla' include:

> Tulla; Tulloh; Tulach-na-epscop; Tulach Na Apstaíl / nAspal; Tulach na nEaspag.[4]

With a population of 382 in 1996, Tulla is represented maps of this area and its importance as a settlement can be traced through history.[5] The hilltop siting of the church clearly displays the influence topography can have over the selection of a site for a church. The later construction of a castle close to the church may illustrate the recognition of important religious power centres by castle builders - or perhaps as Nugent suggests, the sponsoring and elevation of certain church sites by the castle builders[6]. Here settlement has grown to the west of the church without infringing in any way on the inner church enclosure. In more recent times there has been major alteration of the landscape with the construction of roads, however the focus of settlement is still adjacent to the original church site.

---

[1] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 649; O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 225

[2] Frost, J. (1906) *County of Clare Irish Local Names Explained*, p. 66.

[3] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 193; O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 227.

[4] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 457; Frost, J. (1906) *County of Clare Irish Local Names Explained*, p. 66; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 649; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 193.

[5] *Census of Ireland* 1996.

[6] Nugent, P. (2003) 'Territory and Territoriality in Late Medieval and Early Modern Clare'.

Comparison between various maps, i.e. 1787 Grand Jury map, first edition and 1921 Ordnance Survey six-inch maps, illustrates the manner in which a landscape can be changed over time (Figure 4.4.2.1. - Figure 4.4.2.4.). The road structure of 1787 is barely discernible in the latter maps, however, using the Grand Jury map may not be totally comparable as the maps are of different scale/detail. In the 80 years between the two Ordnance Survey six-inch maps however, there is still an identifiable alteration of landscape - particularly in the construction of roads. By 1921 an extension had been added to the northeast - southwestern aligned road to the south of the settlement, cutting through Cutteen More townland. The curvilinear road to the north of the town was also built, leading to the east - passing the Workhouse, which is also added. Other structures which differ are Woodlawn Cottage, to the west, of which no trace remained in 1921, and nearby Clonmore House, which did not exist in the earlier map. Despite all these relatively modern changes on the landscape, the elevated site of St. Mochulla's church appears to have avoided major disturbance over the centuries since its construction.

Gleeson claims that Tulla may have been founded by an individual called Mochuille / Mochulla mac Dicholla, who seems to have lived in the seventh century.[7] The Irish name of the parish - 'Tulach na Apstail' - may imply that the church was originally, or more probably at a subsequent period, dedicated to the Twelve Apostles.[8]

Westropp proposes that this individual may perhaps be 'Molocus' of Inistibraid, a friend of St. Senan (who is important in the Christianisation of County Clare) and if this was the case he lived circa 550.[9] This is the only proposal regarding the identification of a founder of Tulla, as Curry could find no written account of its 'ancient patron'.[10]

The only suggestion cited by Curry is the following 'rude though not apparently ancient stanza remembered in the district' which names the patrons of the churches of Tulla, Quin, Clooney and Feakle:

Mochuille a t'Tulaigh, Mochunna sa bhFiacail,

Finghin Chúinche, is Ricin Chluaine.

i.e. :

---

[7] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 408;, 96.

[8] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 225.

[9] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 110.

[10] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 225.

Mochuille in Tulla, Mochunna in Feakle,

Fineen of Quin and Ricin (Rikin) of Clooney.[11]

Despite Spellissy's claim that a detailed life of this saint was written in the neighbourhood of Limerick in 1141.[12] There is no holy or patron day remembered in the parish of Tulla.

Westropp lists a large number of holy wells with which Mochulla of Tulla is associated - both in this and in neighbouring parishes. It appears that he was highly venerated in some places, being more important in some cases than the immediate patrons of parishes.[13] Also according to Westropp, St. Mochulla's Day is recorded as March 23rd.[14]

Site Description and Plan Analysis

The identification of 'plan units' at Tulla is relatively straightforward. The ruins of Mochulla's church lie within a landscape which is a classic example of early church form. The church stands on the top of Tulla Hill within a distinctly curvilinear property enclosure (Plan Unit 1 - Figure 4.4.2.5.). There is strong indication of an outer enclosure (Plan Unit 2) and a fair green (Plan Unit 3) market space which lies adjacent to the inner enclosure, preserves the survival of open space and market function to the present day. A number of roads radiate from the central church / market area, and along a number of these settlement has developed - Plan Unit 4 outlines the predominantly Georgian / Victorian settlement fabric at Tulla.

The inner enclosure is discernible on the various maps, but is most clearly visible on the 'five inch-to-one mile' Valuation map (Figure 4.4.2.6.). This presents Tulla church standing in a wedge shaped enclosure with eastern, southern and northwestern curvilinear boundaries. The following table (Table 4.30.) illustrates the measurements of the enclosure scaled from the 1895, 25-inch map of the settlement (Figure 4.4.2.4.).

The inner enclosure at Tulla is arguably the most complete ecclesiastical plan unit under investigation in this work. Rather than providing individual descriptions of segments the inner enclosure may be described by identifying the plots which form the church plan unit. The core of the enclosure is formed by Tulla church and the old graveyard which

[11] Ibid.
[12] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 193.
[13] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 225.
[14] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 110.

surrounds it. The northern portion is formed by the plots annotated as '.385' and '1.555'. The eastern boundary of plot '.236' continues the circuit with plot '1.089' forming the eastern and southern segments. From the southwestern to western points the enclosure has been interrupted by the presence of a Fair Green (Plan Unit 3), but a suggested line is presented in Figure 4.4.2.5..

TABLE 4.30. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT TULLA			
Measurement N-S*	149.9	Measurement E-W*	132.1
Average Radius Length	70.5	Area of Enclosure	1.56 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

This results in an enclosure which is 150 meters north-south and measures 132 meters east-west. The overall shape is circular with an average radius of 71 meters. This boundary encloses land of approximately 1.56 hectares in area. From these observations we can see that the lands surrounding Tulla church presents a very clear example of an church enclosure at the centre of a settlement.

The religious features within the central plan unit at Tulla include:

- A church

- An ancient burial ground.

- There is documentary evidence for ancient tomb(s) or burials and tradition of a 'druids' altar.

While it is acknowledged by some sources that St. Mochulla founded the original church on this site at a very early date, the present ruined church of Tulla was dedicated to the Virgin Mary.[15] Whether or not the dedication of the place to her is older than the building of the church is not possible to ascertain. According to O'Curry, this building (Figure 4.4.2.7.c.) which was in ruins in the mid 1800s, deserves no particular description: along with being very modern (early eighteenth century), all its architectural features were destroyed even though 'the walls remain in tolerable preservation very conspicuously situated on the top of the hill with a burial place attached'.[16]

Westropp initially appears to agree with O'Curry's comments, stating that:

[15] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 193.

[16] Ibid; O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 225.

> to a casual visitor, there is nothing in the graveyard to suggest the site
> of an ancient Celtic monastery . . . Nothing, not a fragment of cut stone
> or of carving, remains to imply antiquity beyond the fifteenth century,
> and very little so early as even that late date.[17]

On closer look however, Westropp identifies a number of features attesting to an earlier dating for the site. First, he claims that the graveyard wall to the north of the present church ruins 'embodies' considerable evidence of a medieval church.[18] He even goes so far as to claim that a 244cm long, 53cm deep recess with chamfered piers, (which was covered in vegetation and unidentifiable in 1999) may have been a church shrine, rebuilt in the fourteenth or early fifteenth century by Maccon MacNamara.[19] He claims that perhaps this recess was the site of the traditional tomb of St. Mochulla, which in 1141 was said to occupy the summit of the hill.[20] A suggestion of an even earlier pre-Christian antiquity is suggested by Lewis who comments that on the hill of Tulla remains include an 'ancient abbey', and a 'druid's altar'.[21]

An outer boundary is also identifiable at Tulla, but a warning must be added at this point. Examining the 1921 six-inch map in isolation illustrates one of the dangers of this technique, as the curvilinear road to the north of the inner enclosure appears to form a distinct boundary around the church site. However, comparison between this and earlier maps illustrates that this is a modern road, and thus its importance to the sacred landscape must be discounted.

Three distinct segments of property boundary stand out as enclosing the church site - these are to the west, northwest and northeast of the hill (Plan Unit 2). To the northwest the curvilinear pattern is clearly identifiable in a townland boundary which lies at a distance of 475 meters from the church site. Northeast of the church at a distance of 210 meters a curvilinear property boundary and old roadway (Figure 4.4.2.5.) form the circuit. A portion of north-south townland boundary lying 325 meters from the church forms the southeastern limit. Between this and the apex of Cutteen More townland boundary the circuit is unclear, however from this southern limit - approximately 420 meters from the church - the western line of the enclosure is uninterrupted. From this point, the curve of the enclosure is regular, running in an arc northwards. The

---

[17] Westropp, T. J. (1911) 'St. Mochulla of Tulla', p. 14.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid p. 15.
[21] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 650.

intersection of this arc with the southwestern road from Tulla, lies 486 meters from the church. Continuing to the west of the glebe land (Figure 4.4.2.5.) and to the east of the modern church, this lineament lies 486 meters west of the church. The line of the enclosure runs in a clockwise direction, passing through the northwestern road junction to again meet with Tulla townland boundary.

TABLE 4.31. : MEASUREMENT OF OUTER PLAN UNIT - TULLA			
Measurement N-S*	739.0	Measurement E-W*	631.9
Average Radius Length	342.7	Area of Enclosure	36.90
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

This proposal results in an enclosure 739 meters north-south and 632 meters east-west. The overall shape is oval with an average radius of 343 meters. This proposal would enclose approximately 37 hectares of land.

The church fabric at Tulla is sparse, however there is evidence of glebe land to the west of the inner enclosure. This church land is not indicated in the 1921 6-inch map, however it is present in the 1842 edition (Figure 4.4.2.2.). The wedge shaped plot is located southwest of the central church site, with its western boundary coterminous with the outer enclosure (Plan Unit 2).

Tobermochulla, or Mochulla's well lies 1.9km to the west of the church site. While there is no apparent record of tradition in relation to this well, it is most likely linked to the central church site which is dedicated to the same person - Mochulla.

As has been shown, the road layout in the vicinity of Tulla is predominantly modern. It appears however, that a number of older routeways converge on the site. This may arise because of either the market or the religious function of the settlement, but, it is likely, considering the close proximity of both, that a dual set of motives led to the development of the site. The overall fieldscape displays a strongly concentric pattern with radiating roads focusing on the hilltop site (Figure 4.4.2.7.a.). Natural topography may influence this, but, cannot be viewed in isolation.

The following table (Table 4.32.) is a suggested chronology of site evolution at Tulla, noting the periods during which the key elements of the site were established or constructed. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that the central church site - Plan Unit 1 - is the key element in the fabric, forming the focal point for subsequent settlement. While all of the plan units are important elements in the evolution of this

settlement, this study reinforces the importance of the primary church unit. This is stressed even further when one takes account of Westropp's map of Tulla (Figure 4.4.2.8.) which suggests the presence of a castle proximate to the hilltop church site.

TABLE 4.32. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT TULLA			
Historical Period	Topographical Features	Plan Unit	Evidence
Pre-Christian			T
Early Christian	Church / Enclosure	1 / 2	T / D / C / P
Anglo-Norman	Castle	1	D
Plantation (16th-17th Century)	Settlement		C
Georgian (18th Century)	Settlement	4	D / C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	Settlement	4	D / C / P
20th Century	Settlement	4	D / C / P
Additional Units	Market	3	C
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

There is a strong tradition of settlement at Tulla. This is evidenced in the number of earthworks in the vicinity of the church site. Though it does not appear in any other references, Lewis' somewhat stylised (and un-substantiated) comment regarding pre-Christian worship at Tulla is not too far-fetched considering that the ancient site of Magh Adhair - crowning place of the kings of Thomond stands just six kilometres to the southwest.[22] This may even suggest Christians taking over a pagan site and assuming its power and function - as happened in Kildare.[23]

The village of Tulla displays evidence of many influences on its transition from pre-Christian to early Christian, through castle building on to major modifications of the nineteenth century. It appears that of these the biggest influence on the settlement has been the original church foundation. Thus, it is clear that the settlement of Tulla represents a site which displays clear evidence of continuity from the foundation of its church to the present day.

---

[22] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 180.

[23] For a discussion of pagan-Christian transition at Kildare see Doherty, C., 'Monastic towns in Ireland'.

Quin

Quin is located in the barony of Bunratty, in the County of Clare, 8km east of Ennis, in a parish of the same name, which was anciently called Quint or Quinchy.[1] For some unknown reason, in 1839, the situation of the parish was not laid down in the same way other parishes were in the *parishes Name Book*. It appears that Curry (who was charged with identifying the boundaries of the parish) had some difficulty distinguishing its borders on the engraved map of the Down Survey.[2]

The Irish name of this parish is 'Cuinche', but, 'why or when it got this name, or what its particular signification may be', Curry was not able to ascertain.[3] According to Frost, the Irish name for Quin is 'Cainche' or 'Cuinche' which is a word meaning arbutus, or it may mean arbutus producing land.[4] Local folklore talks of an arbutus grove here in bygone days.[5] Spellissy claims that the name could refer to a quince tree, which produces an acidic fruit - used in making preserves.[6] Some alternative spellings and derivatives of the name include:

> Cainche; Quinn; Cuince; Coinche; Coynche; Cuinnche; Cohenny; Cuynn; Queing; Quint; Quinchy.[7]

There is evidence to suggests that this may be a town of early Christian origin, but the name would not appear to be religious in nature.[8] It is extensively used however, in the surrounding townlands: Quingardens, Quinville North and South and since the central site appears to be religious in function it is likely that by association (i.e. name) these townlands were linked to the central church.

---

[1] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 478; Archdall, M. (1786) *Monasticon Hibernicum*, p. 53.

[2] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 196.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Frost, J. (1906) *County of Clare Irish Local Names Explained*, p. 59; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 171.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, p. 450; Frost, J. (1906) *County of Clare Irish Local Names Explained*, p. 59; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 171; Murphy, D. (1896) *The Annals of Clonmacnois*, 1278BC, p. 252; O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1278BC, Vol. III, p. 429.

[8] Ordnance Survey of Ireland, *Map of Monastic Ireland*.

With a current population of 242, Quin is a small settlement, represented on maps from the earliest period up to the present time (i.e. Figure 4.4.3.1.a-d. & modern Ordnance Survey maps).[9] The present size of the settlement does not reflect the former importance of this focal site in the County of Clare. It occupies a central location in the plains to the east of Ennis (Figure 4.13) and this is reflected in the importance placed in it by the Anglo-Normans, who built a large fortification at the site. As with Tulla, This castle siting may have been influenced by the presence of an early church site, or vice versa. Subsequently the location returned to being an important religious centre with one of the most impressive abbeys in Ireland being built upon the ruins of deClare's Anglo-Norman castle.

Quin is first mentioned as a settlement in the days of the Norman castle which preceded the abbey.[10] News of the 'Great Rebellion' of 1641 was first announced in Co. Clare 'at the great fair of Quin', which, one can surmise, must have been a big event in the county of those days.[11] In contrast to this rich heritage, the documentary and physical evidence from the pre-Norman period is much less extensive.

Settlement is implied in the maps by Speed (1610) and Petty (1685), which both illustrate churches at Quin (Figure 4.4.3.1.). The 1787 Grand Jury map illustrates both the abbey and the parish church. In all cases the maps show that Quin is located at a crossing point of the river Rine.

Very little information exists about the early church at Quin other than the name of the founder, and that itself takes various forms - being spelled Finghin in records of the antiquarians and Fineen on the maps of the Ordnance Survey. Documents mention that an abbey was founded here at an early date (possibly in about 1250) and was consumed by fire in 1278.[12] This however appears to be the second wave of religious occupation, succeeding Finghin's original foundation. Ware, following this thread, claims that an abbey was founded for friars by Macon MacNamara in 1433.[13] This date comes from a bull of 1433 and is also cited by Wadding, who believed that the foundation was in existence before 1350 (this existence of an earlier foundation is supported by

---

[9]   *Census of Ireland 1996*
[10] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 172.
[11] Ibid.
[12] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 197; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 478.
[13] Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 257.

Spellissy).[14] Alternative sources give Sioda MacNamara (who died in 1406) as founder, in 1402.[15]

According to tradition of the inhabitants (the only authority Curry met on the subject) the church of Cuinche was dedicated to St. Finghin, but they had forgotten who this Finghin was (i.e. by 1839).[16] According to Curry, the holy day formerly kept in Finghin's honour in the parish was totally forgotten in his time.[17] Westropp surmises that Finghin of Quin may perhaps be Finghin of Roscrea (in the same diocese, 55km to the east), whose remembrance date is February 5th, or Finghin of Clonmacnois (65km to the northeast), whose coarbs were connected with Tuamgraney - which is 25km to the east.[18]

The following extracts from the various *Annals* are some of the key historical references to Quin and give some indication of its former importance:

> 1278   *'Donogh mcBrian Roe o'Brian gave the overthrow of Coinche to Thomas De Clare . . . & burned the church of Coynche, over the heads of the said earle and his people, where infinite numbers of people were both slaine and killed terein, and escaped narrowly himself (for which escape my author saith) that himself was sorry for'.[19]*

This account is annotated by O'Donovan in the *Annals of the Four Masters* with the following comments:

> *Quin, three miles [4.8km] southeast of Ennis Co. Clare. The church mentioned here is not that of the abbey, which was not founded till later, but the more ancient church close by, which was dedicated to St. Finghin.[20]*

This 'more ancient church' appears to be St. Fineen's church (in ruins), which stood to the west of the River Rine. (Figure 4.4.3.4.).

[14]   Wadding, in Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 257;; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 172.

[15]   Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 257.

[16]   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 196.

[17]   Ibid.

[18]   Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 108.

[19]   Murphy, D. (1896) *The Annals of Clonmacnois*, 1278BC, p. 252; O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1278BC, Vol. III, p. 429.

[20]   Ibid.

Almost a century later, De Clare built his 'strong' Norman castle at the site - a square with massive rounded towers at the corners.[21] In retaliation for atrocities carried out, the Irish attacked and destroyed this building:

> *The Irish under Cuvea Macnamara attacked and ransacked the castle.*[22]

The following are some of the entries describing the development of a foundation on the ruins of the castle in later years.

1402   *The Abbey of Cuinche in Thomond, in the Diocese of Killaloe, was founded for Franciscan Friars by Sheeda (Sioda) Cam Mac Namara, Lord of Clann Coilein, (who ordained) that it should be the burial place of himself and his tribe.*[23]

1541   *The friary was officially dissolved and granted (in 1543 or 1547) to Conor O'Brien, Baron Ibracken, under whose protection the friars continued in residence.*[24]

1548   *By this year, the abbey had fallen into disrepair and was described as 'one great church, now ruinous, covered with slate, and a steeple greatly decayed'.*[25]

1583   *The monastery with all its possessions was granted to Sir. Turlough (Tirlagh) O'Brien, of Ennistymon.*[26]

A lengthy and rather gruesome extract from the *Annals of the Four Masters* illustrates the importance of Quin as a central settlement in County Clare during the sixteenth century:

1584   *A new Chief Justice came to Ireland, viz., Sir John Perrott, on the 21st of June, accompanied by Sir John Norris who had been sent as President over the two Provinces of Munster, and by Sir Richard Bingham, who had been sent as Governor over the Province of Connacht. The Chief justice had not passed an entire month in Dublin before he proceeded to Athlone and thence to Galway to which Town the Chiefs of the Province of Connacht repaired to meet and welcome him and acknowledge him as their ruler and as the Chief placed over them by the Sovereign. The Lord Chief justice, having spent some time in*

[21]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 171.
[22]   http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/quininterest.htm
[23]   O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1402BC, Vol. IV, p. 775.
[24]   Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'Excursions of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland', p. 430; Idem (1887) 'Notes on the Franciscan Abbey, Manister Cuinche, or Quin', p. 335.
[25]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 172.
[26]   Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 257; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 478.

Galway set out for Limerick and arrived the first night after leaving Galway at Kilmacduagh; by the second night he had reached Cuinche in the Territory of Clann Cuilein, where he was met by the Chiefs of the county who had not met him at Galway. Among those was Cruise, the Sheriff of the County of Clare, who had then in chains Donogh Beg, the son of Teige, who was son of Donogh O'Brien, heretofore the archtraitor and head of the plunderers of the Province of Connacht. Donogh met his merited fate, for his joints were dislocated by a rack and his bones broken and smashed with the back of a large and ponderous axe, after which, his half dead body thus mangled, was fastened with hard and tough hempen ropes to the top of the Cloccas (tower) of Cuinche, under the talons of the ravenous inhabitants of the air, to the end that the spectacle he presented might operate as a warning to evil doers.[27]

1604   *The buildings of the monastery were repaired.[28]*

1617   *In the time of Fr. Donagh Mooney - Irish Franciscan Provincial, two or three aged and decrepit friars were living in the friary, which had been recently repaired.[29]*

For the next century and a half the site declined in status. In 1617 the friars were expelled, but obviously returned, as they were expelled again in 1637.[30] By 1641-2 a great college was opened, but again in 1651 the site was desecrated by the Cromwellians who shot and hanged priests and brothers.[31] In 1667 the Franciscans returned, but, the abbey was empty by 1681.[32]. Ten years later they returned again and from 1760 until 1820 individual friars, or groups continued to live in the abbey ruins, the last friar being a Fr. John Hogan who died in 1820. In 1880 the Board of Public Works took over the abbey as a national monument.[33]

Site Description and Plan Analysis

Documentary and physical evidence suggests that St Finghin's Church (Fineen's Church on OS maps) is the original settlement / primary plan unit (Plan Unit 1) at Quin. This unit lies within a distinctly curvilinear feature (Figure 4.4.3.6.) and this in turn is

---

[27]   O'Donovan J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1584BC, Vol. V, pp 1817-1819 in O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 197.

[28]   Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 478.

[29]   Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 257; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 172.

[30]   Westropp, T. J. (1894) 'Churches with round towers in Northern Clare'; (1900) 'Excursions of the Royal Society of Antiquarians of Ireland'.

[31]   Ibid.

[32]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 172.

surrounded by a larger enclosing feature which has been identified here as Plan Unit 2. De Clare's castle which subsequently became the abbey to the east of the river Rine forms the next phase of settlement (Plan Unit 3). Despite this change in spatial emphasis, it appears that the western bank of the river retained its importance and thus, settlement focused on the original site. At the present time the main settlement focus in Quin is along the northwest - southeast aligned street to the south of St. Finghin's Church, and the generally northeast - southwest aligned street which is west of this central church site (Plan Unit 4). This layout, which appears to be an eighteenth century estate village forms the next phase of development. The widening of the street (Figure 4.4.3.7.) suggests a possible market function, separate from the southerly Fair Green. The next element (Plan Unit 5) contains the Roman Catholic Chapel (Built c.1837), south of Quin Abbey.[34]

The Fair Green, located on the eastern bank of the river, to the southeast, with a nucleus to its south containing a school building, forms an additional element (Plan Unit 6). The origins of this unit are difficult to ascertain - they may or may not be linked to the church site which they adjoin. Much of this unit has been eliminated at the present day with the expansion of settlement (Figure 4.4.3.5.). South of the Fair Green a curious curvilinear boundary suggests the presence of a southern enclosure containing a school. This boundary is identified as Unit 7.

While all the plan units of this settlement are important, the study focuses on continuity as displayed by church units. There is clear evidence of both an inner (Plan Unit 1) and an outer (Plan Unit 2) enclosure at Quin, with Finghin's church at the centre of both (Figure 4.4.3.6.). The following table (Table 4.33) presents the measurements of the inner enclosure scaled from the 1896, 25-inch Ordnance Survey map (Figure 4.4.3.4.).

TABLE 4.33. : MEASUREMENT OF INNER PLAN UNIT AT QUIN			
Measurement N-S*	153.5	Measurement E-W*	135.7
Average Radius Length	72.3	Area of Enclosure	1.64 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

---

[33] Ibid.

[34] http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/quin_history.htm

The western, northwestern and northern points of this inner enclosure are clearly identifiable. To the northeast, east and southeast, this distinct boundary continues, but at these points the importance is reinforced by the presence of a townland boundary. To the east and southeast the line also follows the curve of the river Rine. The only sectors where the line of the inner enclosure is unclear are to the south and southwest. In these cases, it appears that the remains of a property boundary, between the church and the street, may reflect this early structure. This results in an enclosure which is 154 meters north-south and 136 meters east-west. The overall shape of this enclosure is circular and it has an average radius length of 72 meters. This enclosure is approximately 1.64 hectares in area.

Quin presents a clear example for the survival of topographical features which identify an inner enclosure at a site. This is reinforced by church fabric within this unit which includes:

- Saint Fineen's medieval church ruins
- Burial Ground
- Saint Fineen's Church (as represented in Figure 4.4.3.2.) - now demolished

On the west bank of the stream flowing through Quin are St Finghin's church ruins (Figure 4.4.3.8.c.). This plain aisleless building with no marked internal division is aligned northeast - southwest.[35] The (formerly ivy-covered) belfry at the southwestern end and the eastern buttresses appear to be later additions.[36] Curry claims that no part of the ruins appear to be older than the fifteenth century, but according to Harbison, this church was built between 1278 and 1285 (Leask claimed early thirteenth century).[37] It is a large building, measuring 24.0 meters in length and 8.2 meters in breadth. The north wall is down to the ground and the gables and south side remain to their original height.[38] There is a pointed doorway, a number of windows made from ornamented cut stones and a 'triple lancet' window in the east gable.[39] The south wall is 1.0 meter thick and about 5.5 meters high.[40]

---

[35] Leask, H.G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. II, p. 152.
[36] Ibid p. 56; Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 69.
[37] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 69; Leask, H.G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. II, p. 152.
[38] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 196.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.

Little is written about the graveyard which stands to the south of St. Finghin's church ruins. The boundary wall of this burial ground is sub-circular in shape, measuring approximately 70 meters northeast - southwest, and 40 meters northwest - southeast (Figure 4.4.3.4.). A number of apparently ancient gravestones stand in this cemetery, none of which have been deemed important enough by the antiquarians, to merit attention.

The shape of the southern and western boundaries of the graveyard suggests that this may originally have formed a smaller inner enclosure. The form of the graveyard (particularly apparent in Figure 4.4.3.4.) suggests that this plot boundary may have evolved from an original 'sanctissimus' which formed the holy centre of an early church foundation. [41] This may have been a circular enclosure, with a diameter of approximately 25 meters. The church ruins lie to the north of this possible enclosure, and may represent a later stage in the evolution of the site, with the curvilinear inner boundary expanding out to enclose the church as suggested above. This evolution of the site would fit in with the recognised triple-concentric-enclosure pattern at Nendrum and Armagh as discussed in Sections 2.4. & 2.5.. However, as this scale of enclosure is unique among the case studies, the inner enclosure is taken to follow the layout described above - with this forming a unique inlier.

Antiquarian discussions of the surviving ruin and graveyard are sparse with even less documented with regard to the duality of church structures dedicated to Saint Fineen. According to Figure 4.4.3.4. two structures stood in the graveyard - 'St. Fineen's Church', and 'St. Fineen's Church (in ruins)'. From the cartographic evidence, it appears that the churches were similar in alignment, overall proportion and size - being approximately 7 meters apart. The later described by Lewis:

> [This is a] small plain building erected in 1797 by aid of a gift of £500 from the late board [of First Fruits] and the ecclesiastical commissioners have lately (c.1847) granted £100 for its repair. [42]

This building appears to have been removed, with no trace of the structure in evidence at the present day. The only structure in this vicinity is a tomb which can be seen in Figure 4.4.3.5.. Analysis of this feature suggests that it may be formed from a portion of

[41]   Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 148.
[42]   Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 479.

the church which stood at this point - possibly the section of the building which projected to the northwest.

The literature on Quin focuses on the nearby abbey, thus, very little information is available on this church. The following reference from O'Curry supports the claim that 'the modern and substantial though plain church' i.e. St Fineen's Church was a Church of Ireland structure which was removed some time between the 1920s and the present:

> [Quin] contains the modern and substantial though plain church (i.e. the now demolished church) and Roman Catholic chapel of the parish, the ruins of the old church, and the unroofed but otherwise well-preserved pile of Quin-abbey.[43]

The graveyard of St. Finghin's church remains under explored, with the tantalising cartographic record being the only useful evidence of the now demolished Church of Ireland structure. This however, is not unusual in County Clare, where Church of Ireland buildings were rarely supported by sufficient congregations to maintain them. Thus, their removal has been a relatively common occurrence particularly in areas where the Church of Ireland population was small.[44]

A variety of religious material survives in the landscape surrounding the central site at Quin including:

- A possible outer enclosure
- Quin Abbey / Castle
- Wells which may be holy - Tobercrine, Toberineenboy and Cahills Well (sites)

A number of features hint strongly at the presence of an outer enclosure at Quin, thus leading to the speculative reconstruction here of an outer enclosure. The clearest evidence of the outer enclosure is to be found in the first edition six-inch Ordnance Survey Map (Figure 4.4.3.2. - also see Figure 4.4.3.3. & Table 4.34). To the northwest, the line of the outer enclosure appears to follow the northern townland boundary of Quinville South for approximately 400m at a distance of 300 to 350 meters from the church. While highly irregular in pattern, the overall trend is curvilinear, focused on the inner enclosure. Continuing eastwards, the enclosure may follow the northern edge of Commons townland and the southwestern edge of Creevaghmore townland. Between

---

[43]   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, pp 198-199.

[44]   Hewson, A. (1995) *Inspiring Stones. A Church of Ireland History*

the north-eastern and eastern points, the line of the enclosure is unclear. At a distance of approximately 370 meters to the east, the eastern boundary of Quin townland appears to again form a definite line of the enclosure which can be followed with relative certainty to the west, where it is again unclear for a segment. The entire southern portion of the enclosure (as suggested in Figure 4.4.3.3.) is composed of field boundaries at an average distance of 300 meters. From east to west the circumference of this southern portion is approximately 950 meters, with only a short segment (circa 70m. - due south of the church) being unclear. The only other portion which is unclear is the segment from the western to the northwestern point.

TABLE 4.34. : MEASUREMENT OF OUTER ENCLOSURE AT QUIN			
Measurement N-S*	589.1	Measurement E-W*	706.9
Average Radius Length	324.0	Area of Enclosure	32.97
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

These measurements would result in a large enclosure of approximately 33 hectares. This is 589 meters north-south and measures 707 meters east-west. The overall shape is approximately circular with an average radius length of 324 meters.

Quin Castle, a massive Norman castle with large rounded towers at each corner, was built in 1280 by Richard de Clare in an attempt to subdue the MacNamaras.[45] It was 'reduced to a hideous blackened ruin' six years later when Cuvea MacNamara attacked, ransacked and burned the castle, slaying most of the defenders. Parts of the towers still remain at the corners of the abbey ruins (Figure 4.4.3.8.b. & Figure 4.4.3.9.a. & b.).[46] The castle walls were incorporated into the abbey's south and east walls.[47]

Westropp considered that the buildings date from 1402 or earlier when the site was given to the Franciscans.[48] Leask, however, does not consider that any of the work is earlier than Macon's time, (1433), but does acknowledge the 1402 date as being recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters.[49] Curry in discussing the antiquities of Quin cites a description of the abbey by a Bishop Pococke which is worth quoting in full:

> Quin is one of the finest and most entire Monasteries that I have seen
> in Ireland; it is situated on a fine stream with an ascent of several steps

[45] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) Clare: County of Contrasts, p. 171.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid pp 171-2.
[48] Westropp, T. J. (1887) 'Notes on the Franciscan Abbey, Manister Cuinche, or Quin', p. 334.
[49] Leask, H.G. (1955-60) Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings, Vol. III, p. 102; 139.

to the church, at the entrance one is surprised with the view of the high altar on each side of the arch of the chancell [sic]. To the south is a Chapel with three or four altars in it and a very gothic figure in relief of some Saint, on the north side of the chancell is a fine monument of the family of MacNamara of Ranna, erected by the founder on a stone by the high altar; the name of Kennedy appears in large letters; in the middle between the body and the chancell is a fine tower built on the two gable ends. The cloister is in the usual form with couplets of pillars, but is particular having buttresses around it by way of ornament. There are apartments on three sides of it, the refectory, the dormitory and another grand room to the north of the chancell, with a vaulted room under them all. To the north of the large room is a closet, which leads through a private way to a very strong round tower the walls of which are near ten feet [3.04m] thick. In the front of the Monastery is a building which seems to have been an apartment for strangers and to the southwest are two other buildings.[50]

The main features of the structure are the tower and well-preserved east, west and south windows, and a south transept. The cloisters are some of the best-preserved Franciscan examples in the country, there is a dormitory on the first floor, and in the church there is an interesting collection of fifteenth to nineteenth century tombstones.[51] While this structure is not an important element in discussing the beginnings of Quin, it is important in discussing continuity and overall importance of the site through history.

Frost in his History & Topography of Clare claims that there were at least six holy wells in the parish of Quin:

> The parish abounds in holy wells, no less than 6 being within its ambit: Tubber-na-neeve, Toberbrassil, Toberagee, Toberfineen, Toberandillane and Toberceeghan.[52]

None of these appear within the boundaries outlined, but it appears that three wells did exist within the outer enclosure. These are: Cahill's Well, 81 meters northeast of the church; Toberinneenboy, 140 meters north of the church and Tobercrine 291 meters east of the church. Two of the wells - Toberinneenboy and Tobercrine are represented on the various maps which are used in this examination. the third well - Cahill's Well - is only represented on the earlier maps, being absent from the 1921/22, 6-inch map (Figure 4.4.3.3.). In all cases, the 1896, 25-inch map records the 'site of' the wells, implying that they had dried up or were not in use by 1896. The provenance of the wells is not stated in any of the main historical sources, but there is a strong possibility that they

---

[50] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, pp 198-199.
[51] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 68.
[52] Frost, J. (1893) *History and Topography of the County of Clare*, pp 51

were related to the church site, being contained within the outer enclosure. Mac Mahon has recently identified seventeen 'holy wells' in County Clare which are dedicated to a saint by the name of Inghin Bhaoith - Toberinneenboy being one of these.[53] Acceptance of Mac Mahon's theory links Quin to the ancient church of Killinaboy and an eighth century tribe in central Clare.[54] Tobercrine may derive from 'Tobar Críon' meaning 'old well'.[55]

The final element worthy of note in the outer enclosure is a curious enclosure to the northeast of the church site at a distance of approximately 160 meters. This (approximately 12 meters in diameter) circular enclosure which does not appear on the 1842 map, is present on all subsequent editions. From its location on the western bank of the river, and the presence of a connection to the river (particularly evident in Figure 4.4.3.5.) it may be suggested that this is a water feature of some nature - possibly an un-named well.

A complex radial field and road network around Quin suggests an ecclesiastical influence. The field pattern in the vicinity demonstrates the influence the central church site has had on the overall shape of property boundaries. The curvilinear influence is particularly evident in the northern sector of the 1921/22 Ordnance Survey map and the 1974 vertical aerial photograph (Figures 4.4.3.3. & 4.4.3.8.a.) with boundaries in Quinville South, Commons and Knockagoug townlands, all portraying a strong curvilinear tendency - focused on the central church site.

A large number of roads (and footpaths - see 'F.P' annotated approximately 700 meters west of church) converge west of the inner enclosure, being linked to the crossing point of the river Rine by the street to the south of the church site. Fewer roads converge from the east, but again, the focal point is the river crossing point. A secondary focal point is the Fair Green southeast of the church site at a distance of 250 meters. This commercial space appears to lie just outside the outer enclosure.

An interesting curvilinear enclosure (Plan Unit 7) to the south of the Fair Green is also worthy of mention. This plot is apparently ancient - being demarcated predominantly by townland boundaries. It contains a number of dwellings and the various maps indicate that Quin School was once located here. This may be an additional structure of religious

---

[53] Mac Mahon, M. (2000) 'The Cult of Inghin Bhaoith', p. 12.
[54] Ibid.

origin, but is outside the outer enclosure. The location would suggest that this could be a secular settlement, related to the Fair Green, perhaps sited here due to segregation of religious and secular function. Alternatively, it may have been a secondary enclosure or church site as existed at Kilkenny, Glendalough or Kells.[56]

Plan Development

Despite the development of peripheral units such as the Abbey / Castle (Plan Unit 3) and Roman Catholic structures (Plan Unit 5), Saint Fineen's church site (Plan Unit 1) has remained the main focus of settlement. Settlement appears to have developed around the initial church - supporting the categorisation of this as a 'central' ecclesiastical site.

The following table (Table 4.35.) is a suggested chronology of site evolution, noting the periods during which the key elements of the site were established or constructed. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that the initial impetus at this site may have been pagan influence, noted in the importance of wells (later Christianised) and trees (as suggested in the place name). The key focal point for all subsequent development continued to be the central church site - Plan Unit 1 - thus, the key element in the evolution of settlement fabric.

TABLE 4.35. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT QUIN			
Historical Period	Topographical Features	Plan Unit	Evidence
Pre-Christian	Wells / Trees		T
Early Christian	Early church site	1 / 2	T / D / C / P
Anglo-Norman	Castle and subsequent abbey	3	D / P
Plantation (16th-17th Century)	Settlement ?		C
Georgian (18th Century)	Church of Ireland & possible estate village	4	C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	RC Church	5	C / P
20th Century			C / P
Additional Plan Units	Fair Green	6	C
	Curvilinear Plot	7	C
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

The evolution of Quin clearly illustrates the intransigent nature of settlement. Despite the attempt to transfer religious and secular power to the eastern side of the river in the

---

[55] Ó Paircín, L. (2001) Pers. Comm.

[56] Bradley, J. (2000) *Kilkenny*; Simms, A. and Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*

thirteenth century, settlement remained focused on the earlier western site. While the abbey is an important item of Irish church architecture it tells little of the origins of either church or secular settlement form here. Being a Franciscan foundation influenced by Anglo Norman forces, the abbey would not have been viewed as an indigenous establishment, thus, the native population may not have accepted the newer structure.[57] The absence of settlement in the vicinity the abbey in 1842 illustrates that the earlier site to the west remained important regarding continuity of settlement development. The focus of ecclesiastical administration has changed over the centuries from St Fineen's Church(es) to the abbey and the R.C. church, the influence on settlement, of St. Fineen's has remained constant.

The apparent insubstantial nature of structures at St Fineen's Church site can be comprehensively compensated for through considering an inner and a possible outer enclosure. The use of Plan Analysis clearly defines the enclosures at this site and supports the claim that this present day central Clare settlement displays continuity since the early Christian period. The presence of such distinct enclosures indicate that Quin is a classic example of a modern settlement which has as its roots an early church site.

---

[57] See Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland* Chapter 5 for discussion re - segregation of the Anglo-Norman colony from the native Irish

Corofin

In 1837 Lewis described Corofin as:

> A small market and post-town in the parish of Kilneboy, barony of Inchiquin, County of Clare . . . this town is situated about three-quarters of a mile [1.2km] southeast of Inchiquin lake, and near the western extremity of Lough Tadane [Atedaun]: these loughs are connected by a river flowing through them, which is here crossed by a stone bridge.[1]

Corofin may derive its name from 'Coradh Finne', the 'weir of Finnia'. In this case, Finnia is a woman's name although other accounts translate it as 'Finn Coradh', the 'white weir'.[2] It is not clear whether this is a weir for a mill or for fishing and no clarification is found in the various sources. Both industries, however, are anciently associated with church sites and early settlements.[3] Some alternative spellings and derivatives of the name 'Corofin' include:

Currach / Coradh Finne; Finn Coradh; Finnchoradh; Corofin; Curofin.[4]

One kilometre to the east of the settlement, on the shores of Lough Atedaun, is the site of Kilvoydan church, which it appears, is closely linked to the present day settlement. The name Kilvoydan or 'Cill Bhaighdeain' is derived from the Irish 'Church of Baighdean' (perhaps church of the Virgin) but nothing is recorded of this Baighdean.[5] Some alternative spellings and derivatives of 'Kilvoydan' include:

Kilvoydan; Kilvedane; Cill Bhaighdeain.[6]

Both local tradition and placename evidence support the early origins of Kilvoydan, which, is the name of the church site, graveyard and townland.

From an examination of the historical evidence, settlement at Corofin, would not appear to be of great antiquity. Due to the late development of habitation, the town is absent

---

1   Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 444.
2   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 56.
3   Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, pp, 388-390.
4   Ibid; O'Donovan J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1157AD, Vol. II, p. 1127; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 444.
5   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 16.
6   Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 111; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 445; O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 16.

from both Speed's 1601 map and the 1685 Down Survey county map. In 1787 it is depicted as having a church with steeple, and a number of fine demesnes are illustrated in the district (Figure 4.4.4.1.). Also clearly indicated on this Grand Jury map, to the east, on the shores or Lough Atedaun, is Kilwedane Church (i.e. almost phonetic spelling of the Gaelic name for Kilvoydan).

One of the reasons for the development of the fledgling settlement of Corofin was the settling here of Maura Rua O'Brien after her eviction from Leamaneh Castle which is 5km to the northwest (In the latter half of the 17th century). In the early decades of the eighteenth century, her grandson, Lucius, and his wife, Catherine Keightly lived here.[7] Using conventional sources this appears to be the history of the site - with settlement evolution relatively recent in date.

According to Westropp, the founder of the church at Kilvoydan is Voydan or Baighdean.[8] In addition to this site, this patron is associated with a graveyard, well and bullaun near Kilraughtis.[9] There are no early church records however, pertaining to Corofin. The earliest documentary evidence appears to be a reference in the *Annals of the Four Masters* in the year 1157, where there is mention of finding the head of Eochaidh Luchta, who was the King of Thomond in the first century.[10]

> 1157 *'The head of Eochaidh i.e. of Eochaidh, son of Luchta, was found at Finnchoradh'.*[11]

O'Donovan, in his explanatory notes of the Annals, states that this is Corofin, in County Clare.[12] The only other historical note regarding Corofin and the surrounding area is that Hugh McCurtin, the learned antiquary, grammarian, poet and author of an Irish dictionary, died here about 1720, 'and was interred at Kilvedane, in the neighbourhood'.[13] Thus, we can see that Kilvoydan was in general use as a burial site, from at least this time. From this investigation, Corofin would not appear to be a settlement of antiquity. With this in mind, the investigation now turns to Plan Analysis to explore the area further.

---

[7] Clare Library *People and Places* : http://www.clarelibrary.ie/ 'Places' – 'Corofin'.
[8] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 111.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 56.
[11] O'Donovan J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1157AD, Vol. II, p. 1127.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 445.

The ancient selection of this site appears to be related to the topography of the region. First, the surrounding area is low-lying and prone to flooding, thus, this dry site on the northern bank of the river Fergus, is an ideal location for a settlement. A clear indication of the dry nature of the site may be observed in Figure 4.4.4.3. which highlights the northeast-southwest band of dry land on which Corofin is sited, with marshland to the north and south. Secondly, this area of Clare is dotted with lakes and rivers, and thus, a crossing point of the river Fergus, such as Corofin is a likely location for the development of a settlement (Figure 4.4.4.7.a.). Finally, Corofin is located on a natural routeway narrowing, between the barriers of Inchiquin Lake to the west and Lough Atedaun to the east.

It is proposed here that the initial settlement focus in this vicinity may have been the curvilinear church site of Kilvoydan, which is identified as Plan Unit 1A (Figure 4.4.4.5.). While this is not physically linked to the settlement 800 meters to the west, it is believed to have influenced settlement at Corofin. Adjoining the settlement lies a second church site, identified here as Plan Unit 1B. These may have been contemporary sites, but development at the western site included a trade function (characterised by the Fair Green - Plan Unit 2). This commercial function in addition to the crossing point, resulted in the subsequent favouring of Corofin over the more secluded Kilvoydan for 18th / 19th century settlement development (Plan Unit 3). The final identifiable plan unit is formed by the 19th century Workhouse, close to Corofin, between the two church units (Plan Unit 4)

Kilvoydan graveyard which stands within a very clear oval enclosure once contained a church. Though no traces of the structure remain, documentary evidence added to the fieldscape which can be seen in aerial photographs and maps, leaves no doubt as to the religious origins of the site. Whether the original church site at this location was a single church standing at Kilvoydan or a more complex dual site, cannot be discerned at the present day. However, the enclosure is clearly an early structure. This slightly flattened circular shape, with the church site offset to the east is formed predominantly by the graveyard and two fields - one to the north and one to the south (marked '1.092' & '.442' in Figure 4.4.4.5.). This ecclesiastical form exhibits a high level of survival up to the present day. Table 4.36 & Figure 4.4.4.7.a. & b. illustrate the measurements of this enclosure scaled from the 1897, 25-inch map.

TABLE 4.36. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT KILVOYDAN			
Measurement N-S*	82.1	Measurement E-W*	117.8
Average Radius Length	50.0	Area of Enclosure	0.78 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

This enclosure measures 82 meters north-south and 118 meters east-west. The average radius is 50 meters enclosing approximately 0.78 hectares. Kilvoydan presents an excellent example of a curvilinear enclosure at a church site.

While it is not possible to state without archaeological investigation, this site appears to follow the pattern displayed at other sites in which the sacred space is subdivided. Resembling Reask and Inishmurray which are discussed in the theoretical section, there is subdivision of the inner space - possibly to demarcate areas of varying religious function - church site, burial ground, cells for ecclesiastics etc. It would be fascinating to see if any remnants of such fabric survive beneath the surface at this interesting enclosure.

The religious fabric in the central plan unit at Kilvoydan include:

- A clearly identifiable church site
- A burial ground & cross
- An eastern approach road
- A holy well.

There is no physical evidence of Kilvoydan church at the present time. Lewis refers to the cemetery of 'the ancient church of Kilvedane' and while he states that 'no vestige of the church' remained at his time, it did exist 'within the memory of many persons living'.[14] This appears to be somewhat dramatic considering the ruins of the church are recorded in the 1842 6-inch Ordnance Survey map (Figure 4.4.4.2.) printed only five years before Lewis' publication. The wedge-shaped graveyard within which Kilvoydan church stood is approximately 54 meters by 35 meters. This does not appear to contain any burials or structures of note (Figure 4.4.4.7.c.). However, outside the graveyard - to the east - stood a cross which has not been extensively analysed, aside from brief mention by Westropp.[15]

---

[14] Ibid Vol. II, p. 195.
[15] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 111.

The main approach road to this site is difficult to ascertain. However, Figure 4.4.4.4. suggests that the site may have been approached form the east, with the routeway curving southwards around the aforementioned cross. Perhaps this cross fulfils a 'signposting' function to announce the site in the same way as the roadside crosses at Glendalough.[16] The roadway (which is clearly visible in Figure 4.4.4.4.) then follows the line of the enclosure, continuing on to the west, preserving the sacred space of this inner sanctum.

The line of field boundaries and a footpath 350 meters to the west suggests that this may have been the original routeway between the two church sites - or between Kilvoydan and the bridging point. This was made redundant at some stage with the construction of the modern road to Corofin, which stands to the north of this track.

In addition to a cross, Westropp also lists a well at Kilvoydan.[17] O'Curry contradicts the existence of a well, but states that a mortise in the pedestal of a cross standing a little to the 'south' of the burying ground which gathers water in wet weather, was used as a cure for warts, and this, he says, may be the aforementioned well.[18] Is this the eastern cross mentioned above?

The landscape surrounding the enclosure at Kilvoydan presents an interesting example of contrasting levels of change (Figure 4.4.4.2 & Figure 4.4.4.4.). It appears that the field boundaries to the south and east have survived over time while the land to the north and west has been altered significantly. Thus, while numerous curvilinear boundaries may be observed in the poor quality marshy land between the church site and Lough Atedaun, the drier more productive land-ward fields have been formalised and laid out in a more regular fashion. The result of these changes is a profusion of boundaries influenced by the church, to the northeast, around to the southwest, while the identification of an outer enclosure in the northwestern half of the space, is much more difficult.

A number of potential enclosures may be identified in this landscape. Northeast of the church site, the curvilinear northern side of the plot annotated '.632' (Figure 4.4.4.4.) appears to form a segment of an enclosure, which continues clockwise to the east of the church, joining plot '.862'. Further to the east lies the eastern boundary of plot '1.709'

[16]   Leask, H. (1963) *Glendalough*, p. 41
[17]   Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 111.

which may also form an enclosure. Likewise, to the south a curvilinear boundary bisects plot '4.549'. To the southwest, a number of field boundaries identify a possible enclosure, approximately 240 meters southwest of the church.

Thus, there is sufficient boundary survival to propose the former existence of enclosures to the south of the church site. There appears to be no surviving fabric in the landscape surrounding Kilvoydan, however, examination of both the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) and Cambridge University aerial photographs (Figure 4.4.4.7.a. Figure 4.4.4.7.b.) supports the proposed enclosure. In addition, the field to the north of the inner enclosure (plot '3.934' - Figure 4.4.4.4.) displays traces of a possible enclosure in the vertical GSI photograph (Figures 4.4.4.7.a.).

While the historical evidence suggests that Saint Catherine's Church in Corofin, was built between 1715 and 1720, there is topographical evidence to suggest that this may be an earlier church site (Plan Unit 1B - Figure 4.4.4.5.).[19] The settlement developed by the O'Briens dominates the streetscape, but, the northwest-southeast linear layout appears to overlay earlier road, field and property patterns - which are clearly visible to the east of the village.[20]

A curvilinear pattern in the six-inch map, is more clearly visible in the five feet to a mile valuation Map for Corofin (Figure 4.4.4.6.). In this map, both sides of Church Street - to the south - provide strong evidence for a curvilinear boundary. In addition, a curvilinear pattern can also be picked up in the property boundaries to the back of plots 7-11a southwest of the church, and along the northern boundary of plot number 3 - south of the church.

The following table (Table 4.37. & Figure 4.4.4.5.) illustrates a proposed church plan unit scaled from the 1897, 25-inch map of Corofin. A clearly defined enclosure is identifiable to the east south and west with the northwest - southeast aligned church lying close to its southern boundary. The southeastern quadrant of the enclosure is strongly defined by the southern portion of the plot annotated '1.127' (Figure 4.4.4.4.). This curvilinear boundary is coterminous with the boundary between Laghtagoona and Kilvoydan townlands, and also the eastern approach road. It is suggested here that the enclosure then follows a curvilinear line, touching the northern footpath, and returning

[18] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 15.
[19] Clare Library *People and Places*, /Corofin.

via a curvilinear circuit to complete the enclosure by joining with the eastern roadway. This would create a regular enclosure, containing 'The Glebe' illustrated in Figure 4.4.4.4.

TABLE 4.37. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT COROFIN			
Measurement N-S*	217.8	Measurement E-W*	235.6
Average Radius Length	113.4	Area of Enclosure	4.03 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

This enclosure is 218 meters north-south and 236 meters east-west. The overall shape is circular and it has an average radius length of 113 meters. This proposal suggests that the settlement at Corofin may have a church enclosure as its core.

The only church fabric within this plan unit is St. Catherine's church. As can be seen from the sparse documentary history, early records are indeed rare. This northeast-southwest aligned church (now the Clare Heritage Centre), was built by a Catherine Keightly between 1715 and 1720 and it is thought to be named after her mother, another Catherine.[21] One hundred years later it was renovated and further renovations were carried out in 1829 with a loan of £369 from the Board of First Fruits.[22] It is suggested here that the church may have replaced an earlier undocumented structure.

To further substantiate the claim that this may be an early site, radiating from the enclosure surrounding St. Catherine's Church are a number of concentric field boundaries. These are particularly evident to the north and west of the enclosure (Figure 4.4.4.3.). While they may have once continued to the east, the construction of the Union Workhouse appears to have obliterated these organic landscape features and replaced them with a grid-like pattern. Most likely these curvilinear boundaries are relics of a religious landscape. The identification of a complete enclosure is not possible due to the Workhouse modifications, but to the north, west and south of the church site, a strong enclosing line is evident. This lineament commences to the west of the church site, with the western and northern edges of the Fair Green. Continuing in a clockwise direction it consists of a number of field boundaries which connect with the approach road to the northeast of the church site. The southeastern point is taken to be the northeastern

---

[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Lewis, S. (1937) A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, Vol. II.

corner of the field annotated as '1.657' in Figure 4.4.4.4.. This boundary is aligned predominantly east-west, and intersects with the street close to the fording point of the river Fergus. Crossing the street in the vicinity of the smithy, the enclosure follows the back of the property boundaries on the street. From this pattern, a curvilinear conclusion may be hypothesised.

TABLE 4.38. : MEASUREMENT OF POSSIBLE OUTER ENCLOSURE AT COROFIN			
Measurement N-S*	421.3	Measurement E-W*	474.8
Average Radius Length	224.0	Area of Enclosure	15.77
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

This circular structure would be 421 meters north-south and measure 475 meters east-west. The average radius length would be 224 meters.

Further curvilinear lines could also be suggested - running parallel to the northwestern segment, beyond the fair green parallel to the enclosure. A further set lie inside this northern line. From these observations we see that while the key site at Kilvoydan is a well-recognised church site, Corofin may also display evidence of religious origins.

Few church features may be observed in the landscape around Corofin. However, a number of factors suggest that this may have been an early church site. These include:

- Glebe Land
- A Fair Green

North of St. Catherine's Church lies glebe land. This plot lies predominantly within the inner enclosure. The fact that 'the Glebe' is adjacent to the church site suggests religious landuse and continuity in this location.

While generally accepted as a Victorian development, the presence of the Fair Green adjoining the enclosure to the northwest fits the overall model of church site development. Fair Greens are common in many Irish towns, but the proximity of church function and that of trade and economics is a common feature in early church sites. In this case the routeways to the fair green appear to have formed an integral part of the church enclosure. The footpath from the east (perhaps an early roadway) circumscribes rather than bisects the inner enclosure. This is even more important when considered in relation to an old, sinuous roadway from the east - it may be suggested that this footpath was indeed connected with the original eastern approach road. The south - north roadway from the street to the fair green and the various suggestions of relict roadways

261

to the north of the Fair Green suggest that this was an important communications and trade centre in the area.

On various maps, particularly the six-inch map, the profusion of roads radiating from the settlement attests to this site influencing communications from an early date. A number of these roads have been altered and straightened over time. For example the eastern approach road, which passes Ballyportry castle (northeastern portion of Figure 4.4.4.3.), shows the survival of an older road, despite the construction of a straighter modern road some time after 1842 (i.e. when compared with Figure 4.4.4.2.). The antiquity of the meandering road is evidenced in it following the townland boundary between Kilvoydan and Laghtagoona.

Plan Development

Three theories may be proposed regarding the evolution of settlement at Corofin. There may be an east-west migration from Kilvoydan to the site of St. Catherine's followed by the development of the present street structure. Secondly, it may be possible that there were two concurrent church sites - one at Kilvoydan the other at St. Catherine's Church. Thirdly, the site of St. Catherine's may be modern, with the field pattern coincidentally following a curvilinear fashion. Tradition and documentary evidence would support the first or third of these hypotheses, however it is suggested here that the western movement may have occurred at an early period.

It is proposed here that Corofin may have parallels with other church sites throughout the country which moved to more favourable sites for a variety of reasons. Saint Cronan's original foundation in Roscrea (in Tipperary) was relocated to be more accessible for travellers, while St. Kevin's foundation in Glendalough moved to a better site to facilitate expansion.[23] Thus, this site, as with Kilmallock appears to have moved from a secluded (lakeside in this case) site to an important river crossing. The river crossing eclipsing the original foundation.

The following table (Table 4.39. & Figure 4.4.4.5.) suggests a chronology of site evolution at Corofin, noting the periods during which the key elements of the site were established or constructed. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that the central church sites - Plan Units 1A & 1B - are the key elements in the settlement fabric,

---

[23]   Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 318.

262

forming focal points for subsequent development. The surviving secular settlement fabric at Corofin dates to the 18th century, but, it is suggested here that the building of St. Catherine's Church may be a rejuvenation of an undocumented site rather than the modern establishment of a new church.

TABLE 4.39. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT COROFIN			
Historical Period	Topographical Features	Plan Unit	Evidence
Pre-Christian			
Early Christian	Early church enclosures	1A & 1B	T / D / C / P
Anglo-Norman			
Plantation (16th-17th Century)			
Georgian (18th Century)	Possible estate village & extension	3	D / C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	Workhouse	4	D / C / P
20th Century			D / C / P
Additional Units	Fair Green	2	C
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

In the absence of documentary or archaeological evidence, any proposals regarding the origins of Corofin are at best tentative. There is substantial evidence however, for a church site at Kilvoydan with a twin site at Corofin itself. This latter site was revitalised in the 17th or 18th century at which time settlement developed. Early church evidence is predominantly found in the survival of curvilinear boundaries - suggesting the presence of enclosures. Other than these and the fording / trade functions, the strength of the argument is circumstantial at best.

The important influence of Kilvoydan cannot be overlooked and suggests that the initial settlement of Corofin was influenced by church factors and reinforced by landscape ones. The linkage between these two sites is paramount to understanding the settlement of Corofin and the bipolar religious cores have led to the development of the settlement as we see it today.

Ennistymon

Ennistymon is situated in the parish of Kilmanaheen which is bounded on the west by the Bay of Lehinch (on Ireland's Atlantic coastline).[1] Four kilometres inland the settlement is 'hidden in a recess among the hills'.[2] It was described in 1837 by Samuel Lewis as:

> [A] market and post-town in the parish of Kilmanaheen, barony of Corcomroe, County of Clare, and province of Munster. . . The town although irregularly built, has a picturesque appearance. A little below the bridge the river, which has its source in the mountains to the southeast, rushes over an extensive ridge of rocks and forms a beautiful cascade, at a short distance from which it joins the river Deery.[3]

MacCurtain suggests that the narrow street near the bridge over the Cullenagh River is the oldest part of the settlement which most likely developed around this old bridge, as historically it was the lowest crossing point of the river before it reaches the sea.[4] What are of consideration here are the factors which influenced the development of this site, and the influences on its evolution.

The name of this possibly religious settlement provides an interesting example of the complexity encountered when examining Irish placenames. According to Frost and Westropp, the name Ennistymon (or Ennistimon) derives from the Irish 'Inis Diamáin'. Various translations of this name have been suggested, including 'Diamain's river meadow' or 'the fruitful river side meadow'.[5] Dinneen's dictionary gives a choicer translation of the name which may signify 'the hidden / lonely or secret island' – the word 'diamhain' in this case referring to something which is either obscure or mystical.[6] Yet further rendering of the name to 'dia-mhaoin', may refer to church property (i.e. 'dia' meaning God and 'mhaoin' referring to property).[7] This may be a more exact

---

[1] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 105.

[2] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 94.

[3] Lewis, S. (1937) ' *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, pp 607-608.

[4] MacCurtain, M. (1994) 'Ennistymon'; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 94.

[5] Frost, J. (1906) *County of Clare Irish Local Names Explained*, p. 34.

[6] Dinneen, P.S. (1927) *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla*, p. 332; *Clare Places* website at: http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/et_history.htm

[7] Dinneen, P.S. (1927) *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla*.

translation, as a Saint Luchtighern is reputed to have had an 'abbey' here.[8] Like the 'half-island' translation of 'Lahinch', Ennistymon's name could also be simplistic and linked to its physical features.[9] At one time the area on which Ennistymon House is now built was an island. The steep hill on which it stands is partly natural and partly artificial.[10] Thus a topographical translation given by MacCurtain is 'the island of the middle house' which may refer to the original O'Connor castle that preceded Ennistymon House.[11]

Some alternative spellings and derivatives of the name 'Ennistymon' include:

Ennistimon; Inis-timain / tomen / diomain / Diamáin; Inisdimain; Inisdyman; Moy Inisdia; Ennistymond; Inistimensis; Inistornensis.[12]

The name of the parish is of direct religious influence - in Irish it is called 'Cill Mainchín', which means the Church of St Mainchin or Munchin, who is an important ecclesiastic in Northern Munster and the Patron Saint of the City of Limerick.[13]

The early history of Ennistymon is sparse, with references to the settlement mainly dating from the sixteenth century - these however, suggest a well established castle of the O'Connors. The site is absent from Speed's 1610 map, and while it is not mentioned by name on Petty's 1685 map (Figure 4.4.5.1.) there is a symbol suggesting that this was a crossing point of the Cullenagh river. By the 1787 Grand Jury map, the cartographer identified this as the location of a large house, but does not identify any church or other settlement features.

MacCurtain in her work focuses development of the settlement from the early nineteenth century.[14] According to her, the earliest mention appears to be a 1422 entry in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, which refers to an O'Connor castle at 'Caislen-na-Dumhcha', which O'Donovan locates 'about two miles [3.2km] west of Ennistymon'.[15] It appears from a document written by a Sir T. Cusack in 1574, which is preserved in

---

8   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 94.
9   Ibid.
10   Ibid.
11   MacCurtain, M. (1994) 'Ennistymon', p. 110; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 94.
12   Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 430; Joyce, P.W. *Irish Local Names Explained*; Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 108; O'Donovan J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, Vol. VII. p. 68; White, P. (1893) *The History of Clare*, p. 208; 396; Archdall, M. (1786) *Monasticon Hibernicum*, p. 52.
13   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 105.
14   MacCurtain, M. (1994) 'Ennistymon', pp 109-119.
15   Ibid p. 110; O'Donovan, J. (1851) *The Annals of the Four Masters*, 1422AD, Vol. IV, p. 853

265

Trinity College, that the O'Briens possessed almost all of the castles (and presumably land) in the Barony of Corcomroe. These they had 'wrested from the original owners', who were mainly O'Connors'.[16] One of the few that still belonged to the O'Connors was 'Inisdyman', which belonged to the O'Connor, (the other non-O'Brien land was Tuomolyn which belonged to MacClancy).[17] Soon after this, in 1582, the Ennistymon land passed into the possession Turlough O'Brien.[18]

O'Donovan comments that in the 1840s, the house and estate of Ennistymon were in the possession of M. Finucane, Esq., who descended from the O'Briens in the female line.[19] As can be seen, the history of Ennistymon house, seat of these various dynasties, is an integral part of the settlement fabric at this site. Antiquity of the site is evidenced in the gable of the present structure at Ennistymon House (which is a hotel) where the end wall of an earlier castle may be seen.[20]

Saint Mainchin is the patron saint of the parish, but, 'there is no Holy Well nor other monument of this Saint now in existence in the parish, nor anything from which it could be inferred that he was the patron except the name of the parish'.[21] In addition to this patron saint, Saint Luchtighern is said to have presided here.[22] While no date is given for this individual by Archdall or Lewis it is likely that the ruins of the old church on the hilltop overlooking the Inagh / Cullenagh River were linked to this foundation.[23] Gwynn and Hadcock provide more information and state that Ennistymon was founded by St. Luctigern (sic), 'abbot of Inis-tomen', in the reign of St. Ita of Killeedy (i.e. circa 550).[24] Westropp tells that Luchtighern, who was the son of Cutrito, of Tomfinlough was perhaps associated with Inisdimain (i.e. Ennistymon) and he was a friend of Macreehy who lived circa 550.[25]

MacCurtain in synthesising the information on him describes the founder as 'a shadowy St. Luchtighern, whose church was close to the shallow ford of the river near the

[16] White, P. (1893) *The History of Clare*, p. 208; 396.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'Excursions of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland', p. 279; O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 105.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'Excursions of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland', p. 279.
[21] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 105.
[22] Archdall, M. (1786) *Monasticon Hibernicum*, p. 52.
[23] Ibid; Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 608; 175.
[24] Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 383; Westropp, T. J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick', p. 349.
[25] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', pp 108-109.

falls'.[26] The feast day of this mysterious figure was kept on April 13th, in the parish in 1839, but it is recorded under April 28th in the *Calendar of Oengus*.[27] Identifying saints associated with the place, Westropp also lists Corman of Kilcoman, near Ennistymon, and of Tobercorman, near Ballyvaughan.[28] Other than these 'shadowy' references to founders and saints associated with the site there is no record of Ennistymon in any of the early sources. Thus, depending on documentation, it appears that the settlement under consideration is of relatively recent origin, being of little or no historical importance.

Site Description and Plan Analysis

The attributes of the landscape which led to the establishment of a castle, at this site, are similar to those which would have encouraged the establishment of an early church site. Ennistymon House, which was the original castle site, was once an island, which would have ensured control of this important crossing point (Figure 4.4.5.4.). While the secular motive may have been defensive, a church would have been suitably placed here to achieve high levels of communication with the surrounding countryside, both sites, however, would have been mutually beneficial with regard to raising of status.

The topography of the area supports the initial development on Church Hill (Figure 4.4.5.7.b.). The central portion of this site is the church and graveyard which are identified here as Plan Unit 1 (Figure 4.4.5.5.). Surrounding this is a possible enclosure - annotated as Plan Unit 2. Ennistymon House, the earliest secular structure at the site is identified as Plan Unit 3. The presence of the Fair Green (Plan Unit 4) within Plan Unit 2 indicates the relationship between religious and market function. Despite the secular importance of the castle site, the greater part of the settlement fabric (Plan Unit 5) lies adjacent to the church unit, straddling the bridging point, thus stressing the importance of the hilltop church site in the evolution of settlement. The construction of a Roman Catholic church and convent (Plan Unit 6) outside this core area follows the pattern identified in a number of other sites.

This neat spatial organisation is interrupted somewhat by two additional plan units, for which a provenance is difficult to ascertain. These (Plan Unit 7A & 7B) are both

---

[26] MacCurtain, M. (1994) 'Ennistymon', p. 110.
[27] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', pp 108-109.
[28] Ibid p. 108.

curvilinear in shape, and lie to the northwest of the settlement fabric. The northernmost of these (7A) contains St. Andrew's church, which may identify this as a church enclosure. The other (Unit 7B) is also curvilinear and lies adjacent to the central planned market space. While religious motives may be proposed for both of these units (with the presence of church, graveyard, curvilinear boundaries and adjacent market), there is less documentary evidence to support either of these as early churches than exists for Units 1 & 2.

Though direct evidence from documentary and physical sources is sparse, there is strong indication for the early existence of a church site. South and east of the present Parliament - Newtown / Church Street junction, with its planned marked place, the landscape is dominated by Church Hill. This eminence overlooks the bridging point of the river and while the ruins at the site are the remains of a building from the 1700s, the streetscape and property boundaries attest to earlier origins.

The following table (Table 4.40. & Figure 4.4.5.5.) illustrates the enclosure at Ennistymon hill, scaled from the 1897, 25-inch map of the site. A number of structures form the enclosure. To the north, the apex of the plot annotated '1.122' forms the northernmost extent of the enclosure lying at a distance of 187 meters from the church. Following this and subsequently the northern extent of the Fair Green, in a clockwise direction, leads to a northwest - southeast roadway. The enclosure continues to the junction of this road with the straight section of eastern roadway northeast of the church. To the south of this a second junction is taken to be the eastern extent of the enclosure. Continuing in a clockwise direction the enclosure may continue to a southeastern apex at the road junction near the river. It is more likely however that the northeast - southwest property boundary truncating the triangular plot of Church Hill Wood is the continuation of the circuit. The junction of this with the curvilinear enclosing line of plot '.273' is taken here to be the southeastern point of the overall enclosure. Connecting with the southern roadway, the line of the circuit then follows a distinctly curvilinear pattern. Crossing Church Hill Street from its corner with this curvilinear street, the enclosure follows the line of a short alleyway. The northern limit of this narrow indentation is the northwestern limit of the enclosure. From this point a strong southwest - northeast property line completes the circuit.

TABLE 4.40. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT ENNISTYMON			
Measurement N-S*	310.6	Measurement E-W*	292.7
Average Radius Length	150.8	Area of Enclosure	7.15 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

This results in an enclosure 311 meters north-south, 293 meters east-west. The overall shape is sub-circular and it has an average radius length of 151 meters.

The church elements surviving within this inner enclosure include:

- A sequence of church sites, ranging from an early period.

- A well established burial ground.

- A Fair Green

A patent roll order of 2nd February 1776 ordered the site of the parish church of 'Kilmanahan' to be changed to Ennistymon, thus, a church of Ireland church was built on the summit of an eminence to the east of the settlement (known as Church Hill).[29] All that stands today are the ruins of this church, built in 1778, which Westropp described as 'an old featureless church of the reign of George III [which] has no monuments of general interest' (Figure 4.4.5.7.c.).[30] An unadorned nave and chancel church, this fell into ruin soon after the 'new' church was built (i.e. 1830).[31] The view over the surrounding countryside from this point is spectacular. A number of tomb burials exist in the graveyard at Ennistymon, and while the burial ground is well established, there appears to be no funerary architecture of antiquarian note.

An important feature in the layout and development of the settlement is the central location of Church Hill Road and the Fair Green. Examination of the 1842 map (Figure 4.4.5.2.) illustrates the convergence of roads at this market area, with a pathway / road bisecting the fair green at this time. Perhaps the presence of these elements within the enclosure denote delineation of quadrants within the original enclosure - as occurred in Armagh. Alternatively, they may simply be remnants of an earlier market place. The

[29] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'Excursions of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland', p. 279.

[30] Lewis, S. (1937) A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, Vol. I, p. 608; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) Clare: County of Contrasts, p. 95; Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'Excursions of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland', p. 279.

[31] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) Clare: County of Contrasts, p. 95.

proximity to the church site and the resulting importance of Ennistymon Fair, would strongly suggest that religious and economic development evolved in tandem.

Saint Andrew's Church of Ireland church was erected in 1830 (Plan Unit 7A). It 'is a handsome cruciform structure, in the later English style, with an octagonal tower on its south side resting on a square base: it is advantageously situated at the northern entrance to the town'.[32] This church which was disproportionately large for the congregation it served was used until the mid 1970s, and in 1983 was taken over as a cultural centre.[33] There is a set of curvilinear landscape features in the vicinity of this east-west aligned church (Figure 4.4.5.5.). The first of these - annotated as Plan Unit 7A - includes the southern border of Punchbowl Wood which links with the curvilinear roadway to the east of the building. A second feature - Plan Unit 7B - is formed by the curvilinear roadway to the south of 'The Cottage' and a curvilinear pathway to the northwest. Perhaps these sets of boundaries form additional church enclosures or earlier curvilinear settlement features. While no historical evidence supports this proposition, the surviving Church of Ireland structure built in the early 19th century may have replaced an earlier structure at this site.

Two separate patterns of approach road exist. The roads which converge from the north of the river appears to be older and more sinuous in their style, while the roads which approach the bridge from the south are more modern and direct (Figure 4.4.5.7.a.). In addition, the field pattern adjoining the bridge to the south (Figure 4.4.5.2.) is more regular and planned. Both of these features would suggest that 'improvements' have been carried out to the road pattern and fieldscape south of the river. In addition, the 1916/19 map (Figure 4.4.5.3.) shows an alteration in the field pattern from that of the 1842 map; the fields are bigger, the allotment style layout has been changed / modernised, the settlement at Ardnacullia which is also evident in the Valuation Map (Figure 4.4.5.6.) has disappeared and the railway has been constructed. All of these 'developments' have altered the landscape, and in so doing, have perhaps interfered with an older landscape which could have further supported the presence of a church site

---

[32]   Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 608.
[33]   Hewson, A. (1995) *Inspiring Stones*, p. 102.

Table 4.41 presents a chronology of site evolution at Ennistymon, suggesting periods during which the key elements of the site were established or constructed. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that the southern church site - Plan Units 1 & 2 - is the key element in the settlement fabric, forming the focal point for subsequent development. Ennistymon Castle or a structure that preceded it may date from the Anglo-Norman period while the majority of the building fabric is of an 18th century planned nature and includes a market place. There is little evidence of the pre-Georgian period, but despite this planned layout and subsequent developments, a number of curious curvilinear elements have survived.

TABLE 4.41. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT ENNISTYMON			
Historical Period	**Topographical Features**	**Plan Unit**	**Evidence**
Pre-Christian	-		-
Early Christian	Church / Enclosure	1 / 2	C
Anglo-Norman	Ennistymon House	3	P
Plantation (16th-17th Century)			-
Georgian (18th Century)	Settlement	5	C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	RC Church	6	C / P
20th Century	Settlement		T / D / C / P
Additional Units	Market Area	4	T / C / P
	Curvilinear Units	7A / 7B	C
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

All of the plan units are important elements in the evolution of settlement, however, this study proposes that the primary focus of habitation in this site is the church unit. While documentary and physical evidence for an ancient church site is circumspect, the streetscape and placename evidence suggest a site of some antiquity. Whichever translation of the placename is adopted - fruitful riverside meadow, or island of the middle house - there is indirect reference to settlement. There is a wealth of religious placenames - Church Hill, Church Street and Church Hill Wood. In addition to this, the surrounding landscape contains much historical fabric. This ranges from the ruins of Glen castle to the southeast, Kilcornan (church of Cornan) graveyard, hill and townland to the northeast, Killeinagh (church of Inagh) townland to the east and a graveyard and church site to the west. Further placename evidence which suggests a highly humanised,

perhaps even aristocratic landscape includes Castlequarter within which Ennistymon Castle stood and the use of the Deerpark placename in three townlands to the east and one to the southwest.

The remains of churches dominate the landscape at Ennistymon. The 1778 church and graveyard preside from their site, as does the newer Church of Ireland church on Church Street and the modern Roman Catholic church above the Lahinch Road.[34]

Based on the evidence presented here, it can be suggested that while documentary evidence of religious origins for Ennistymon is scant, topographical evidence is strong if tantalisingly confusing. While the complexity of possibly multiple church foci exists, Ennistymon was most likely an important historical site for trade and communication. From the survival of enclosures, and placename evidence, it may be suggested that this secular importance was based on, or at least in parallel with, religious development.

---

[34] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 95.

Killaloe

In 1837 Lewis described Killaloe as:

> pleasantly situated on a rising ground on the western bank of the
> Shannon near the noted falls of Killaloe, and about a mile [i.e. 1.6
> kilometres] from Lough Derg. . . . [It] is connected with the County of
> Tipperary by an ancient bridge of nineteen arches . . . [It is a] . . .
> parish, and the seat of a diocese, in the barony of Tulla, County of
> Clare, and province of Munster. . . This place, anciently called Laonia,
> derived its present name, supposed to be a corruption of Kill-da-Lua,
> from the foundation of an abbey, in the 6th century, by St. Lua or
> Molua, grandson of Eocha Baildearg, King of Munster, and which
> became the head of a diocese.[1]

In discussing the location of church sites, on natural route ways, Hughes comments that
the 'monastery' at Killaloe is sited on the Shannon just below Lough Derg - an
important crossing-point (Figure 4.4.6.7.b.). In addition to the site providing a terrestrial
fording point, the damp, heavily wooded landscape of the sixth century would have
resulted in the river Shannon acting as an important aquatic highway, connecting
Limerick to Lough Derg, Lough Ree and Lough Allen. This further emphasises the
importance placed on Killaloe by the early ecclesiastics.[2]

In the work of the ancient Irish authorities the name of this settlement, parish and
diocese is written 'Cill-Da-Lua', which means the Church of Molua, Dalua, or
Lua(nus), a 'famous' Saint who 'flourished' towards the end of the sixth century.[3]
According to O'Donovan, 'every authority states that Kill-Dalua means the Church of
St. Molua, the leper'.[4] Despite the consensus of translation and meaning, some
alternative spellings and derivatives of the name exist, including:

Cill DaLua; Killaloe; Laonia; Cell-da-lua; Kildalua; Ceall-Dalua).[5]

Because this area contained the only ford over the Shannon into the lands of Richard de
Clare, the area was known for some time as Claresford.[6] This placename has been

---

[1] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 122.
[2] Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. *(1977) The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, pp 23-24.
[3] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 243.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 122; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J.
     (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 121; O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*,
     1084AD, Vol. II, p. 921; Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 439.

retained locally and is the name of the former Church of Ireland Bishop's palace to the south.

Yet another name associated with the area is Kincora, or rather the palace of 'Ceann Coradh', (which means 'the head of the weir'). This palace was situated on the summit of the hill in Killaloe, in the vicinity of the site now occupied by the Roman Catholic Church.[7] The ancient structure, of which no evidence now exists, may have been built as a defence against the Vikings as early as the ninth century but it was under the stewardship of Brian Boru 'High King of Ireland', that it achieved its greatest fame. Brian rebuilt and strengthened this ancient stronghold of the Dalcassian sept in 1002.[8] Some alternative spellings and derivatives of the name 'Kincora', the palace of Brian Boru at Killaloe, include:

Ceann-coradh; Cenn Corad.[9]

As with Kilfenora, Killaloe is an episcopal site. From the earliest period the site has been intrinsically linked with the river Shannon, which is a key factor in its evolution. The settlement is indicated on the various historical maps under investigation, being identifiable in Speed and Petty's map, and indicated as a cathedral site in the 1787 Grand Jury map (Figure 4.4.6.1.). This importance continues to the present day and with a population of 972 in 1996 it is the seventh largest census town in County Clare.[10]

The aforementioned 'Ceann Coradh' stood at the summit of the hill of Killaloe, but no trace of it is now visible.[11] In collecting data for the Ordnance Survey, O'Donovan commented : 'I fear that it will be impracticable to shew [sic.] its site on the Ordnance Map as no field works are visible'.[12] It is thought that the site extended from the verge of the hill over the Shannon to the point where the present R.C. Chapel stands. It was either erected or developed by Brian 'Imperator Scotorum' (i.e. 'Emperor of the Irish') but was not inhabited by his successors for more than two centuries.[13]

---

[6]   Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 122.
[7]   Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 121.
[8]   Ibid.
[9]   Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 439; O'Donovan, J. *The* (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1061AD, Vol. II, pp 880-881; Murphy, D. (1896) *The Annals of Clonmacnoise*, 1061AD, p. 178; MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1010AD.
[10]   *Census of Ireland 1996*.
[11]   O'Russel, (1897) *Beauties and Antiquities of Ireland*.
[12]   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 245.
[13]   Ryan, M. (1990) *Brian Boru: Imperator Scotorum*; O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 245.

274

In the townland of Ballyvalley ('Baile Ui Mhothla') about 1.5km to the north of Killaloe and near the western bank of the Shannon is a fort called 'Beal Borumha'. It was here that Brian received his 'Boru' meaning tribute or royal tax,. The present remains consist of a large earthen mound, which was constructed by the Anglo-Normans over Brian's fort, and other than indicating its location, it 'presents no feature worthy of remark'.[14]

About 1.5 kilometres northwest of Killaloe is the far-famed rocky mountain of Craig Liath, which, according to O'Donovan was well known by name in every part of Ireland as the habitation of the great spirit Eeval / Aoibheal. This person / entity was the familiar sprite or Banshee of Munster and of the Dalcassians.[15] A well called Tobar Aoibheal springs from the side of the mountain.[16] Also in this mountain is situated the site of 'Grianán Lachtna', ('Sunny place of Lachtna') which, was built by Lachtna (Lucius) ancestor of Brian Boru in the year 953.[17]

Molua, (also Dalua, Lua or Lugad) after whom the church of Killaloe was named, was Abbot and Patron of 'Cill-Da-Lua' c.640. He was also associated with Friar's Island (1km south of Killaloe) and according to Westropp, probably sites called Killue (Kiluga) and Kilofin (Killugafion).[18] He was succeeded by St. Flannan, who was consecrated Bishop of the place about the year 639. From that period, Killaloe is mentioned in Irish History as the seat of a Bishop.[19] Dates for St. Flannan are uncertain. Westropp comments that he preached in the Hebrides, and gave his name to the Flannan Isles, living c. 680.[20] Others state that it is a mistake to confuse him with the Flannan whose apostolic work lay in Scotland. It is also claimed that he may be identified as Flannan of Cell Aird in West Clare, who died in 778.[21] According to Gwynn and Hadcock, the *Vita S. Flannan*, 'a product of the twelfth century', is 'historically worthless'.[22] Flannan's memory was formerly celebrated at this site on the 18th of December, but, in the time of O'Donovan, his Holy Well was visited 'on any day the

---

[14] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 246.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid; Kierse, S. (1983) *Historic Killaloe*.
[18] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 110.
[19] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 243.
[20] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 108.
[21] MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 778AD.
[22] Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 86.

pilgrims think proper'.[23] Westropp gives December 19th as the official date for this pilgrimage.[24]

It was the policy of Brian Boru, at the height of his power in Munster, to make Killaloe the principal church of his Dalcassian kingdom in Clare. In Irish tradition, the two island churches of 'Inis Cealtra' (in Lough Derg) and 'Inis Cathaig' (Scattery Island in the Shannon estuary) had stronger claims to antiquity and prestige than Killaloe which was almost unknown. However, because it was the birthplace and administrative centre of Brian, it became the seat of the Dalcassian sponsored diocese. Flannan became patron of the see, which was later (at the synod of Rathbreasail - 1111) extended to include Nenagh, Roscrea, Birr, Terryglass and Clonfert-mulloe in N. Tipperary, thus, containing important church sites and covering a vast area - much larger than the county in which its ancient cathedral stands.[25]

In addition to sponsoring the Episcopal rise of Killaloe, it appears that the O'Brien dynasty also influenced other developments. For example, it seems likely that Killaloe had a good scriptorium at the end of the eleventh century, as the Annals of Inisfallen (described as an O'Brien document) may have been transcribed here in 1092. The quality of this scriptorium would have been very high as this manuscript is 'one of the finest surviving specimens of early medieval Irish calligraphy', and according to Hughes, by far the most valuable of the Munster historical documents of this period.[26]

Brian's successors continued his efforts and attempted to maintain a church here which was independent of Norman influence. This was a source of some concern to William the Conqueror's adviser, Lanfranc, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who wanted to extend Norman influence over all Irish church affairs.[27] Lanfranc's death in 1089 weakened Canterbury's grip on Irish church affairs, particularly in Killaloe which was becoming an important centre of religious life.[28] Towards the end of the eleventh century, the O'Briens shifted their capital to Limerick, making it their chief power base

[23] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 243.
[24] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 108.
[25] Gwynn and Hadcock (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses : Ireland*, p. 86; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 121.
[26] Hughes, K. (1972) *Early Christian Ireland*, pp 297-298.
[27] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 121.
[28] Ibid.

as Kings of Munster and Thomond.[29] Killaloe retained its episcopal status and has remained an important church site to the present day.

Numerous events and episodes at Killaloe are recorded in the annals and ancient documents. While the usual references to the death of coarbs of Flannan exist (as early as 563AD), there are also many references which stress the importance of the site.[30] The following are a selection which illustrate the evolution of the settlement and the importance of its standing.

> 1009   'The coambarba of Colum, son of Crimhthainn, i.e. of Tir-da-ghlas, Inis-Cealtra and Cill-Dalua, died'.[31]

This, and other similar records illustrate the links between Killaloe and other O'Brien church sites at Terryglass and Inis Cealtra.[32]

> 1009   'mcLiagh arch poet of Ireland and one that was in wonderfull favour with king Bryan died; he was named Mortaugh, a very good man [in the same year] Connaught men broke downe Killaloe and Kynkorey [i.e. Kincora] (king Bruan his mannor house) and tooke away all the goodes therein'.[33]

In the Following year (i.e. 1010) Brian Boru led a number of raids including one against The Ua Néill of Ard Macha, and took hostages back to Kincora.[34] He also undertook to protect his territory with Killaloe at its centre

> 1012   'Many fortresses were erected by Brian (Boru), namely, Cathair Cinn-coradh' etc (This translates directly as the 'city' of Kincora).[35]

But to no avail it appears:

> 1015   'The Connaughtmen plundered, and demolished Ceann-Coradh and Cill-Dalua'.[36]

This reference (just as the 1009 record above) makes a clear distinction between secular and religious site - the palace of Kincora and 'the church of Lua'. The importance of

---

[29] Ibid.

[30] Murphy, D. (1896) The Annals of Clonmacnoise, 563AD, pp 87-88. Also see: MacAirt, S. (1951) Annals of Inisfallen, 991AD

[31] O'Donovan, J. (1851) Annals of the Four Masters, 1009AD, Vol. II, p. 761.

[32] See also: MacAirt, S. (1951) Annals of Inisfallen, 1010AD

[33] Murphy, D. (1896) The Annals of Clonmacnoise, 1009AD, p. 169.

[34] Ibid; O'Donovan, J. (1851) Annals of the Four Masters, 1010AD, Vol. II, p. 763.

[35] O'Donovan, J. (1851) Annals of the Four Masters, 1012AD, Vol. II, pp 769-771.

[36] Ibid 1015AD, Vol. II, p. 789.

this division is unclear, but there appears to be sufficient difference to merit the mention of both places. Elsewhere this event is recorded as happening in 1016.[37]

In 1028, 1030 and 1040,[38] important ecclesiastics of Killaloe died, but the site continued to retain its administrative importance:

> 1050 *Arising from poor weather, which carried away corn, milk, food and fish, there grew up dishonesty among all, until 'the clergy and laity of Munster assembled, with their chieftains, under Donnchadh, son of Brian, i.e. the son of the King of Ireland, at Cill-Dalua, where they enacted a law and a restraint upon every injustice from small to great'.*[39]

It appears however, that this rise in status made Killaloe a more attractive target, with many attacks on the site perpetrated as O'Brien power began to wane.

> 1061 *'An army was led by Aedh an Gha-bhernaigh Ua Conchobhair (i.e. Hugh of the broken spear) to Ceann-coradh [Kincora]; and he demolished the fortress (mannorhouse of king Brian borowo), and destroyed the enclosing wall of the well, and eat its two salmons, and also burned Cill-Dalua.*[40]

In 1080, 1081 and 1084 the 'town' was reduced to ashes.[41] Recovery of the settlement after these disasters, and the scale of the site is evident in the following record from the *Annals of the Four Masters.*

> 1088 *'An army was led by domhnall, the son of Mac Lochlainn, King of Ireland, and the people of the north of Ireland . . . (They) proceeded with their forces into Munster . . . (in addition to destroying sites such as Emly and Lough Gur, they) broke down and demolished Ceann-coradh; and they obtained eight score heroes, both foreigners and Irish, as hostages and pledges, and then returned to their houses'.*[42]

This report infers a high population for Kincora, and, as no mention is made of Cill da Lua, this implies secular and religious differentiation.

---

[37] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 121.
[38] O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1015AD, Vol. II, p. 1028; Ibid 1040AD, Vol. II, p. 837; MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1030AD; Ibid 1040AD
[39] O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1050AD, Vol. II, p. 859.
[40] Ibid, 1061AD, Vol. II, pp 880-881; Murphy, D. (1896) *The Annals of Clonmacnoise*, 1061AD, p. 178.
[41] MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1081AD;Lewis, S. (1937) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 122; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 121; O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1084AD, Vol. II, p. 921; Ibid 1081AD, Vol. II, p. 917..
[42] O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1089AD, Vol. II, pp 933-935.

A wide variety of other events are recorded for Killaloe. For example, important men of the community of Cell Da Lua died in 1095;[43] Various attacks and counter attacks are recorded, which involved the men of Kincora - in 1101 Murtagh, plundered 'Grianan-Oiligh' in revenge for Kincora;[44]; natural disasters are also recorded - Kincora was burned by lightning in 1107.[45] Revenge for the damage to Grianan was taken at a later stage:

> 1118   *Torlogh O'Conor, at the head of a great army of the Connacians, marched to the Palace of Ceann Coradh and hurled it, both stones and timber, into the Shannon. Such was the end of the famous Palace of Brian Boroo! hurled into the Shannon by Connaughtmen.*[46]

The arrival of the Anglo-Normans is recorded in 1207, as is their attempt to build a fortification, and their subsequent repulsion. This shows the tactical importance of this site (as illustrated in the subsequent record of 1216, they later succeeded):

> 1207   *The English of Meath and Leinster, with their forces, went to Killaloe to build a castle, near the Borowe (Now Beal Boru, a hill in the neighbourhood of Killaloe). They were frustrated of their purpose, did neither castle nor other thing worthy of memory, but lost some men and horses in theire jorney, and soe returned to their houses back again'.*[47]

> 1216   *'Geffrey March founded a castle at Killaloe and forced the inhabitants to receive an English Bushop (Bushop - Robert Travers. In 1221 he was deproved of the See by the Papal Legate)'.*[48]

Unlike many of the previous case studies, a wealth of annalistic documentation survives (much more than the brief samples illustrated here) much of it proclaiming the importance of Killaloe in both secular and religious matters. The next step is to place this rich record alongside the fabric and topographical evidence, primarily undertaking this task through the use of Plan Analysis.

---

[43]   MacAirt, S. (1951) *Annals of Inisfallen*, 1095AD; O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1095AD, Vol. II, p. 951.

[44]   O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1101AD, Vol. II, pp 967-969; O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 245.

[45]   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 246; O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1107AD, Vol. II, p. 985..

[46]   O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 246.

[47]   Murphy, D. (1896) *The Annals of Clonmacnoise*, 1207AD, p. 222.

[48]   Ibid, 1216AD, p. 228.

The evolution of Killaloe was clearly influenced by two powers - church (Cill da Lua) and state (Kincora - palace of Brian Boru and his successors). Arising from this, settlement (as illustrated in Figure 4.4.6.5.) developed between the two sites - the cathedral / Flannan's oratory (Plan Unit 1) and Kincora (Plan Unit 3 - the outline of which follows that of the subsequent market area in Killaloe).

Thus, the origins of the main street of Killaloe, which connects both sites, may date back to the early years of the second Millennium, when Brian Boru was hailed as high King of Ireland. Possibly originating along the main street, this settlement expanded to its present scale (Plan Unit 4), developing throughout subsequent periods. A clearly identifiable plan unit at Killaloe (Plan Unit 5) is the riverine development to the east which is related to the development of the Limerick - Dublin canal in the latter years of the 18th century. The significance of this unit for this discussion is that these workings considerably altered this area, possibly eliminating historical traces in the vicinity of the cathedral. The curvilinear nature of streets and adjacent boundaries suggests the presence of many additional units. Just two are explored here: Plan Unit 2 is suggested as an enclosure surrounding the primary church unit and; Plan Unit 6 is a curious curvilinear property boundary which is based on topographic features and historical references.

The first of these church units is that surrounding Saint Flannan's Cathedral (12th century) and Oratory (11th / 12th century). The older of the two buildings - the oratory - lies to the north of, and parallel with the cathedral, in a roughly east-west alignment. Many curvilinear lineaments radiate from this structure. The following table (Table 4.42) illustrates the proposed inner enclosure scaled from the 1895, 25-inch map of Killaloe (Figure 4.4.6.4.). The inner enclosure proposed here follows the line of John's lane and Bridge Street, to the west and northwest, with a curve in this boundary directly to west of the oratory strengthening this hypothesis. The sinuous line of the narrow street initially follows the curve of the hill, then picking up a curvilinear shape centred on Flannan's Oratory. Northwest of the oratory lies an important junction where Bridge Street, Royal Parade and the northwestern canal-side road meet the bridge. This point where terrestrial routeways meet river crossing, lies outside but adjacent to the enclosure.

The eastern line of the enclosure appears to follow the bank of the River Shannon, which is coterminous with the eastern limit of Shantraud townland (possibly derived from 'Sean tsráid' meaning 'old street' - thus suggesting ancient settlement). This is strongly conjectural, but the absence of evidence may result from the major river works (i.e. dredging and canal building) carried out in the area in the late eighteenth century. In the absence of evidence, a natural curvilinear boundary is hypothesised for the southern limit of this unit - linking the riverbank to John Street. At the intersection of John Street and Abbey Street the conclusion of the circuit may be proposed.

This proposed layout places St. Flannan's well within the enclosure and is further supported by the discovery of a number of ancient stone fragments within the area.[49] In addition, a number of human bones have been unearthed in gardens to the east of John Street - i.e. within the area identified.[50]

TABLE 4.42. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURE AT KILLALOE			
Measurement N-S*	221.3	Measurement E-W*	285.6
Average Radius Length	126.7	Area of Enclosure	5.05 ha
* = Summary measurements are based on distance N-S and E-W.			

This results in a semi-circular enclosure 221 meters north-south and 286 meters east-west. While unusual, this shape for an enclosure is not a unique phenomenon. It closely resembles the shape of a possible enclosure at Cork City, where the river runs to the north of the central church site, forming part of the boundary.[51]

In addition to the extensive documentary references to both church and settlement, there is abundant evidence of church features within the proposed inner enclosure including:

- St. Flannan's Oratory
- Saint Flannan's Cathedral
- A carved / decorated stone.
- A burial ground.
- St. Flannan's Holy well.

In the grounds of Killaloe Cathedral is St Flannan's oratory. This is a twelfth century Romanesque church (according to Leask, built c. 1100-30) which has lost its chancel but has retained a good Romanesque doorway and a well-preserved stone roof

[49] Kierse, S. (1983) Historic Killaloe.
[50] National Museum of Ireland (undated) Correspondence Files - Killaloe

supported by an arched barrel vault.[52] This small stone roofed church or 'duirtheach', is not unlike Columkille's House at Kells or Kevin's Kitchen at Glendalough. It measures 11.1 meters by 7.6 meters in breadth.[53] The doorway in the west gable is semicircular at the top and consists of four concentric circles.[54] The roof is of stone, and is very firmly constructed.

Despite the historical impossibility, this building (traditionally called Old Killaloe) was said to be the house in which Brian Boru's workmen deposited their implements when they were building the cathedral.[55] Up to the present day, belief in Killaloe is that Brian Boru himself hid in this oratory during his guerrilla warfare with the Vikings - 'when he was on the run'.[56] Could it be that these folk tales relate to an earlier structure at this site?

St. Molua founded the original church here but Donal (Domnall) Mór O'Brien erected the first cathedral circa 1180. According to Gwynn and Gleeson, an older church must have been built by Brian Boru, but was taken down to make way for the cathedral which was then destroyed by Cathal Carrach of Connaught in 1185. The Romanesque doorway in the southwestern corner of the current cruciform building appears to have belonged to the earlier cathedral.[57] According to Leask, this structure 'in elaboration . . . exceeds any other Irish doorway, even that of Clonfert'.[58]

The present Cathedral is a plain thirteenth century building, built of purple and yellow sandstone, cruciform in plan, without aisles, with a central tower over the crossing.[59] The most striking feature of the church is the great east window, which is 'bold and lofty'- the stained glass was installed in 1865.[60] Other Features of interest in the cathedral are lancet windows; the Gothic west door; the oak screen between the nave

[51] Bradley, J. (1990) 'The role of town-Plan Analysis in the study of medieval Irish Towns', pp 51.

[52] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 65; Leask, H. G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. I, p. 36.

[53] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 243.

[54] Ibid p. 244.

[55] Ibid p. 245.

[56] Griffin, K.A. (1990-92) *Killaloe / Ballina*, Unpublished Local History - Interviews

[57] Gwynn, A. and Gleeson, D.F. (1961) *History of the Diocese of Killaloe*, pp 9-11; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 121.

[58] Leask, H. G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. I, p. 151.

[59] Griffin, K.A. (1990-92) *Killaloe / Ballina*, Unpublished Local History Folio Q001-Q017

[60] Leask, H.G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. II, p. 56; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 122; Griffin, K.A. (1990-92) *Killaloe / Ballina*, Unpublished Local History Folio Q001-Q017

and chancel; the south transept with an elaborate double window in the east wall; and a medieval font of yellow sandstone.[61]

On the floor, in the recess of the Romanesque doorway, is an ancient tombstone incised with a cross which tradition says is the tomb of Murtagh, the last of the O'Briens who was High King of Ireland.[62] The cathedral is still used for divine worship today almost 800 years after its erection and on visiting in 1999, a number of restoration projects were underway, including work on the ceiling and on the Romanesque door.

A carved stone which is to be found inside the cathedral, is one of the few stones in the country with a Viking Runic inscription. This reads 'Thorgrim carved this stone'. It is even more unique in that it has a similar inscription in Ogham which reads: 'A Blessing upon Thorgrim'.[63] Unfortunately the original siting of this fragment is not known. If it is in fact from this site, which is likely, it represents an important carving from a transitional period of Viking / Christian interaction. Also in the cathedral, is a twelfth century high cross brought from Kilfenora in 1821 by Dr. Mant who was then Bishop of Killaloe.[64]

The Well of St. Flannan, who became the Patron of the Diocese (Molua according to O'Donovan, 'never having had the dignity of being designated Bishop') is situated in the east corner of Killaloe Town, northwest of the cathedral.[65] At one time a pattern (or patron's celebration day) was held at this well on St. Flannan's feast-day, 18th December, but this had dwindled to sporadic visits by the time the well was enclosed at the beginning of the twentieth century.[66] Some inscribed stones found here are now stored in St. Flannan's Oratory.[67] One of these, a gable finial (See Figure 2.2.), enticingly hints at the former existence of an early church building (similar possibly to Kilmalkedar), now vanished, or much altered.[68]

Spellissy proposes that a headless 'shiela-na-gig' (a grotesque small sculpture of a nude female, possibly apotropaic) which is located near the well, was probably brought here

[61] Griffin, K.A. (1990-92) *Killaloe / Ballina*, Unpublished Local History Folio Q001-Q017.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 65; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 122.
[64] Ibid.
[65] O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 243.
[66] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 123.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Hughes, K. and Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 65-66.

from some building now unknown.[69] This again hits at the existence of early structures - possibly even pre-Christian. At some stage the area around the well was used as a burial-ground since human bones have been exhumed from time to time.[70]

In addition to this fabric, evidence of multiple enclosures also exists around the churches at Killaloe. At a distance of approximately 250m, a curvilinear enclosure may be suggested in the line of Carriage / Carrick's Lane, and field boundaries leading to the southeast. This boundary would contain the present Church of Ireland Dean's residence - marked as Glebe land and thus suggests historical continuity of land usage.

North and west of the present day Roman Catholic church the boundary between Knockyclovaun and Shantraud townlands form part of an enclosing lineament approximately 380 meters in radius. This continues south along the line of Cross Roads, turning southeast until it disappears in the latter-day landscaping of Clarisford estate 500 meters southwest of the oratory. A strong curve in the boundary between Shantraud and Killestry ('Kill' meaning church, 'estry' probably meaning a person's name) a kilometre to the southwest suggests curvilinear boundaries as do a multitude of lines to the west.[71] Thus, the suggestion of one particular outer enclosure at Killaloe must take cognisance of these many other potential enclosures and not adopt a single suggestion.

A curious fact in the layout of Killaloe is that the streetscape radiates out from the cathedral site in a manner which ignores the local topography. The Roman Catholic church, which is proposed to stand on the site of Kincora, is sited upon an east-west aligned spur of land, with a steeply sloped hill between this and the riverside oratory / cathedral. The fact that the hilltop church occupies the site of Kincora - Brian Boru's palace, seems to be secondary in influencing the field pattern which radiates outwards from the more ancient church site - contradicting the physical landscape. The location of a market-place at the summit of Killaloe hill (Plan Unit 3 - locally called 'the green'), proximate to the Catholic church and the site of Kincora, is very likely of ancient origin.

The multitude of concentric lineaments makes the identification of an outer enclosure a rather difficult exercise. This is further complicated by lineaments which appear to run contrary to the overall pattern such as Church Street and Royal Parade (Figure 4.4.6.6.) which run contrary to the pattern focused on Flannan's Oratory. Perhaps this strong

---

[69] Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 352; Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 123.

[70] National Museum of Ireland (undated) *Correspondence Files – Killaloe.*

curvilinear line suggests / indicates a more radical proposal. Local tradition and a plaque erected in the early 20th century holds that St. Mary's Convent stands close to the site of an earlier church - the church of St. John. The presence of a church at this point within a curvilinear enclosure would explain the concave curve in the southwestern portion of the proposed inner enclosure. Thus, a second church, situated outside the proposed inner enclosure (Plan Unit 2) may have stood at this point. Local researcher Kierse, who has traced this building - St. John's Church back - to the mid 1700s, suggests that this may originally have been an Anglo-Norman construction, acting in parallel with the native site, dedicated to Flannan.[72]

'Inis Lua', 'Lua's Island', more commonly known as Friar's Island, now submerged by the river Shannon 1km to the south of the settlement, must also be considered when discussing the origins of Killaloe.[73] From the drawings of Friar's Island undertaken by Macalister prior to the removal of Lua's oratory, this site clearly portrayed many characteristics of an early church site.[74] The northeast-southwest aligned oratory stood on a slightly elevated platform, in the middle of a clearly curvilinear enclosure (Figure 4.4.6.9.). To the south there stood an additional building of which a gable stone and platform survived in the late 1920s. The First Edition six-inch Ordnance Survey map shows that a holy well (Lady's Well) stood north of this curvilinear enclosure and to the northern end of the island (Figure 4.4.6.9.).

St. Lua's Oratory now stands at the top of the hill of Killaloe, next to Killaloe Catholic church, on the site of the palace of Kincora, having been moved from its original site. When the Shannon hydroelectric scheme was inaugurated it was realised that the island and its ninth or tenth century church would be submerged. In order to preserve it, the entire structure was removed stone by stone, to its present site (by July 1930).[75] Leask suggests that this structure may have been constructed prior to the tenth century, Harbison is more conservative, however, proposing a pre twelfth century date.[76]

---

[71] Ó Paircín, L. (2001) Pers. Comm.

[72] Kierse, S. (2001) Pers. Comm.

[73] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 123 - The Shannon Hydro Electric Scheme resulted in the creation of an artificial lake down-river from Killaloe. This flooded farm land and islands and thus Lua's Oratory was relocated from Friar's Island to the grounds of the Roman Catholic Church in Killaloe.

[74] Macalister, R.A. (1929) 'Some Excavations Recently Conducted on Friar's Island', p. 16-26.

[75] Leask, H. G. (1930) 'The Church of St. Lua', p. 136; Macalister, R.A. (1929) ' Some Excavations Recently Conducted on Friar's Island', pp 16.

[76] Leask, H. G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. I, p. 28; Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, p. 65.

Tobermurragh, well to the north (Figure 4.4.6.3.) is named after Brian Boru's great grandson who was baptised at this place.[77] Though not a holy well, Murrough's well supplied the settlement with water before a piped water scheme came into operation. At the end of the nineteenth century it was enclosed by a red-brick building.[78]

A number of present-day roads radiate from Killaloe, leading to the west into County Clare. In addition, Ballina at the eastern end of Killaloe bridge, is the focus of a number of routeways which converge from the east. The ancient importance of this crossing point has been evident from the earliest times. It has been suggested that Killaloe is the point where the Slighe Dala - one of Ireland's ancient roadways - crosses the River Shannon to Kincora.[79]

Plan Development

It is possible that Killaloe evolved from a Pre-Christian site. This can be proposed for two reasons - the linkage of the site with the pagan figure Aoibheal of Craig Liath, and the discovery of archaeological artefacts in the river during dredging works of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These do not provide evidence of settlement however. The first settlement would appear to arise from humble origins on Friar's Island. As the site became more important, particularly with the rise of Brian Boru, the church site evolved. This however, ignores the presence of a diocesan boundary running congruent with the river Shannon to the east of which Friar's Island lies. Thus, this southern site is within the diocese of Cashel and Emly, rather than Killaloe.

This boundary and separation of sites suggests two possibilities. First, the Episcopal boundaries may be more modern and hence have no bearing on the evolution of the site which, according to local tradition and ancient documentation clearly support the antiquity of both Lua's Oratory and Flannan's Oratory. The conventional chronology begins with Friar's Island followed by Flannan's oratory, and then Flannan's Cathedral.[80] Using conventional dates for these buildings as proposed by Westropp, this is entirely logical.[81] A second, more radical proposal however is that these buildings may in fact be closer in age than has been previously thought. It may even be that both

---

[77] Spellissy, S. & O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, p. 123.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Fitzgerald, W. (1925) *The Historical Geography of Early Ireland*, p. 82
[80] Kierse, S. (1983) *Historic Killaloe*.
[81] Westropp, T. J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare', p. 110; O'Donovan, J. and Curry, E. (1939/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, p. 243

structures - which stood in different ecclesiastical divisions - could have been in use at the same time.[82]

In many similar frontier situations where two dioceses meet, major churches were built, but, as the O'Briens held the territory on both sides of the river, conflict between the two dioceses (Cashel and Emly, and Killaloe) would have been minimal. Thus, without need for 'frontier' churches, Cashel may have focused on development of their core churches while at Killaloe, the episcopal seat, buildings were developed to their present grandeur (Figures 4.4.6.7.c.-e. Figure 4.4.6.8.a.-c.).

The following (Table 4.43.) is a suggested chronology of evolution at Killaloe, based on the conventionally accepted history of the site, noting the periods during which the key elements of the site were established or constructed. From this basic Plan Analysis it appears that the central church site - Plan Units 1 & 2 - is a key element in its establishment, forming a focal point for subsequent settlement. The secular hilltop site of Kincora forms a secondary core, with settlement developing between these foci. Killaloe displays an uninterrupted sequence of settlement from the earliest records and beyond, up to the present day, playing a role in the Anglo-Norman occupation of this area, being an important strategic site during the Cromwellian conflicts and being a garrison town throughout the Georgian and Victorian periods. In all these periods the settlement is an important and strategic communication node.

TABLE 4.43. : PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT KILLALOE			
Historical Period	Topographical Features	Plan Unit	Evidence
Pre-Christian	Artefacts		T / P
Early Christian	Flannan's Oratory / Kincora	1 / 2 / 3	T / D / C / P
Anglo-Norman	Motte at Beal Boru		T / D / C / P
Plantation (16th-17th Century)			C / P
Georgian (18th Century)	Settlement / Canal	4 / 5	C / P
Victorian (19th Century)	Settlement Fabric		C / P
20th Century	Settlement Fabric		C / P
Potential Units	Curvilinear Plan Unit	6	C
* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc. D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc. C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc. P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.			

---

[82] Griffin and Griffin, (2000) *Ballina - Boher Our History and Traditions*, p. 53; O'Keeffe, T. (2001) Pers. Comm.

A problem arises however when one considers Plan Unit 6 which cannot be reconciled with these other features. Was St. John's church developed in parallel with other church sites or subsequent to either St. Flannan's Oratory or Cathedral?

Alternatively, could this be the original church site - perhaps even pre-dating Units 1-3? This relatively complete enclosure (Plan Unit 6) may represent an early church enclosure which was either usurped or simply replaced by an O'Brien sponsored building plan - resulting in the construction of Flannan's Oratory, and subsequently the more impressive cathedral. Unfortunately, this theory, while tantalising could only be coherently resolved / explored through detailed archaeological investigation.

Some of the physical elements (i.e. Flannan's Oratory) directly relate to ecclesiastical provenance, while curvilinear boundaries, a holy well and enclosures support the presence of an early church site. Folk tradition, road layout and placename evidence further develops the religious profile. The suggestion in this discussion is that settlement at Killaloe began with an early church. Due to its political and religious importance, the site, later evolved into the settlement under discussion.

Historically this has been a key fording point of the river, and this fact is still evident in the focusing of routeways on the crossing point (Figure 4.4.6.7.a.). Raising the water levels with the 1929 Shannon Hydro-Electric Scheme, has negated the natural variance of levels, but prior to this, fording points existed north and south of the bridge. To the north, Brian Boru established a fort, at a site where he exacted his tribute from lands to the east. To the south in the vicinity of Friar's Island, the river was also fordable, leading to the adoption of the placename Clarisford (i.e. Fording point into Clare). It has also been proposed that the Slighe Dala, one of the five ancient roads of Ireland, crossed the river Shannon at Killaloe. This again adds to the historical importance of the site as a nodal point for routeways. The landing point for the bridge is located mid-way between the two poles of influence, and these forces still influence the entire layout of this complex settlement pattern, which has its roots in ancient history.

The origins of the previously discussed 'Church of Lua' translation for the name Killaloe, clearly places the origins of Killaloe in an religious context. In addition to this is the aforementioned Friar's Island placename. Local tradition clearly supports antiquity, as does the wealth of religious and secular remains. Despite the elevation of Killaloe / Kincora to national importance with the political career of Brian Boru, a native of the area, the initial impetus for settlement would clearly appear to have been

church related with Brian bringing religious development to a higher level of development.

While the existence of church elements is clear, their interpretation is difficult. In some ways Killaloe fits comfortably into the model of church sites. It abounds in high quality documentary and physical elements. The unravelling of this and the suggestions presented by topography make interpretation difficult. The religious elements as they are preserved may represent a deliberate shaping of the landscape, or the confusion may simply represent layers of evolution and change. Only archaeological investigation will be able to clearly investigate the actual processes which helped shape this site which nonetheless is clearly of early religious origin.

CHAPTER 5 : ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

During the course of this investigation a number of commonalties came to light regarding elements within the case study sites. In the following sections these characteristics are investigated in a thematic manner and brought together in a revision of the Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites which was developed at the end of Chapter 2.

Following the revision of this model, the topic of continuity is discussed. This theme was explored in the investigation of each case study site, thus, this investigation, addresses overall issues of continuity. The discussion begins by drawing together the findings of the case studies in order to contextualise the concept of continuity. Following this, the discussion is drawn out, to explore various aspects of this important theme.

5.1. PRESENTATION OF CASE STUDY FINDINGS

One of the main approaches in this work is the identification and examination of curvilinear enclosures encircling key church sites. As the presence of such structures is taken to be indicative of early church influence on settlement, the results of this examination will suggest a broader pattern of ecclesiastically influenced settlement continuity. This is further supported by other commonalities such as presence of church fabric, placename, tradition, and topographic characteristics. The following sections examine each element in detail, bringing together the various findings and characteristics identified in the individual case studies.

This analysis takes cognisance of the shortage of comparative work by other authors. Few have attempted to synthesise the analysis of church sites in a systematic manner. Of those who have included a comparative element Hughes and Edwards have compared sites but Swan has assessed the layout of 12 Irish church sites (Figure 5.1.).[1] This suggests a general model of conformity in design and structure for well-established church-influenced settlements, leading him to state that '[e]xamination of Irish ecclesiastical sites reveals a striking pattern of unity in function, organisation and plan'.[2]

Apart from Swan's work, very little comparative analytical exploration has been carried out on church enclosures, with the academic focus of any such work being placed on the

---

[1]   Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland in the early medieval period'.
[2]   Ibid, p. 55.

immediate boundary of the churchyard. Preston-Jones has examined churchyards at 199 sites in Cornwall, and divides them into a number of categories, based on criteria such as their rectilinear shape, the origin of the saint who founded the site or the presence of specific elements in their placename.[3] The second of the following figures illustrates the results of this extensive study (Figure 5.2.). The third figure in this sequence (Figure 5.3.) illustrates ten examples of French settlements - illustrating the location of churches within curvilinear towns. As Crowley notes, the examination of French models is complicated since many settlements where curvilinear patterns exist have actually resulted from the construction of castellations and defensive structures.[4]

These three sets of case studies illustrate the possibility for comparative work with this form of topographical investigation. There are major limitations however, including the focus by many on graveyard boundaries. This would appear to be strongly influenced by the work of Thomas whose inspirational writings have set the scene for much research of this nature.[5]

The second limitation of these studies is that they focus on visual comparison, with little effort to compile, compare or synthesise the results. Extensive comparative analysis has been carried out by Brook, who discusses 'curvilinearity of churchyards' for approximately 1000 sites. In this work, sites are identified, as 'uncurved', 'partly curved' or 'largely curved', they are mapped, and size is also discussed.[6] He makes no attempt, however to provide an overall synthesis of the material.

By contrast, the following sections compile the results of this investigation through the use of direct comparison and simple computerised modelling. The results of the case studies are examined in a thematic manner, presenting data in tabular form. A main concern in this analysis is highlighting how the results from this investigation compare and contrast with the features / traits identified in the documentary derived Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites. The overall trends from the case studies are subsequently distilled into a revised model. It is proposed that this model may be used to identify / examine early church fabric and thus, may be used as an indicator for settlement continuity at a broader scale.

---

[3]   Preston-Jones, A. (1992) 'Decoding Cornish Churchyards'.
[4]   Crowley, C. (2000) Pers. Comm.; Pawlowski, D. K. (1993) 'Circulades', pp 152-53
[5]   Thomas, C. (1971) *The Early Christian Archaeology of North Britain*; Idem. (1971) *Britain and Ireland in Early Christian times:BC 400-800*; Idem. (1981) *Christianity in Roman Britain toBC 500*; Idem (1986) *Celtic Britain*.

FIGURE 5.1. : COMPARATIVE MODEL OF CHURCH ENCLOSURES - IRELAND

50 0 100 200 300 400 500 m

1 = Armagh; 2 = Kells (Co Meath); 3 = Kildare; 4 = Tuam; 5 = Lusk; 6 = Cashel; 7 = Killala;
8 = Finglas; 9 = Monasterboice; 10 = Lorrha; 11 = Glendalough; 12 = Downpatrick

(Source : Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland', p. 55)

---
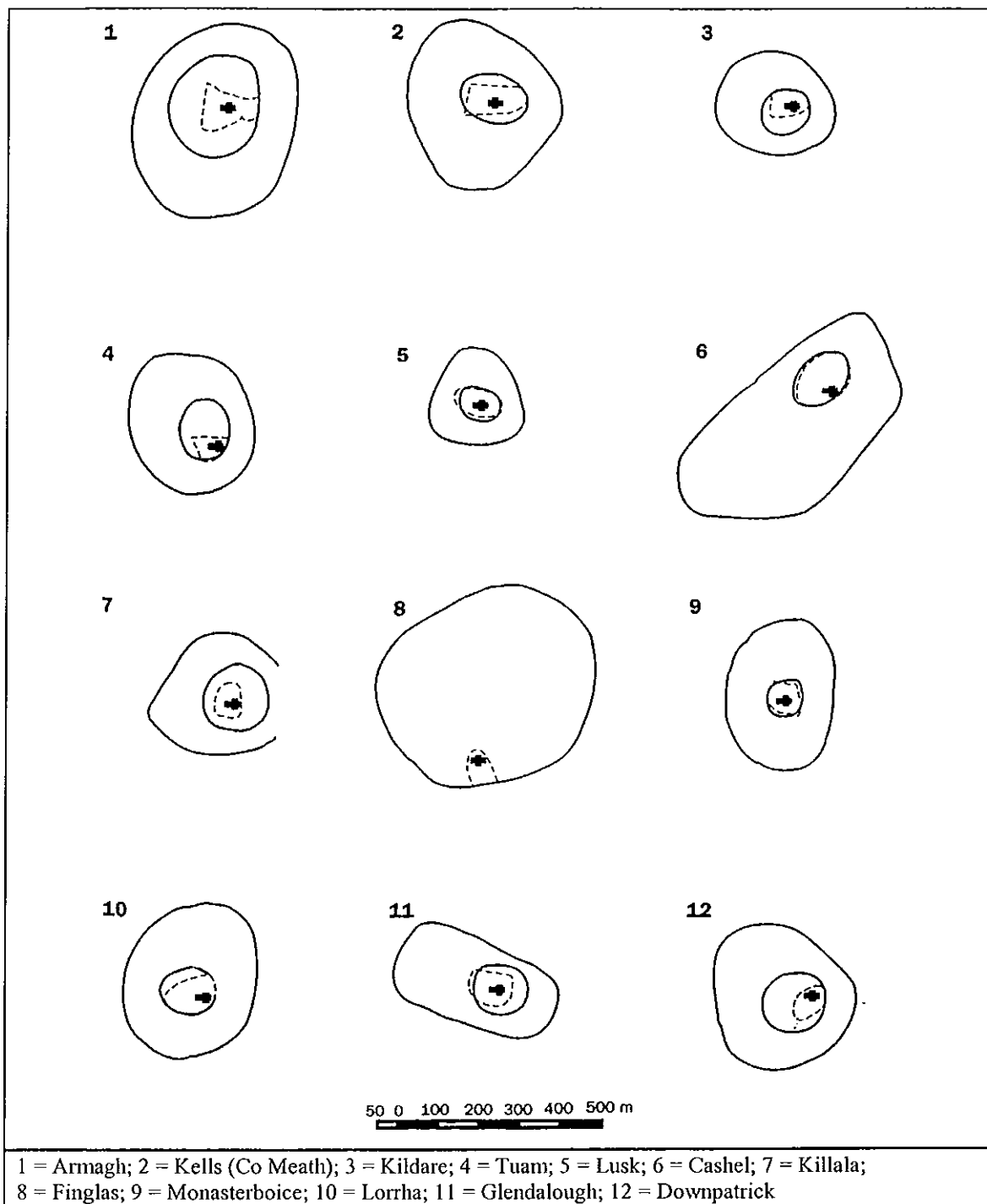
6   Brook, (1992) 'The Early Christian Church East and West of Offa's Dyke', pp 80-87.

FIGURE 5.2. : COMPARATIVE MODEL OF CHURCHYARDS - CORNWALL

Existing churchyard boundary

Former boundary, shown on early map

Boundary established by fieldwork

Suggested boundary

200 m

N
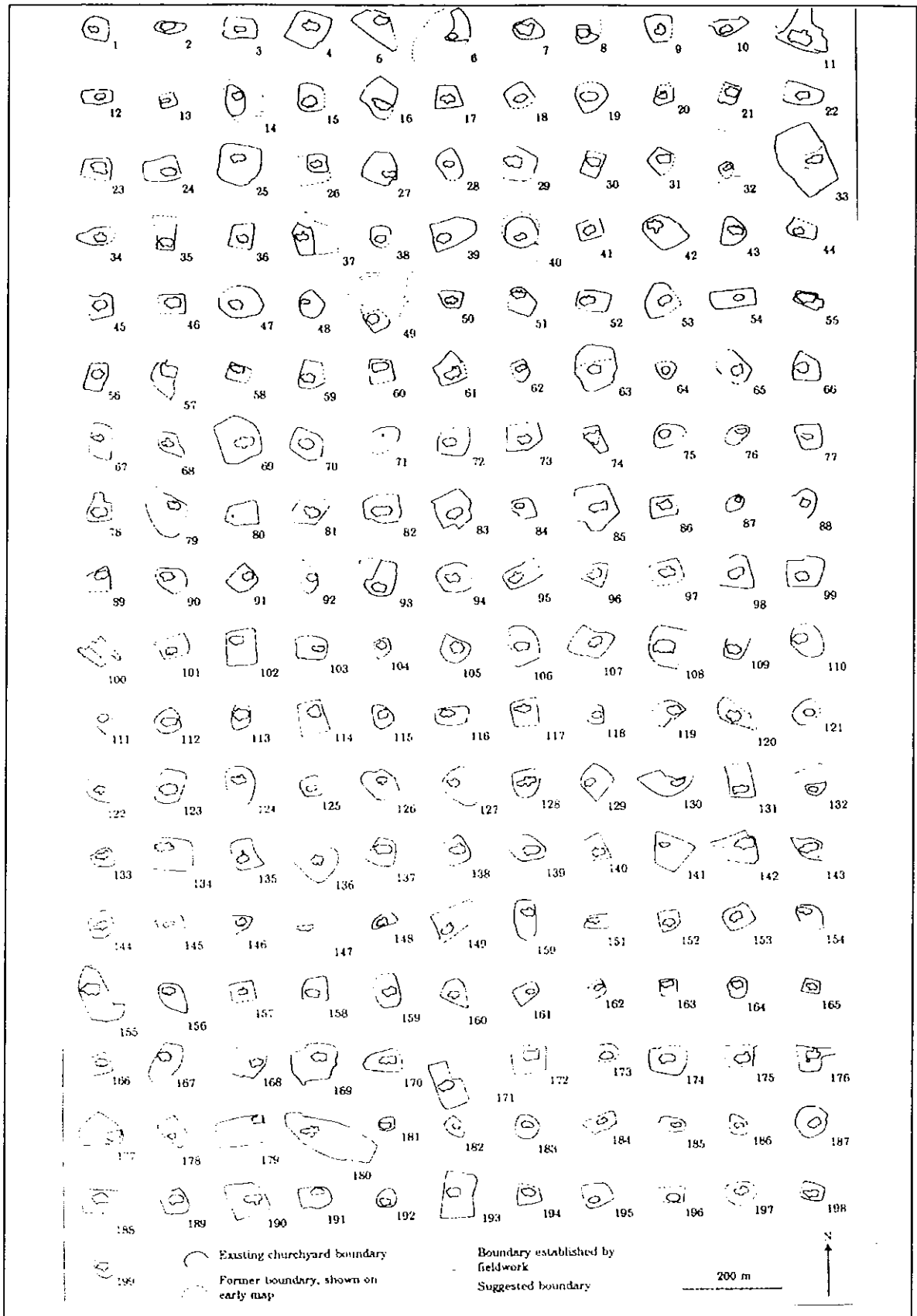
(Source : Preston-Jones, A. (1992) 'Decoding Cornish Churchyards', p. 103)

7 Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 318.

Typical Church Features

Having examined twelve case study sites a number of overall trends may be observed with regard to their site and situation. While some foundations were established in secluded areas where the early ecclesiastics could live a life of contemplation and prayer, many were located in central areas where they were easily accessible and perhaps from which they may have even controlled / influenced communications. In many cases (Table 5.1,) the siting of foundations reflects the influence of topography on their location: Kilmallock Corofin, Ennistymon, Killaloe and Quin are all located at river crossings. Therefore, these sites are ideally located, proximate to fording/bridging points and thus conveniently benefit from natural routeways. A second topographic feature related to communication is the siting of foundation in association with lowland passes. Ardpatrick, Killeely, Ballingarry, Kilmallock and Killaloe are all located proximate to passes which afford easy transport through higher land in the surrounding landscape. A third topographic characteristic is the location of ecclesiastical sites on hilltops. Ardpatrick, Kilmallock Hill, Killeely, Kilfenora and Tulla are all situated on commanding elevated sites.

Despite these varying locations and topographical situations, all the sites would appear to act as focal points for communication routes, the only exception in this investigation is the small lakeside site of Kilvoydan - does this suggest that the site was established to escape from rather than become part of society? Perhaps Corofin has parallels with Saint Cronan's foundation in Roscrea (in Tipperary), where the original secluded site included the original establishment was relocated 'to a more convenient position, because the original establishment was inaccessible for travellers'.[7] Similar motivations may have influenced the development of Corofin and the subsequent abandonment of Kilvoydan. This proposal could also be made regarding the transfer from Friar's Island on the river Shannon northwards to Killaloe, and also to Kilmallock from the nearby hillside site.

Throughout the case studies, reference is made to communication routes. As a means of assessing communications and connectivity, the numbers of roads that lie at a distance of 1km from the central church were examined. The results range from 6 roads in the case of Kilvoydan to 13 roads approaching Ennistymon. The average number of roads approaching the case study sites is 9, emphasising the nodal nature of the sites.

8 Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland', p. 53.

Table 5.1. : ANALYSIS OF SITING AND APPROACH ROADS

Site	Road Feature			
	Siting*	Radiating roads	Number Rds	Main approach road / Entrance
Model	-	Yes	-	E
Doon	L	Yes	10	W
Ballingarry	L / P	Yes	8	W
Ardpatrick	P / H	Yes	8	W
Kilteely	P / H	Yes	9	S ?
Ardagh	R	Yes	10	NW
Kilmallock Hill	P / H	Yes	10	E ?
Kilmallock Town	C / P	Yes	8	S
Kilfenora	H	Yes	12	E / W
Tulla	H	Yes	12	W
Quin	C	Yes	8	SW
Kilvydan	R	No	6	W
Corofin	C	Yes	7	SW
Ennistymon	H / C	Yes	13	NW
Killaloe	C / P	Yes	10	W
Revised Model	P / H	Yes	9	E

* H = Hilltop; R = Raised; P = Pass between highlands; C = Crossing point; L = Low Lying

Swan claims that the main approach road to the sites he examined is from the east, however, no methodology is suggested for the identification of this trend.[8] In this investigation, the identification of a primary approach road - if it existed - proved to be very difficult due to the large number of approach roads to many of the sites. Rather than identify the main road, it was decided to identify the entrance into the surviving church site. In the case-studies investigated by Swan, eastern entrance to sites tallies with eastern approach road. In the Clare and Limerick case studies however, the result is overwhelmingly that the main entrance is to the west.

The only sites with a possible eastern approach road are Kilmallock Hill and Kilfenora. This latter site can be entered from either the east or the west, but the 'eastern' approach is the prominent one at the present day. The Southern approach to Kilteely is tentative, with a footpath from the south, being the only identifiable routeway. Ardpatrick, while it is approached at the present day from the east, is considered a 'western' site, as the entrance into the graveyard is in the western wall. All other sites are clearly entered from their western side.

In many cases the fieldscape surrounding sites follows a distinctly curvilinear pattern, evidencing the survival of early curvilinear influences on the present day landscape. The range of fabric creating these curvilinear forms ranges from constructed to natural features – which it would appear was employed in formalising the landscape. In a number of sites curvilinear roadways appear to pass around rather than cut through the religious space. In these cases roadways form an intrinsic part of the curvilinear landscape. This is particularly evident in Kilfeely, Corofin, Enistymon, Kilfenora, Killaloe and Tulla (Table 5.2). Townland boundaries (likely of medieval origin) of a curvilinear nature also surround most of the sites. While it is not possible to define all of these lineaments as enclosures, in many cases they illustrate the presence of curvilinear features surrounding the sites. The overall pattern of field and property boundaries also define curvilinear trends in many cases. This is particularly the case south of Ardpatrick; north of Doon; north of Corofin; south of Kilvoydan; west of Killaloe; south of Quin and west of Tulla.

In addition to these constructed features, curvilinear boundaries are also formed or emphasised using the natural landscape. While topography and natural features such as rivers may exert influence on the landscape independent of ecclesiastical sites, there are well-recognised examples of churches which illustrate this phenomenon. The hilltop site of Armagh and low-lying Glendalough which is enclosed by narrow streams, both demonstrate the use made by ecclesiastics of the natural landscape. In this manner, the hilltop churches of Ardpatrick, Kilfeely and Tulla (and to a lesser extent Kilfenora) exploit their elevated sites to the hill, with landscape features following the contour of the eminences. In addition, rivers have been used in the demarcation of church space. The site at Killaloe employs the broad river Shannon as an eastern limit, Enistymon similarly uses the river Inagh to the south, Quin exploits a curve in the river Rine to the east and Kilmallock also uses a river to the east. Other sites appear to use rivers in the formation of additional enclosures, as may be the case southeast of Ardagh, while Doon east and Kilmallock appears to be circumnavigated by small streams to the east and north. Kilmallock Hill has a similar waterway to the south.

All of these features, natural and constructed lead to a general curvilinear trend in the landscape surrounding the sites under investigation. The following table (Table 5.2.) is an attempt to summarise these findings.

Table 5.2. : ANALYSIS OF SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

Site	Characteristics of Surrounding landscape (Overall)	Roads	Town-lands	Prop-erty	Hilltop	River
					Curvilinear Fabric	
Model	Curvilinear boundaries					
Doon	Curvilinear	Y	Y		?	
Ballingarry	Curvilinear		Y			
Ardpatrick	Curvilinear	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Killeely	Curvilinear	Y	Y		Y	
Ardagh	Curvilinear		Y		?	
Kilmallock Hill	Curvilinear	Y	Y		?	
Kilmallock Town	Curvilinear					
Kilfenora	Curvilinear					Y
Tula	Curvilinear	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Quin	Curvilinear		Y	Y		Y
Kilvoydan	Curvilinear	Y				
Corofin	Curvilinear	Y	Y	Y		
Enistymon	Curvilinear	Y	Y			Y
Killaloe	Curvilinear			Y		Y
Revised Model	Curvilinear	Y	Y	Y	?	?

Y = Site displays this characteristic
? = Site displays suggestion of this characteristic

Throughout this investigation many elements have been noted at sites. Of these, three features have appeared as constants - the presence of a church, burial ground and holy well(s). The following presents a summary of these three features at the various sites under investigation.

As suggested in the original Spatial Model (Figure 2.17.) in all sites under investigation there is evidence of a church building (Table 5.3.). These range in scale from the cathedral churches of Killaloe and Kilfenora to the modest structures at Ballingarry, Quin and Tula. Building survival varies considerably. In Ballingarry, Doon, Killeely, Kilvoydan and Quin the original structures are but a memory, but in all cases (except Kilvoydan) cartographic and documentary investigation provides sufficient evidence to calculate the scale and alignment of the structure. Mere stumps of buildings survive at Ardagh, and Kilmallock Hill, with slightly more complete shells standing at Ardpatrick, Enistymon and Tula. In Kilmallock Town the central church is relatively complete - if roofless - as is a portion of Kilfenora, the remainder of which is still used by the Church of Ireland congregation. The relatively modern church at Corofin now serves as a heritage centre, while the most ancient structure at Killaloe - St. Flannan's Oratory - is

Table 5.3. : ANALYSIS OF TYPICAL CHURCH FABRIC

Site	Ecclesiastical Feature			
	Church			
	Alignment	Survival	Burial Ground(s)	Holy Well(s)
Model	E-W		Surrounding church	Outside inner encl.
Doon	E-W	Map only	Surrounding Church	Outside Encl. W & S
Ballingarry	E-W	Map only	Surrounding Church	E of church
Ardpatrick	E-W	Partial ruins	Surrounding Church	Outside encl. - SW
Kilteely	NE-SW	Map only	Tradition.	To North
Ardagh	E-W	Partial ruins	Surrounding Church	Inside inner encl.
Kilmallock Hill	E-W	Partial ruins	Surrounding Church	Possible
Kilmallock Town	E-W	Partial ruins	Surrounding Church	E & W
Kilfenora	E-W	Partially intact	Surrounding Church	Edge of inner encl.
Tulla	NE-SW	Partial ruins	Surrounding Church	West of Site
Quin	NE-SW	Partial ruins	South of original church	3 close to church.
Kilvoydan	-	-	Surrounding Church	Possible
Corofin	NW - SE	Intact	Surrounding Church	Possible
Ennistymon	E-W	Partial ruins	Surrounding Church	-
Killaloe	E-W	Intact	Surrounding Church	West of Church
Revised Model	E-W	Partial Ruins	Surrounding Church	Outside enclosure

intact yet obsolete (standing alongside the fine cathedral of St. Flannan). As would be expected, and as presented in the original model, nine of the churches under investigation are aligned east-west with Kilteely, Quin and Tulla being aligned northeast - southwest and Corofin southeast - northwest. An orientation cannot be established for Kilvoydan, of which no trace remains.

A burial ground would appear to be present at the majority of sites. The only exception to this is the hilltop site of Kilteely, where there is no physical or cartographic evidence of a burial ground. However, tradition holds that disciples of Saint Patrick are buried on this eminence, thus a burial function may be inferred. A clear characteristic of burial grounds is that in most cases they surround the primary church. The only exception to this pattern is Quin, where the graveyard lies along the southern edge of the ancient church ruins.

A holy well is commonly linked to pious individuals who, tradition holds, blessed these wells throughout Ireland. The proximity of wells to the central church ranges from Ardagh, Ballingarry and Killaloe, where they are located close by, to Corofin and Ennistymon where the presence of a holy well is tentative. The overall trend is for at least one holy well, with multiple wells located near some sites i.e. Quin (Table 5.3.).

301

A number of additional features are present at many high-status sites. These include: additional buildings; carved cross(es) or slab(s); founder's tomb; round tower; plated and souterrain. The first of these features is additional church buildings. The only sites where additional structures definitely exist are Ballingarry, Kilteely, Killenora, Killaloe and Quin. In most cases the secondary structures are either outside the central enclosure, or of a much later foundation than the original site. Ballingarry, and Quin have Anglo-Norman abbeys close by, Kilteely and Killenora have small secondary churches (possibly of a later period) nearby - to the southwest and west respectively, and Killaloe has a number of structures which would appear to have succeeded each other. Thus, while important ecclesiastical sites such as Armagh, Kells and Glendalough show evidence of multiple structures, further examination would be required before definite conclusions could be made at these sites. Tantalising questions may be raised from examining the proposed plan units at Killaloe, Iniscaltra, Quin, and Ardpatrick, where tentative secondary curvilinear plan units suggest possible secondary enclosures.

Only four of the sites display definite examples of carved crosses / slabs. These are Kilmallock, Kilvoydan, Killaloe and Killenora. While the Spatial Model suggests multiple crosses located at the cardinal points, Killenora is the only site which displays this arrangement - with crosses or cross-sites to the north, south and west. Conflicting reports exist regarding a cross at Kilmallock, but this may have been a western market cross. The cross at Kilvoydan stood to the east, and the original site of the 'ogham stone' cross-shaft at Killaloe is unknown. In the context of carvings, ornate medieval tombs depicting ecclesiastics an ecclesiastic's head carving survive at Killenora. Additional stone fragments from earlier structures survive at Killaloe.

Only two of the sites record any evidence of a founder's tomb - Tulla and Kilteely, and even in these cases the evidence is insubstantial (Table 5.4.). An ancient tomb in the cathedral at Killaloe is reputedly dedicated to the secular patron of the cathedral, not the founder. The only relationship between most sites and their founders is the dedication of churches, but there is no evidence that this relates to the presence of a tomb or shrine. Thus, while documentary evidence and numerous examples exist throughout Ireland, this is not a feature which applies strongly to the sites under investigation.

The only site under investigation which has the undisputed remains of a round tower is Ardpatrick (Table 5.4.). Curiously it lies outside the graveyard wall, but, following the pattern illustrated in the Spatial Model, lies to the northwest of the church - facing the

302

western doorway. Kilmallock may also contain a round tower. While this contentious claim has been discussed by many scholars, no irrefutable conclusion has been reached. Thus, the classic northwestern location of this structure in relation to the overall church building may not be of any significance.

The influence on the surrounding landscape of the church may be evidenced in many different ways. In Ordnance Survey maps of a number of the sites, plots of land are annotated as 'glebe land' (Table 5.4.). In some sites, such as Killaloe, this land is still under Church of Ireland ownership, while in others this has changed over time. The survival of 'glebe land' suggests strong ecclesiastical continuity, with ownership up to the present day.

The identification of a platea or open space at any of the sites under investigation could only be established with supporting archaeological or documentary evidence. However, it is proposed here that the layout of the central graveyard at Quin would allow for an open space to the south of the church. In Tulla and Ennistymon the presence of an open space close to the central church site has survived in the presence of a market area. It could be suggested that with evolution from religious to secular power, that the original platea evolved into a secular market space. Finally, none of the sites under investigation display evidence of either a bullaun stone or a souterrain, features which are associated with church sites elsewhere.

In examining these case studies, trends may be identified in spatial relationship between settlement, market and ecclesiastical function. The overall tendency is for settlement to locate to the west of the church site. This is clearly the case at Doon, Killaloe, Quin and Tulla. At Ardagh and Ennistymon settlement established to the west and north, while at Ballingarry, Kilmallock Town, Corofin and Kilfenora settlement developed to the west and south.

Table 5.4 : ANALYSIS OF ADDITIONAL CHURCH FEATURES

Site	Ecclesiastical Features						
Revised Model	Additional buildings	Carved cross or slab.	Founder's tomb	Round tower	Globe Land	Plates	Bullaun / Souterrain
Model	Perhaps	Cardinal points	in graveyard	NW of church door	-	West of church	Perhaps
Revised Model	Possible	Possible	Possible	Possible	Possible	Possible - Market	Possible
Killaloe	Y	Y	-	-	Y	-	-
Ennistymon	Poss.	-	-	-	-	Mkt?	-
Corofin	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-
Kilvoydan	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-
Quin	Y	-	-	-	-	Poss.	-
Tulla	Poss.	-	Poss.	-	Y	Mkt?	-
Kilfenora	Kilcameen Ch.	Cardinal Pls.	-	-	Y	Mkt?	-
Kilmallock Town	Poss.	Poss.	-	Poss.	Y	-	-
Kilmallock Hill	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ardagh	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-
Kilteely	Ballinlough Ch.	-	Poss.	-	Y	-	-
Ardpatrick	Poss.	-	-	Y	-	-	-
Ballingarry	Poss.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Doon	-	-	-	-	-	Poss.	-

In nine of these sites (Quin excepted) the location of settlement raises the question of approach roads. An approach road to the central church from the east, as discussed in Chapter 2 would be unimpeded by settlement. Travellers from the east would encounter the ecclesiastical foundation before arriving to the settlement. The question therefore is whether this eastern approach road is a valid element at these sites. An answer is not clearly evident. The main approach may be from the east, leading to the ecclesiastical site, and subsequently the settlement. A more likely suggestion is a main approach from the west with settlement being established where the routeway intersects with the ecclesiastical fabric. This interesting phenomenon would require further investigation before a definitive conclusion could be reached.

Ardpatrick, Kilmallock Hill and Kilteely form a distinct style where settlement does not lie adjacent to the ecclesiastical core, it lies to the east or northeast (Table 5.5) and is small in scale. In these cases the settlement material appears to be later in date than many of the other sites. Thus, variation of these sites from the pattern of western settlement may be linked to the later establishment of their habitation - implying that deviance from the western trend results from the abandonment of an ancient convention. Neither Kilfenora or Kilvoydan fit either of these models. Kilvoydan displays no

evidence of settlement while Kilfenora possess settlement to the southwest, south and southeast – however, the older settlement fabric does lie to the west.

In many early Irish settlements there would appear to be a strong connection with market function. The dating of market spaces and fair greens is notoriously difficult, however. Andrews points out:

Unfortunately the differentiation of period settlement forms is still a matter of uncertainty in Ireland, as can be seen from the difficulty of proving that the triangular village green is a typical feature of plantation settlement.[6]

Similar problems occur when dating all trading areas. Thus, it is difficult to draw a causal relationship between church site and trade function. What follows therefore, is an observation of spatial relationship rather than a statement of causality. In Ballingarry, Kilmallock Town, Kilteely, Corofin, Enništymon, Kilfenora, Killaloe and Tulla, a well defined market space appears to be linked to the arrangement of settlement and church site. In Kilfenora and Tulla where settlement surrounds the market area, this space adjoins the central church site and in fact forms part of the enclosing boundary.

The only positively identified market space which contradicts this model is Quin where the market space lies to the southeast of St. Finghin's church and is disjointed from both ecclesiastical and settlement focal points. The original market space may, however, have existed between the central enclosure and the main street, or perhaps in the street to the west of the church. While there is no concrete evidence of this proposal, subsequent settlement in the area may have resulted in the moving of this trade function to its present more modern location.

The overall trend suggests a strong spatial linkage between church site, settlement and market space (Table 5.5). A chronology for this relationship is not proposed, merely this discussion illustrates that settlement is predominantly western with market function being closely linked to this western trend.

In order to be thorough in investigating individual sites, it is important to go beyond the material, topographic and documentary evidence. Two factors which have been investigated in this study are placename evidence and ritual or folk customs related to the individual sites.

9 Andrews, J. (2000) 'Plantation Ireland', p. 140.

Table 5.5 : RELATIONSHIP OF SETTLEMENT AND MARKET FUNCTION TO CHURCH SITE

Site	Feature*		
	Settlement	**Location of Market**	**Shape of Market**
Model		Adjoining enclosure	
Doon	**West**	**W** – Street Layout?	Widening of street
Ballingarry	**West** & South	**SW** of Enclosure	Triangular
Ardpatrick	Northeast	-	
Kilfeely	Northeast	N – Adjoining Encl.	Rectilinear
Ardagh	**West** & North	**W** – Street Layout?	
Kilmallock Hill	East		
Kilmallock Town	**West** & South	**NW** – Street Layout?	Widening of street
		SW - Fair Green	Wedge
Kilfenora	East & South	SE – Street Layout	Widening of street
		NE – Fair Green	Triangular
Tulla	**West**	**W** Adjoining Encl.	Rectilinear
Quin	**West**	**W** – Street Layout?	Widening of street
		SE – Fair Green	Rectilinear
Kilvoydan	-	-	
Corofin	**West** & South	**NW** Adjoining Encl.	Rectilinear
Ennistymon	**West** & North	**NW** Street Layout	Widening of street
		N – Fair Green	Rectilinear
Killaloe	**West**	**West**	Triangular
Revised Model	**West**	**Generally Western**	Triangular / Rectilinear

* Text in bold is to accentuate location of features to the west.

The first group of sites with ecclesiastical placenames are those with the prefix 'Kill' or 'Coill'. While this placename can derive from 'Coill', meaning wood or forest, in many sites it means church. The sites in this sample include Kilmallock, Kilfeely, Kilvoydan and Killaloe. All four of these are named after the church of their founder - Mochealloge, Tile, Baighdean and Lua respectively. Kilfenora may also be included in this group. However the 'fenora' portion of the name has proved difficult to translate and would appear to be a topographical term rather than relating to an individual.

Throughout Ireland the practice of visiting minor holy sites / shrines has declined in recent generations. Many church sites throughout the country, which were resorted to by locals on an annual basis are now forgotten / neglected. However, in many instances there are documentary records of ritual or tradition at these sites. Thus, evidence of tradition in many cases depends on the survival of antiquarian or analistic documentary record. With this in mind, the sites under investigation in this work vary in the level of Christian tradition (Table 5.6). Accounts of formal pilgrimage to holy wells is recorded for Ardagh (St Molua's Well), Kilfenora and Killaloe (St. Flannan's Well), while the well at Kilvoydan is reputed to have cured people of warts.

Many of the sites are linked to pious individuals, ranging from the well-recognised national apostle - St. Patrick - to the obscure Luchtighern (of Enmistymon) for whom little information is known. Linkage to an important primogenitor was sought by many ecclesiastical foundations, and this was achieved (though somewhat dubiously) by a number of the sites. Ardpatrick and Kilteely both claim direct linkage to Saint Patrick, while Doon was reputedly founded by a disciple of St. Comgall of Bangor. It is suggested that Mochulla of Tulla was a friend of Senan of Scattery Island. Quin may have had links to Roscrea and Tuamgraney and Enmistymon had links to Mainchin (or Munchin) of Limerick. Killaloe, Kilfenora and Kilmallock are all recorded as being founded by holy men who were important in their own right.

Table 5.6 : ANALYSIS OF LOCAL CUSTOM / TRADITION

Site	Custom / Tradition		
	Place-name(s)	Translation*	Ritual / Folk custom
Model	Not considered	Not considered	Not considered
Revised Model	Prefixed by Cill / Cill	Church of -	Possible Tradition
Killaloe	Cill DaLua / Cill daLua	Church of Lua (Y)	Holy Well / St. Lua & Flannan
Enmistymon	Inis Díomáin / Inis Díomáin	Diarnain's river meadow / God's Property (?)	St. Luchtighern
Corofin	Cuirach / Cuirach Finne	Wet place / weir of Finne (?)	
Kilvoydan	Cill Bhaoidheáin / Cill Bhaoidheáin	Church of Baighdeán (Y)	Cross / Well
Quin	Caínche / Caínche	A word meaning arbutus	St. Fínghin
Tulla	Culach Ua Apréail / Tulach na Apstail	Hill of the Apostles (Y)	St. Mochulla
Kilfenora	Cill an Abhadvóth an / Cill an	Church of ? (resemblance to eyebrow) (Y)	St Fachtna / Crosses / Wells
Kilmallock Hill / Kilmallock Town	Cill mocheallóg / Cill mocheallóg	Church of Mocheallóg (Y)	St. Mocheallóg / Early Site
Ardagh	Ardach / Ardach	High field	Holy Well / Chalice
Kilteely	Cill Tíle / Cill Tíle	Church of Tíle (Y)	Múin and Lommchu
Ardpatrick	Árd Pádraig / Árd Pádraig	High place of Patrick (Y)	St. Patrick / Early Site
Ballingarry	Baile an Charral / Baile an Ṡapṗal	Town of the garden	Post Norman Churches
Doon	Dún bleisce / Dún Bléisce	Fort of Bleisce	St. Fintan

* Y = Ecclesiastical Placename
? = Possible Ecclesiastical Placename

There are many historical records where data on the various sites may be explored. Of these, the most fruitful are the annals, and some of the more reliable antiquarian records. In addition, investigation can be supported by consultation of archaeological records such as the *SMR* and further informed by fieldwork. The following table (Table 5.7) presents a summary of these sources.

The information recorded in the annals regarding a particular site varies - this being based on the importance of a site to the particular annalists. Many factors, not least the political significance of the site, result in the presence or absence of a site from a particular source. Because of this, episcopal Killaloe (which was also the O'Brien secular capital), is strongly represented in the Annals of Inisfallen - an O'Brien document. Ardpatrick however, displays a reversal of this status, where a clearly important early church declined and thus, is poorly represented in the sources. Likewise, while there is an abundant record for the cathedral town of Killenora, because it was a relatively poor site, there are major periods where the record of the site is blank. References to Quin and Ballingarry are relatively late, dating to the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries respectively. Two theories may be postulated arising from this, either they were unimportant early sites, or perhaps their Anglo-Norman importance eclipsed their former importance, resulting in the abundant later records. A similar proposal may be suggested for Kilmallock which also had an important Anglo-Norman foundation. In this case, however, the survival of place-name, and tradition has preserved a record of the earlier site. The annals only turn up a small number of references for Corofin and Ardagh, while the record for Doon is represented by a single tenuous reference. Kilteely, Ardagh, Kilvoydan and Binnistymon are absent from the annals altogether.

It is hypothesised here, that while some sites are better represented in the annals, this may or may not reflect ecclesiastical importance. Undoubtedly important sites (i.e. the episcopal centres) are well documented, but this may in fact be a result of careful political positioning rather than the presence / absence of an early church site. Kilteely and Kilvoydan for example, demonstrate strong topographical and fabric evidence of early origins, yet these are absent from the written record. Thus, while documentary records can support the early origins of a site, absence does not negate church antiquity.

In some cases antiquarian records are used to support and in others to compensate for the absence of annalistic and other primary data. The antiquarian records used in these case studies included the *Ordnance Survey Letters*, and Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*. These provided a basic analysis of each site, drawing in their own way from a variety of primary and secondary sources. The most useful sources however proved to be the writings of antiquarians, primarily Westropp, who visited sites in the early 20th century and recorded their condition in minute detail. The only sites where the

Table 5.7 : ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Site	Custom / Tradition		
	Record in Annals	Antiquarian Records	Archaeological Record*
Model	Yes	Yes	
Doon	-	Yes	Well (x2) Graveyard, Church Site
Ballingarry	Late - 1500s	Yes	Abbey, Well (x2), Graveyard, Church (x2)
Ardpatrick	Yes	Yes	Enclosure, Round Tower, Church, Graveyard, Earthwork (x2), Road, Ecclesiastical Enclosure
Kilfeely	-		Well (x2), Graveyard (x3), Church & Church Site (x3), Abbey (x4)
Ardagh	Sparse	Yes	Ardagh Fort, Chalice, Church Ruins.
Kilmallock Hill		Yes	Church, Graveyard, Well
Kilmallock Town	Yes	Yes	Historic Settlement, Burial Ground, Well, Church, Possible Round Tower, Church, Abbey.
Kilfenora	Abundant	Yes	Cross / Cross Site (x6), Church (x2), Graveyard (x2), Cathedral (x2), Enclosure, Ecclesiastical Remains, Well (x2), Carvings (x3)
Tulla	-	Yes	Church (x2), Graveyard, Ecclesiastical Enclosure, Ecclesiastical Remains, Castle, Fragments
Quin	Late - 1400s	Yes	Friary, Castle, Holy Well (x2), Graveyard, Church, Earthwork Complex, Possible Carvings
Kilvoydan	-	Yes	Cross, Church, Graveyard, Ecclesiastical Remains, Ecclesiastical Enclosure
Corofin	Sparse		Graveyard, Church
Enniskymon	-		Graveyard, Church
Killaloe	Abundant	Yes	Well, Cathedral, Church (x2), Cathedral, Ogham Stone, Stone Fragments.
Revised Model	Yes / Possibly	Yes	Church, Graveyard, Well

* Church Fabric within 1km of site - from *SMR*, documentary sources, fieldwork observation and cartographic investigation.

other sites a significant body of data has been compiled by these researchers.

To provide a complete overview of the archaeological material at each site, the *Sites and Monuments Record* for both Limerick and Clare was consulted extensively in this study. The quantity and quality of archaeological material varies. The largest range of material is found Kilfenora, where crosses and carvings survive to the present day. In Ardpatrick, fabric is also abundant, the stump of a round tower lies adjacent to the graveyard, and both are surrounded by a network of earthen enclosures. At the other end of the scale are Doon, Kilmallock Hill, Corofin and Enniskymon, where church, graveyard and holy well provide the entirety of the fabric record. Ardagh also fits in this latter category, being elevated in importance by the discovery of an ornate chalice, which may or may not originate from the site.

Analysis of Enclosures

In this work the identification of enclosures and curvilinear boundaries - through the application of Plan Analysis techniques - has been a central tool for the identification of church sites. While it is acknowledged that this would be untenable as an exclusive methodology, in conjunction with the elements already discussed, it has proven to be of fundamental importance in this investigation. The enclosures at each site display individual characteristics, ranging from the location and survival of boundaries, to their influence on settlement evolution and the overall topography of a site. The following sections present an examination of all the enclosures which have been identified, and attempt to establish some patterns and overall conclusions.

Table 5.8. and Figure 5.4. examine the 19 enclosures identified at the 12 sites. Rather than approach the examination in a site by site manner, enclosures are grouped according to their average radius. As discussed in each of the case studies, the measurement of north - south and east - west diameters records the maximum distance in each case. From these, an average radius is calculated.

The overall shape of the enclosures under examination is curvilinear. On examining the ratio between the north-south and the east-west measurements, it was noted that in thirteen out of the nineteen enclosures the latter measurement was greater (Table 5.8.). Kilvoydan and Kilfeely clearly mirror Glendalough (Figure 2.7. & 2.8.) and Kells (2.16), with their overall shape being a horizontally accentuated oval. This is not universal however, and the vertical axis is dominant in six cases, including Tulla (inner & outer) and Dunishymon which are similar in pattern to Nendrum (Figure 2.11.) and Armagh. Development of an overall model is complicated further by Ardpatrick and Quin, where the inner and outer enclosures have different orientation. Thus, while variations exist (average north - south measurement is 375.4 meters, average east - west is 364.1 meters), there would appear to be insufficient information to suggest an overall pattern with respect to orientation – thus, as presented in the initial Spatial Model, the overall pattern is taken to be circular.

While a pattern was not very visible in the orientation of sites, ranking of enclosures by their average radius length results in a clear pattern of distribution. As can be seen in the table (Table 5.8.), and in the following graph (Figure 5.4) there would appear to be a sorting of sites by size. The division of enclosures into groups is somewhat arbitrary, however natural breaks would appear between Quin inner and Corofin inner, and again between Ballingarry and Quin outer. This results in three groupings of sites. The average measure of the five smaller sites is a radius of 62.5 meters. The medium enclosures, of which there are 10, have an average radius of 164.0 meters, ranging from Corofin inner which is 113.4 meters, to Ballingarry, which is 243.7 meters. The group of large enclosures contains the fewest examples and ranges from Quin outer (232.9 meters) to Ardpatrick outer (532.8 meters), with 390.0 meters as the average.

Table 5.8. : MEASUREMENT OF ENCLOSURES

Site	Enclosure Measurements#				Area (ha)
	Meters N-S	Meters E-W	Average Radius	Group Average	
Average Small					
Kilnoyvan	82.1	117.8*	49.9		0.78
Ardagh Inner	114.2	124.9*	59.8		1.12
Kilmallock Town	114.2	124.9*	59.8	62.5	1.12
Tulla Inner	149.9*	131.1	70.5		1.56
Quin Inner	153.5*	135.7	72.3		1.64
Average Medium					
Corofin Inner	217.8	235.6*	113.4		4.03
Kilmallock Hill	160.7	328.4*	122.3		4.69
Killaloe	221.3	285.6*	126.7		5.04
Killeely	260.6	292.7*	138.3		6.01
Ennistymon	310.6*	292.7	150.8	164.0	7.14
Ardpatrick Inner	285.6	328.4*	153.5		7.40
Kilfenora	328.4	349.9*	169.6		9.03
Doon	392.7	399.8*	198.1		12.33
Corofin Outer	421.3	474.8*	224.0		15.76
Ballingarry	481.9	492.6*	243.7		18.65
Average Large					
Quin Outer	589.0	706.9*	323.9		32.97
Tulla Outer	738.9*	631.9	347.7	390.0	36.90
Ardagh Outer	738.9*	703.3	360.6		40.84
Ardpatrick Outer	1203.1*	928.2	532.8		89.18
Average	375.4	364.1	184.8		15.58

* = Longest diameter i.e. 13 of the 19 documented enclosures are longer E-W than N-S.
# = Based on Cardinal point measurements - N-S & E-W.

Based on fieldwork and cartographic analysis of case study sites

This sorting of enclosures suggests a three-tiered pattern: small, medium and large. This pattern may have evolved over time, resulting in the formation of sites of varying size. Alternatively it may reflect a planned situation with multiple concentric enclosures following a pattern as suggested in Nendrum and Armagh. In order to explore this phenomenon further, each of these enclosure groupings is examined in detail.

The following diagram (Figure 5.5.) illustrates the five small enclosures. These range in scale from Kilvoydan with an average radius of 49.9 meters to Quin inner, with an average radius of 72.3 meters. The most notable point about this group is the similarity of east - west measurement (ranging from 117.8-135.7 meters), while the north - south measurements vary considerably (82.1 meters - 153.5 meters).

Based on fieldwork and cartographic analysis of case study sites

Average Radius of Identified Enclosures
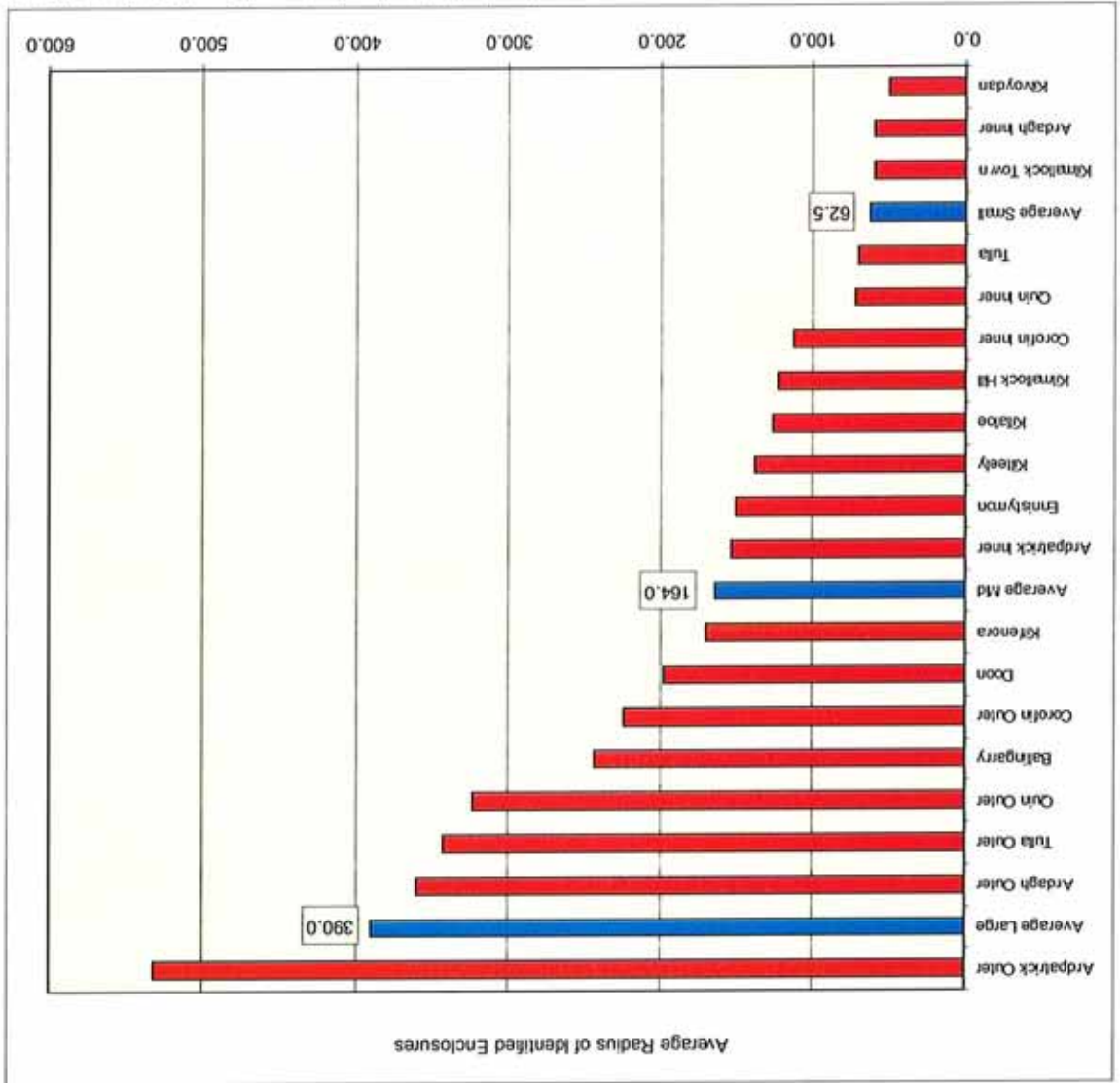
FIGURE 5.4. : AVERAGE RADIUS OF IDENTIFIED ENCLOSURES

There is a strong overall pattern evident from these sites with Kilmallock Town and Ardagh actually possessing identical measurements - except in the northeast-southwest diameter, where there is only a difference of 3.6 meters. The circuit of the red line (Figure 5.5.) represents the average of the six measurements.

FIGURE 5.5. : MODEL OF SMALL ENCLOSURES

The similarities displayed in the smaller enclosures would not appear to be matched by the medium enclosures, which are characterised by discordance (Figure 5.6.). Looking closer however, some overall observations may be made. The circuits which show the greatest tendency towards commonality are Finistymon, Ardpatrick inner and Kilfenora. In addition to being closest in size to the 'average' medium enclosure, these are also the most closely grouped enclosures. While other sites may have average radii which are closer in measure to each other (i.e. Killaloe and Kilmallock Hill), these three sites display similarities of pattern and scale. Kilmallock Hill & Killeely could also be included in this central group - in both of these cases their exclusion results from one of the diameters being shorter than the overall pattern (east - west diameter in the case of Kilmallock Hill and the northwest - southeast diameter in the case of Killeely). The remaining enclosures in this group may be considered as inliers and outliers, being larger or smaller than this central group.

Corofin and Killaloe display strong reasons for inclusion in the medium category - albeit as inliers. At the upper end of the medium enclosures are Doon, Corofin outer and Ballingarry. These three enclosures are regular in shape (other than a slight indentation in Corofin due to shorter north - south axis). While these have been taken to form part

of the 'medium' group of enclosures, perhaps they form a separate group of enclosures (i.e. outliers of the medium group). Taken as a separate entity, these three enclosures have a highly regular form, with an average radius of 125 meters. Separating these from the previous grouping would also remove the inconsistency of having both the inner and outer enclosures at Corofin in the same grouping. It must be noted however, that these three enclosures as highly conjectural in identification and perhaps could be revisited to identify enclosures which provide a better fit regarding the average size.

FIGURE 5.6. : MODEL OF MEDIUM ENCLOSURES

The break between Ballingarry and Quin outer is clearly a natural break in the data - marking the break between medium and large enclosures. However, the cohesion of this 'large' group is interrupted with the inclusion of Ardpatrick outer. The other three enclosures in this group (Quin outer, Tulla outer and Ardagh outer) are regular in shape and similar in size (Figure 5.7.). With the elimination of Ardpatrick outer, the average radius of this group becomes 340 meters.

FIGURE 5.7. : MODEL OF LARGE ENCLOSURES

Following the above examination, it is proposed that more than three groupings of enclosures may be considered. The presence of multiple enclosures at some of the case study sites follows the pattern at Nendrum and Armagh. Thus, it may be proposed that the enclosures identified here, represent a standardisation of enclosure size, with some sites possessing multiple enclosures, while other sites display evidence of single enclosures – in a manner similar to univallate and multivallate ringforts.

The presence of single or multiple enclosures may arise from the survival or destruction of structures. However, the pattern may result from an original construction plan. Thus, Kilvoydan, or Killeely where a single enclosure is clearly evident may result from a different design to Tulla, Ardagh or Ardpatrick which display evidence of multiple structures.

The following table (Table 5.9, & Figure 5.7.) presents a model of four stylised enclosures, arising from this analysis. In each case an average radius is suggested, while a standard deviation is calculated to illustrate the conformity of the radii to this model.

Formulation of an 'inner enclosure' is relatively straightforward and arises from the original grouping of the smaller enclosure. This includes Kilvoydan, Ardagh Inner, Kilmallock Town, Tulla Inner and Quin Inner. From analysing the cardinal and intermediary measurements of these five enclosures, an average radius of 62.0 meters is

formulated. This has a regular shape with the average radius ranging from 51.7 meters to 70.1 meters giving a standard deviation of 8.0 meters for the radii.

The second enclosure proposed here is a 'smaller middle enclosure', which is based on Kilmallock Hill, Killeely, Binistymoon, Ardpatrick Inner and Kilfenora (Table 5.9. & Figure 5.7.). As discussed above, these have a commonality of size and shape - which justifies the omission of Killaloe and Corofin Inner. To regularise the model, the irregular east - west diameter of Kilmallock Hill and the northwest - southeast diameter of Killeely have been omitted from the calculations. This results in a regular enclosure which is 150.2 meters in radius. The individual enclosures in this case range from 138.0 meters to 166.0 – the standard deviation being 15.2 meters.

The three 'larger middle enclosures' - Doon, Corofin Outer and Ballingarry - form a third group (Table 5.9. & Figure 5.7.). These are highly regular in shape with the north-south axis of Corofin Outer being the only minor deviation in this pattern. These enclosures have a combined average radius of 224.6 meters, individually ranging from 200.8 meters to 243.7 meters with a standard deviation of 20.0 meters. The stylised enclosure is slightly flattened, but follows a similar regular trend to the previous two enclosures.

Omitting Ardpatrick from the 'Outer Enclosure' category provides a regular pattern derived from the measurements of Quin Outer, Tulla Outer and Ardagh Outer. With individual structures ranging from 317.3 meters to 364.6 meters, the average radius is 339.3 meters with a standard deviation of 29.1 meters. Again this is a highly regular pattern.

The outer enclosure at Ardpatrick causes imbalance in the formulation of an outer enclosure. Because of this, it is considered here as an outlier. Due to the irregular shape of the enclosure (which is considered to be topographically influenced) and the absence of other comparative structures, it is not considered prudent to use this to represent a stylised enclosure pattern.

The aim of this comparative investigation is to propose an overall model which may be used in the investigation of ecclesiastical sites. Figure 5.8, which illustrates these four enclosures could be used as a template for investigating potential ecclesiastical sites.
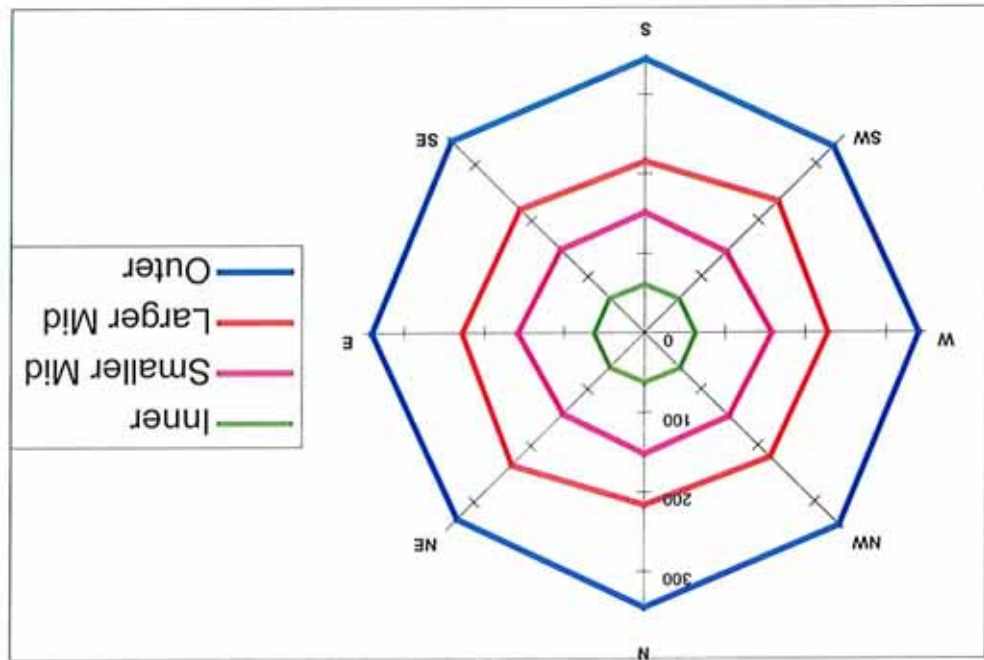
FIGURE 5.8. : STYLISED MODEL OF ENCLOSURES

Table 5.9. : SUBDIVISION OF ENCLOSURES

Enclosure	Site	Radius of Individual Enclosures*	Group Average*	Deviation of Group
Inner	Kilvoydan	51.3		
	Kilmallock Town	60.7		
	Ardagh Inner	61.1	62.0	+/- 8.0m
	Quin Inner	66.9		
	Tulla Inner	70.1		
Smaller Middle	Kilmallock Hill	138.0		
	Kiteely	138.6		
	Finistymon	143.7	150.2	+/- 15.2m
	Ardpatrick Inner	157.1		
	Kilfenora	166.0		
Larger Middle	Doon	200.8		
	Corofin Outer	229.4	224.6	+/- 20.0m
	Ballingarry	243.7		
Outer	Quin Outer	317.3		
	Tulla Outer	336.0	339.3	+/- 29.1m
	Ardagh Outer	364.6		
Outlier	Ardpatrick Outer	499.8	500	
Omitted	Corofin Inner	112.0	Irregular Shape	
	Killaloe	122.7	Irregular Shape	

* Data in this table differs from the previous table which considers just the cardinal measures, while these calculations are based on the cardinal and secondary measurements (8 in total)

Based on fieldwork and cartographic analysis of case study sites

The presence of multiple enclosures has been discussed previously, and this diagram presents a model of such features, based on the sites which have been investigated. The regularity of the various enclosures is striking. This has been engineered to a certain extent, by omitting certain radii, (particularly in the Smaller Middle enclosure), however, overall, the circularity of the enclosures arises from the data gathered from the case studies.

The danger with models such as this is the tendency to distil a complex phenomenon into a simplified pattern. Wary of veering into numerology, the following table suggests one possibility with regard to these enclosures. By including an enclosure with a radius of 100 meters, and altering the stylised radii slightly, a very convenient ratio of 1:1.5 is observed between the various categories. Minor adjustments are justifiable particularly when one considers that alterations are less than the standard deviation in each case.

The fact that the next radius in the sequence would be 507 meters while Ardpatrick outer is has a radius of 499.8 meters may add further to this idea. Is this the illumination of a 'grand plan' of church layout requiring further study, or is it merely a coincidence? Without placing too much emphasis on this, the possibility of an overall pattern is worthy of note - particularly when considering the initial deliberate construction and spiritual purposes of these enclosures and their planning as noted in Chapter 2.

Table 5.10. : COMPARISON OF RADII - STYLISED MODEL			
Actual Radii*	Ratio	Possible Radii**	Ratio
62		66.5	
		100	1:1.5
150.2	1:2.4	150	1:1.5
224.6	1:1.4	225	1:1.5
339.3	1:5	338	1:1.5
		507	1:1.5
* Based on size of enclosures derived from investigation of case study sites.			
** Based on case study enclosures, altered to fit 1:1.5 ratio.			

There is some merit in examining this model in the context of the well-studied sites for which enclosure measurements have been clearly established. For this purpose, the following table (Table 5.11.) examines Inishmurray, Nendrum, Armagh, Kells and Kildare. A number of these sites, i.e. Nendrum, Inishmurray and Armagh, display evidence of enclosures which are smaller than any of the ones identified in Limerick and Clare. In some of the case study sites, the graveyard boundaries may form an enclosure of this smaller scale. The western curvilinear boundary of Ardpatrick graveyard and the curvilinear western extent of Quin graveyard may in fact demonstrate

the presence of this smaller curvilinear structure. The omission of enclosures of this scale from investigations may appear an oversight, but it was decided that without suitable archaeological backup, it would not be possible to confidently support the identification of such features.

The middle enclosure at Nendrum is approximately 61.0 meters in radius, which closely matches the 62.0 meter radius in the stylised model (Table 5.10). Kells and Kildare also have enclosures close in size to this category (60.0 meters and 50.0 meters respectively)

The Smaller Middle Enclosure as identified in the stylised model is 150.2 meters in radius. Kildare, with an enclosure of 162.5 meters radius, is relatively close to this pattern. The 91.5 meter and 100.0 meter enclosures of Nendrum and Armagh do not fit into this pattern very closely. However, considering the possibility of a 100 meter enclosure as discussed above (Table 5.10.) these two enclosures would comfortably fit into the model.

Armagh and Kells with enclosures of 210.0 meters and 200 meters respectively are close in size to the stylised Larger Middle enclosure with a measure of 224.6 meters. None of the sites which have been examined in detail, appear to display evidence of an outer enclosure as defined in this stylised model. This may contradict the presence of an outer enclosure at sites, or alternatively it may be proposed that examination of sites has not traditionally looked at the possibility of such extensive circuits.

Table 5.11. : STYLISED MODEL & RECOGNISED SITES

Site	Radii					
Radii Based on Case Studies		Inner 62.0		Smaller Middle 150.2	Larger Middle 224.6	Outer 339.3
Possible Radii*		66.5	100	150	225	338
Inishmurray	23.5					
Nendrum	38.0	61.0	91.5			
Armagh	25.0		100.0		210.0	
Kells		60.0			200.0	
Kildare		50.0		162.5		
* Based on stylised size of enclosures – see Table 5.10.						

Arising from the analysis of enclosing features, it is proposed that enclosures are indeed a deliberate and calculated feature at church sites. The existence of enclosures of a standard size is a major revelation. The implications of this for understanding these features is profound. Not only were these structures formally constructed, it would appear that their layout followed a deliberate co-ordinated pattern.

Placing this model in the context of literature on secular sites from the early Christian period raises many issues. As discussed in Chapter 2, a variety of settlement forms existed in Early Ireland. These varied from simple univallate ringforts, to larger ringforts, and multivallate sites. The hierarchy and relationship between secular sites as discussed by Stout, may also apply to ecclesiastical sites.[10] Thus, the size of a site or the number of enclosures may in fact be indicators of status. The presence of a very large enclosure around Ardpatrick may indicate the importance of this early site, which is well documented. Killaloe, where there would appear to be multiple concentric curvilinear lines is another important site, while the obscure church at Kilvoydan would appear to have only one small (though clearly identifiable) enclosing boundary.

On the basis of this work, it would appear that a regularised form of ecclesiastical site layout did exist. A pattern and a range of possibilities are proposed here. However, this would require further refining to establish a more definite model of this phenomenon. Notwithstanding this, these findings may be used to aid the identification of such features in the Irish landscape.

Placement of churches within the enclosures varies from place to place. The only pattern mentioned in literature is Swan's suggestion that churches are often offset slightly to the east of a central location.[11] As can be seen in Table 5.12, attempts to identify an overall pattern are inconclusive. The only discernable trend being a slight tendency for the church to be located to the south of a central location and to be located to the middle with regard to east - west orientation. This is a generalisation however, with few churches actually sited in a central location. Kilmallock Town church is located north of centre, Kilfenora, Corofin and Emlystymon churches are distinctly southern in position. In east-west orientation, churches in Ballingarry, Doon and Kilmallock Town are located very definitely to the west of their enclosures while Ardagh, Kilmallock Hill, Kilvoydan and Killaloe churches are all offset to the east. A central location is only clearly visible in Ardpatrick, Kileely, Tulla and Quin. Interestingly, these are all sites with very clearly defined enclosures and where the ruins (or site) of the respective churches are markedly ancient.

10 Stout, M. (1997) *The Irish Ringfort* - Chapter 7; Simms, A. (1986) 'Continuity and change',
11 Swan, L. (1989), 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland in the early medieval period'.

Table 5.12. : LOCATION OF CHURCH WITHIN ENCLOSURE

Site	Church Location	
	N/S	E/W
Doon	Mid	West
Ballingarry	Mid	West
Ardpatrick	Mid	Mid
Kileely	Mid	Mid
Ardagh	Mid	East
Kilmallock Hill	Mid	East
Kilmallock Town	North	West
Kilfenora	South	Mid
Tulla	Mid	Mid
Quin	Mid	Mid
Kilvoydan	Mid	East
Corofin	South	Mid
Emlisymon	South	Mid
Killaloe	Mid	East
Revised Model	Mid	Mid

Spatial Arrangement of Enclosures

In addition to the presence of concentric ecclesiastical enclosures, a number of sites display evidence of multiple focal points. Thus, the layout of sites is more complex than the straightforward concentric pattern proposed at the end of Chapter 2. From the examination of case studies, three basic patterns may be proposed (Figure 5.9.):

- Type A - Church site with a single enclosure (Kilvoydan, Doon and Kileely).

- Type B - Church site with two concentric enclosures (Tulla and Quin).

The number of concentric enclosures may be greater as in and Nendrum. While multiple enclosures may be planned, they may also reflect an evolution of site development as displayed at Armagh:

- Type C - Church site with the possibility of multiple concentric enclosures (possibly Tulla, Quin and Ardpatrick).

Many sites display evidence of secondary sites in close proximity to the primary site. Thus, a fourth type exists:

- Type D - Church site with additional enclosure(s) close by (Emlisymon, Killaloe, Ardpatrick and Quin).

In this case a primary church site exists with separate additional enclosure(s) in close proximity (Figure 5.9.). These secondary sites may contain ecclesiastical elements (St.

Andrew's Church at Finis(ymon), or may simply suggest curvilinear tendencies (Toor House at Ardpatrick, the southern enclosure at Quin, the enclosure around St. John's church at Killaloe) hinting at possible church sites.

Type E presents an evolutionary model, where a succession of sites is evident:

- Type E - Two church sites in close proximity. One subsuming the authority of the other (Kilvoydan→Corofin, Kilmallock Hill→Kilmallock and Friar's Island→Killaloe).

In most cases one site is abandoned when a better site is developed. It is difficult to establish the chronology of such arrangements with certainty, but, the more prominent site appear to eclipse an earlier site, similar to Glendalough and Roscrea, where more suitable sites were developed to allow for expansion / proximity to routeways respectively.

The final layout proposed here is similar in organisation to Types D & E. In this case (Type F) a double core is also present, however, in this case one site over-runs the other, engulfing this secondary site.

- Type F - Two sites in close proximity. One site engulfs the other, either eliminating the secondary site or incorporating it (Killaloe, Ardpatrick, Ballingarry, Ardagh).

This complex pattern may result from a number of influences. It would appear in Ardpatrick and Killaloe that secondary enclosures (Toor House & St. John's Church respectively) were engulfed by more important sites. In both cases curvilinear traces are all that survive at the present day. It would appear in both Ballingarry and Ardagh that the central core shifted slightly westwards. Possible remnants of the original core are evident in a curvilinear property boundary and glebe land respectively.

Drawn by Kevin Griffin. Based on analysis of fieldwork and cartographic analysis of case study sites.

Type A	Church site with a single enclosure (Kilvoydan, Doon and Kilfeely)
Type B	Church site with two concentric enclosures (Tulla and Quin)
Type C	Church site with the possibility of multiple concentric enclosures (possibly Tulla, Quin and Ardpatrick)
Type D	Church site with additional enclosure(s) close by (Ennistymon, Killaloe, Ardpatrick and Quin)
Type E	Two church sites in close proximity. One subsuming the authority of the other (Kilvoydan=>Corofin, Kilmallock Hill=>Kilmallock and Friar's Island=>Killaloe)
Type F	Two sites in close proximity. One site engulfs the other, either eliminating the secondary site or incorporating it (Killaloe, Ardpatrick, Ballingarry, Ardagh)

= Church Site   = Possible Church Site   = Enclosure

A

B

C

D

E

F

FIGURE 5.9.: MODELS OF ENCLOSURE LAYOUT

5.2. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS / ENHANCEMENT OF SPATIAL MODEL

Having compared and contrasted the various elements of the case studies a number of general trends are noted in settlements which have church sites at their core. This analysis is now placed in the context of the Spatial Model of Early Christian Sites. Arising from the examination of the case studies, modifications to the Spatial Model are proposed and presented (Figure 5.10. & Table 5.13.)

The most prominent feature regarding the location of the case studies is their physically elevated siting. Six of the sites are in hilltop locations while a further two are raised slightly above the surrounding location. Of those that are not elevated, the remainder are either located at a pass between nearby uplands or at a river crossing/fording point, with just Doon being sited in a relatively level lowland site – however there is rising land to the north and east. In the following table these various characteristics are accounted for.

As noted above, the presence and number of radiating roads is a feature of many of the case study sites. This indicates that sites are important central places, and communication nodes. The number of roadways at a distance of 1km from sites ranges from Kilvoydan with six to Ennistymon with thirteen, with roads radiating out from the site in all cases. The final feature in this category is the main approach road / entrance to the site. As discussed above, the expectation was that sites would possess an approach road, eastern in orientation, similar to the layout suggested by Swan. However, in all but two of the sites under investigation the entrance to the church site is to the west. In the two sites that deviate from this pattern, the direction of the approach is uncertain.

The three church features which are most prominent in the investigation of case studies are, church, burial ground and holy well. In all cases the overall orientation of the church is east-west. This varies slightly in some cases, with some churches orientated northeast-southwest, and one northwest-southeast. The survival of these structures varies, but in general they are in poor repair, with some identifiable only on maps. This has major ramifications regarding the continuity of sites. Despite the fact that they are the central features in a preserved religious landscape, these focal structures have not survived unscathed throughout time. In most cases the original structures were replaced, in some cases by church buildings beside/on the original site, in other cases the building was enlarged and in others the site has been abandoned. It would appear that the poor repair of some buildings is tied in with their adoption during the Reformation and the

resultant decline in their congregations – thus, adoption by the church of Ireland can be seen as one reason for discontinuity of church usage.

As indicated in the following table the location of the church is typically located to the centre of the surrounding enclosure. While the sites under investigation vary considerably, overall a central location is identified in the model.

In almost all cases the burial ground surrounds the church building. The only exception to this is Quin. However, as noted in the case study, at least two churches have stood at this site, thus, the exact site of the original church is difficult to ascertain.

The location of a holy well is difficult to generalise but in all sites except Emlisrymon, the presence of one is at least suggested. In Ballingarry, Ardpatrick, Ardagh, Kilfenora and Killaloe, definite wells of religious usage are located close to the church site. Perhaps these represent sites where the tradition of worship at wells has survived in the folk or documentary record. Most of the other sites also possess wells nearby for which a religious function is unidentified. However, no clear layout pattern can be discerned apart from the presence of such a feature

The survival of additional church features (buildings, crosses, cross slabs, founder's tomb, round tower, glebe land, platea, souterrain, bullaun stone) at the sites under investigation is sporadic. None of these church sites display evidence of a souterrain or bullaun stone. However all other features appear in some of the sites. A number of sites possess secondary churches (or sites) close to the central one. The only sites that suggest a complex layout such as at Armagh may exist are Killaloe and Emlisrymon. There is tentative evidence for multiple early churches at Ballingarry and Ardpatrick in the form of possible secondary enclosures, and both Killeely and Kilfenora have church sites nearby.

The absence of early funerary architecture is one of the surprising results of this work. It was expected that early church sites would display evidence of early burials. This is not the case however. Where such monuments do exist they are not ordinary grave markers. The only surviving carved stonework is the exceptional carvings of 'high crosses' at Kilfenora or a grave slab at Killaloe. Thus, while such fabric is included in the model as a possible element, as with a founder's tomb, and western located round tower, it would appear to be the exceptional feature and indicate higher order sites.

Glebe land and platea are two elusive features, the former being uncertain in historical origin, the latter being difficult to identify. While both of these are possible supplemental indicators of an early church, their importance is taken to be less than some of the more certain elements. The presence of glebe land needs to be supported by documentary evidence and the identification of a platea cannot be undertaken confidently without archaeological exploration.

The final element of this category is the spatial arrangement of features. As indicated in literature, round towers are normally located to the northwest of the church – usually facing the 'western' doorway of the primary church building. The other elements of this category are also presented in a stylised manner in the model – crosses at the cardinal points, and platea to the west of the church (in this case, possibly related to the market).

Under the category 'settlement features' in the model is included the location of settlement and also the presence, shape and location of a market. From the presentation of results above a strong correlation can be observed between the orientation of the main entrance to each site and the location of settlement. The only sites with a non-western approach are Kilmallock Hill and Kilteely, with some reservation also being expressed about Kilfenora and Ardpatrick. These are the only sites that do not possess settlement to the west. This suggests a strong relationship between the primary approach route and the location of settlement.

For the model, the location of a market in relation to the church site also follows this western pattern. In some sites the western market space is definitely western, in others it is based on the presence of street widening or other circumstantial evidence (presence of a possible market cross in Kilmallock Town). The strong overall trend is for the sites with western approach and western settlement to have a market function located to the west. Examining Kilteely and Kilfenora which both possess settlement and market functions to the east further reinforces this.

Absent from the original Spatial Model is any suggestion regarding traditions as evident in place-names, ritual or folk custom. While this varies from site to site, an overall pattern observed in undertaking the case study analysis was a tendency for sites to be named after the founder, or to show evidence of religious placenames. In some sites this is subsequently reflected in rituals or folk customs related to the site such as pilgrimage, dedication of holy well, or physical fabric (church / cross etc). Provision for these

various elements is included in the revised model, as they can be indicative of an early church presence.

The traditional approach to investigating early church sites focuses on the documentary record. While this is not taken as an exclusive feature in this study, nonetheless it is still an important element. The most fruitful sources used in this investigation are: early sources such as *Annals*; records and accounts by antiquarians such as Archdall, Lewis and O'Donovan; and, archaeological records such as the *SMR*.

As extensively discussed above, settlements with church sites at their core display evidence of surrounding enclosures. In some cases there is a single enclosure evident while in other sites there are multiple enclosures. In the revised model this is represented as an inner and an outer enclosing feature, with data in the table illustrating the possible enclosure sizes. These enclosures can be formed from a wide variety of elements including roads, townland and other property boundaries, topography and natural landscape features such as rivers. In addition to the enclosures, the surrounding landscape displays the curvilinear influence of the central site through the layout of these lineaments.

Used together this model (Figure 5.10.) and table (Table 5.13.) may be considered as tools for the identification and examination of ecclesiastical sites. The model may be useful for the initial identification of sites, while the table may be useful in follow-up investigation - highlighting areas for further documentary, cartographic and fieldwork investigation.

Table 5.13. : INVENTORY / CHECKLIST OF CHURCH FEATURE CONTINUITY AT SETTLEMENTS

Category	Feature	Typical
Siting / Communications	Siting*	Hilltop / Pass / Crossing Point
	Radiating roads	Yes
	Number of Roads	6
	Main approach road / entrance	Western
Typical Church Features	Church	Aligned E-W
	Church Survival	Partial / Ruins
	Location of Church	Mid - E/W & N/S
	Burial ground(s)	Surrounding church
	Holy well(s)	Outside enclosure
Additional Church Features	Additional buildings	Possible
	Carved cross or slab / Founder's tomb / Round tower	Possible
	Platea	Possibly to west – link to Market?
	Glebe Land	Possible
	Souterrain / Bullaun	Possible
	Spatial Arrangement of Elements	Round Tower NW of Church – Crosses at Cardinal points
Settlement Features	Settlement	Western
	Location of Market	Western
	Shape of Market	Triangular / rectilinear or widening of a main street / road
Custom / Tradition	Place-name(s)	Prefixed by Cill
	Translation*	Church of -
	Ritual or folk custom	Founder / Pilgrimage
Documentary Evidence	Record in early sources	Yes / Possibly
	Antiquarian Records	Yes
	Archaeological Record	Church / Graveyard / Well
Enclosures	Inner and Outer Enclosure	Possibility of additional enclosures, Inner & outer enclosure
	Surrounding landscape Features	Curvilinear lineaments - roads, townlands, property boundaries, topography & river
	Possible Radii	66.5, 100, 150, 225, 338, 500 meters

Based on analysis of fieldwork and cartographic analysis of case study sites

Representation	Features Depicted in Model
	Church * (ruins)
	Burial ground*
⊕ ✚	Holy well* / cross
– – – –	Enclosure / Possible Enclosure*
	Settlement
	Market Space / Street Widening
◁	Slope
——	Road
–·–·–	Main approach road
——	River
——	Property Boundary
* = Essential features	

Drawn by Kevin Griffin. Based on analysis of case study sites
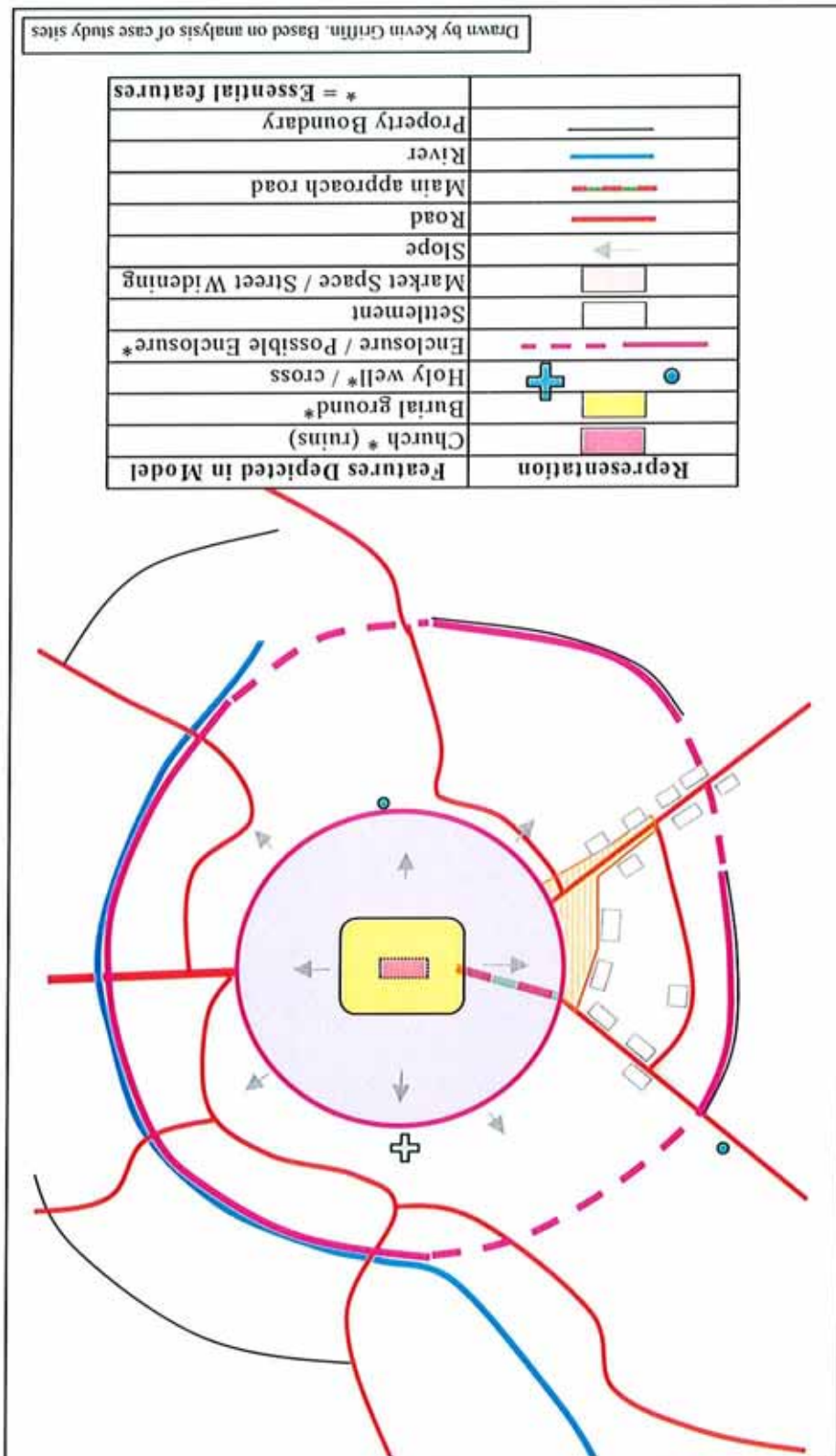
FIGURE 5.10. : MODEL OF ECCLESIASTICAL CONTINUITY AT SETTLEMENT SITES
(REVISED / ENHANCED SPATIAL MODEL OF EARLY CHRISTIAN SITES)

5.3. CONTINUITY OF SETTLEMENT

A central issue in the work being undertaken in this project are the concepts of continuity and change in Irish settlement evolution. Simms has highlighted the need to question the long established trend of considering the major phases in Irish settlement evolution as separate periods seen in the context of invasions and transitions.

There was a period when major changes in the history of Irish settlement were attributed solely to immigrants from abroad from the Neolithic period onwards via the Celts, Vikings, Anglo-Normans to the English.[12]

Instead of considering immigration of groups, research should consider diffusion via small elite groups who influenced or were influenced by ideas and practices. This concept runs contrary to some of the traditionally accepted norms of Irish social evolution, but is finding favour among many archaeologists, historians and historical geographers. This concept is particularly important in this work, which suggests that the construction of curvilinear enclosures around church sites diffused throughout Ireland during the early Christian period.

Furthermore, the data presented in this work suggests that the traditional view of towns being established in the Anglo-Norman period is rather simplistic and ignores the influential part played by earlier church foundations. In order to question this simplified viewpoint, this examination identifies church fabric and related features at settlements through the use of a Model of Ecclesiastical Continuity.

This in itself is an important element of the work, however the model operates as a means of identifying church origins for the sites under investigation and thereby provides a valuable tool for the investigation of Irish settlements. The real value of the model therefore, is as a tool for the investigation of continuity - through identification of early roots of current settlements. The following table represents the continuity of settlement at the case study sites. Rather than examine the sites in a fragmented manner, the model represents evidence for habitation continuity in each site throughout the main historical periods. Beside each settlement is a time-line which illustrates continuity. Strong evidence of settlement in a period is noted by red shading, possible evidence is noted by use of yellow shading and the absence of shading suggests that continuity is interrupted - settlement evidence being poor or non existent for the period in question.

---

[12] Simms, A. (2000) 'Perspectives on Irish Settlement Studies', p. 238.

The initials above each bar, which represent tradition, documentary, cartographic and surviving physical evidence annotate the various indicators of continuity.

It must be noted here that suggesting such a definite pattern of continuity is not meant to propose functional continuity. It is accepted here that the functions and activities at sites varies over time, and this could be masked by such suggestions of continuity. The continuity under discussion is predominantly spatial continuity, with religious and settlement continuity also suggested. As is illustrated by changes to buildings and other surrounding fabric (including their decay and ruin), these are dynamic elements of the landscape. The uses to which churches have been put in the past indicates flexibility of function, with the case study churches firstly being used as places of worship, refuge, and local gathering. They have also been used as school-houses and courts, and the conversion of the Church of Ireland building in Ballingarry into a present-day dwelling exemplifies this flexibility of function.

Each of the case study sites contains present-day settlement evidence of varying degrees, with all sites possessing fabric that dates back at least to the eighteenth century (nineteenth in the case of Ardpatrick). In many of the sites there is a hiatus of evidence for settlement in the Anglo-Norman and Plantation periods, but all sites except Bunratty/Inon display strong evidence of settlement before and after this interruption.

The site with strongest evidence for continuity of settlement since the pre-Christian period is Killaloe, where there is traditional and physical evidence for settlement in the pre-Christian period and evidence of habitation from then to the present day. Due to locational factors and political astuteness of the O'Brien clan the site became an important religious, and administrative centre, supported by its importance for communication in the region, thereby playing an important part in the evolution of the region throughout history. At the other end of the scale is Ardpatrick where there is little evidence for habitation from the early Christian period until approximately the Victorian period. The present day settlement is not very substantial and belies the importance this site once played in the organisation of the Christian church in Munster.

These two sites typify the differing fortunes of settlements and illustrate how one site, through a series of events can be virtually abandoned, while another can rise to episcopal status, and thereby ensure continuity of settlement. Two other sites illustrate the transfer of a focus from one location to another - these are Corofin and Kilfenora. As discussed in these case studies, the earliest site in each case displays evidence of an

early church. For various reasons the settlement which evolved out of these churches is located in a more advantageous site some distance away. In the model a break in the timeline represents this break in the settlement continuity.

Table 5.14 : CONTINUITY OF SETTLEMENT AT CASE STUDY SITES

	Pre-Christian	Early Christian	Anglo-Norman	Plantation (16th 17th Century)	Georgian (18th Century)	Victorian (19th Century)	20th Century
Killaloe	T/P	T/D/C/P	T/D/C/P	T/D/C/P	C/P	C/P	C/P
Ennistymon		C		P	C/P	C/P	T/D/C/P
Corofin		T/D/C/P			D/C/P	D/C/P	D/C/P
Quin	T	T/D/C/P	D/P	C	C/P	C/P	C/P
Tulla	T	T/D/C/P	D	C	D/C/P	D/C/P	D/C/P
Kilfenora	C/T/D/P	D/P		D/P	C/P	C/P	C/P
Kilmallock		T/D/P	C/D/T/P	C/D	C/P	C/P	C/P
Ardagh	T/D/C/P	D/C/P	D	C	C/P	C/P	C/P
Kilteely		T/D/P	C	C	C/P	C/P	C/P
Ardpatrick	T/D	T/D/C/P		C		C/P	C/P
Ballingarry		T/C	T/D/P	C	C/P	C/P	C/P
Doon	T	D/C		C	D/C/P	D/C/P	D/C/P

Legend: ■ (red) Strong Evidence of Settlement ■ (yellow) Possible Evidence of Settlement □ No Evidence of Settlement

* T = Tradition - i.e. folk tradition, place name etc.
D = Documentary Evidence - i.e. Annals, historical references etc.
C = Cartographic Evidence i.e. early OS maps, Petty's map etc.
P = Surviving Physical Evidence i.e. identifiable buildings, ruins etc.

Based on analysis of case study sites

Doherty, in tackling the reluctance by scholars of Irish settlement to recognise the early existence of nucleated settlement highlights that throughout Europe in the early Middle Ages, the 'village' in a modern sense had not yet emerged. In the past scholars saw Ireland as exotically different when we ought to see it in the context of general north-

west European culture'.[13] In Europe the classical continental 'village', does not develop until the eleventh century, similarly, Ireland would appear to have developed a pre-

'village' stage at a similar time to Wales and Scotland.[14]

It is possible that in Ireland the major churches may have functioned as proto-urban centres from as early as the seventh century in the case of Armagh, and in general from the tenth century. This is supported by the work of Leo Swan who claimed that many early medieval church sites acted, as local points for · · · communities · · · providing a place of worship and burial'.[15] In a manner similar to examples from Europe – i.e. France and Italy - early Irish ecclesiastics provided ministry for local churches with some forming the core of pre-village nucleations.[16]

Early churches supported farmers and craftsmen who would have seen the church as a natural focal point for subsequent settlement. By the seventh century, individuals belonged to a given church, to which they were closely connected. Ó Corráin suggests that identity with a particular church is strongly linked to churches levying dues and collecting money.[17] While this did not necessarily lead to settlement, it did develop place identity. For churches that did develop into settlements, as with examples throughout Europe, the successful nucleations are to be found beneath the contemporary villages and towns.[18] On the other hand, the abandoned rural church sites that are scattered throughout the Irish countryside are those that failed at some point in time. In many settlements.

13 Doherty, C. (2000) 'Settlement in early Ireland: a review', pp 53-4.
14 Ibid, pp 56-7.
15 Ibid, p. 57.
16 Ó Corráin, D. (2003) 'Is there parish in the early medieval Irish Church'.
17 Ibid.
18 Doherty, C. (2000) 'Settlement in early Ireland: a review', p. 59.

5.4. EXPANSION AND URBANISATION OF CHURCH SITES

One factor which encouraged the development of church sites was the establishment of formal linkages between sites based on factors such as common founder, or allegiance to a 'mother church', i.e. Armagh, Kildare or Iona. When a church became part of a network by affiliating itself to a site of higher status, it became a subject to a powerful patron from outside the local area. In many cases this was sought to avoid the tentacles of a powerful ecclesiastical 'neighbour', or lord and was achieved by seeking the patronage of a more distant church. It would appear that Armagh was often prepared to fulfil such a role.[19] The creation of paruchiae or groups of churches resulted, therefore, from political developments and sometimes forceful subjection. The impact on the newly subordinate church would have been minor, with possibly a small token tribute being paid to the superior church.

Communities depended on direct exploitation of adjacent lands to sustain themselves. Thus, rather than resorting to increased exploitation of their resources larger foundations developed alliances to facilitate increases in size. This resulted in the accumulation of economic resources (in the form of 'cís' or tribute) in the mother church.[20] This was particularly evident in the case of the main foundations of the more dominant churches - Armagh, Clonmacnois and Kildare - which increased in status and in size as they received revenue from their subject sites.[21] This arrival of donations from far-afield maintained the major churches and the cultivation of accumulated land or demesnes avoided exhausting the local resource base and laid the seeds for urbanisation.[22] Due to the nature of their acquisition, these holdings were not necessarily cohesive blocks of territory - distant lands became considerably important.[23]

It is suggested here that the Episcopal centres of Killaloe and Kilfenora may represent such high status power centres, with the rise in importance of these being linked to tributes from daughter churches. This income would have supported the presence of settlement from an early date. The dual centres of Kincora and Cill-da-Lua at Killaloe, representing secular and religious power further illustrates the connectivity of this site with the surrounding region.

19 Charles-Edwards, T. M. (1984) 'The Church and Settlement', pp 167-168.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid. p. 169.

22 Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 42.

23 Ibid.

In discussing the early origins of Ardpatrick it was mentioned that this south Limerick case study was an important church site at an early period. It is possible that this church was more important than the latter day Arch-Episcopal site of Cashel. Why then did this not develop into a present day settlement of note? The lack of development / continuity arises for a number of reasons which apply to many of the sites under investigation, and many other sites that have not developed into settlements. Firstly, this church collected tributes for Armagh from the entire region. Thus, Ardpatrick itself was not the destination for this income, instead passing on the potential for development to distant Armagh. Secondly, the administration at Ardpatrick would appear to have remained entirely religious at a time when other sites were adopting secular functions. This lack of desire for worldly advancement is demonstrated in the fact that Ardpatrick made no claim to Episcopal status. While other more astute sites were developing and advancing in their 'urban' functions, Ardpatrick remained monastic, and thus was by-passed by administratively and subsequently in the establishment of settlement by sites with less claim to greatness.

It could be suggested therefore, that development into a settlement was not an accidental process. Sites such as Kilmallock, Corofin and Kiltely and possibly Killaloe (which may have developed from nearby Friar's Island) demonstrate deliberate action by those who moved churches to more advantageous sites for settlement development. Well-endowed sites such as Ballingarry, Kilfenora, Tulla and Quin display extensive evidence of settlement resilience. Settlement at Quin for example has remained focused on the early church site, despite the nearby construction of a major Anglo-Norman foundation.

Thus, a number of factors may be suggested as to why discontinuity is evident at some sites and not others, but the primary one would appear to be the possession of secular power. The varying fortunes of some sites caused a hiatus in their settlement profile, but in others, similar events did not interrupt the process. It would appear that the main influence on settlement continuity is adoption of secular and religious administrative function. Thus, Killaloe, which was abandoned by the O'Briens in favour of Limerick survived relatively unscathed as it had developed an identity and importance arising from but separate from the church site at its core. Development at Kilvoydan and Kilmallock Hill however, was terminated with transfer just a short distance to more suitable sites. A similar decline is evident at Ardpatrick, which lost its importance with the establishment of dioceses and transfer of power from Armagh to the nearby sites of

[24] Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p. 91.
[25] Ibid, p. 90.
[26] Doherty, C. (1980) 'Exchange and trade in early medieval Ireland', p. 45.

in barbarian societies, ceremonial centres with religion-administrative functions sometimes developed . . . but this did not happen in Ireland.

function, but in their roles as tribal cult centres. Aalen comments:

their decline had begun.[26] The principal importance of these sites lay not in their urban evidence however that they were 'moving on the road towards urbanism' and by 800AD Uisneach dominated the provinces where they were situated. There is little or no It would appear in Ireland that some of the larger secular sites such as Tara, and

from the existence of appropriate social institutions and patterns of leadership.[25] habitations of cultivators, the incentive for growth and development appears to come population.[24] While the focal points for development may be provided by nucleated on agriculture, particularly where there is a surplus of food available to support a The development of settlements generally occurs in sedentary society, which is based

The Process of 'Urbanisation'

a settlement.

section discusses some of the forces which lead a church site towards development into Having teased out some issues regarding the church sites under investigation, the next

these areas.

for which strong evidence of continuity is absent, are those which are less secure in functions or which had important market areas, developed into settlements, while those Thus, Sites located at important river crossings, which have important administrative administrative, communication and trade function, than the influence of political forces. forces than external. Discontinuity is more a product of weak 'settlement' traits such as evolution into settlement and continuity thereafter is more closely linked to internal development into settlements. From this discussion however it would appear that or plantation would have a major bearing on the adoption of certain church sites for At the outset, it was thought that major forces such as the Anglo-Norman colonisation,

decline.

replaced by a similar role in the new diocesan structure, resulting in almost immediate Emly and Cashel. In this case, Ardpatrick's function as Armagh's 'proxy' was not

The underlying conditions were not suitable for such a transformation.[27]

If this was the case, the impetus for urban development in Ireland would have to come from some other (external) source(s) - possibly the Anglo-Norman(s). Other scholars however, suggest that the church in Ireland became fully integrated into secular society between the eighth and tenth centuries and Doherty claims that this fusion of church and secular power resulted in the simultaneous emergence of some of the major foundations (Armagh, Kildare, Clonmacnois and Iona for example) as capitals of kingdoms.[28] If this theory is accepted, Aalen's concept that Ireland possessed no native urban tradition can no longer be sustained and church sites can be proposed as indigenous origins for Irish settlement development.[29] This can be further supported by examining the case studies in this work which display continuity of settlement since the early Christian period. The traditionally accepted theory of that Irish settlements began with the Anglo Norman is also somewhat negated when one examines sites such as Doon and Corofin which display no evidence of Anglo-Norman influence.

While a number of eremitic sites such as the Skelligs existed, remote retreats were not the typical foundation. Sites appear to have been positively chosen for their development potential. Accessible by water or land was important, with many being coastal or riverine. Ample natural resources and existing concentrations of population were further requirements. In a number of cases, sites were associated with ancient seats of power (i.e. Armagh/Emhain Macha, Slane/Knowth and Killaloe/Béal Ború).[30] Smyth, in considering the location of church sites suggests that power may have been transferred from local aristocracy to the religious foundation.[31]

Numerous authors have discussed the evolution of early Christian sites into settlements. They stress that an understanding of this process is hampered by the absence of secular sources; the morphology of sites being described and explained largely in spiritual

---

27 Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, p. 90.

28 Byrne, F.J. (1978) 'Early Irish Society', pp 57-60; Edwards, K. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 100; Hughes, K. (1978) 'The golden age of early Christian Ireland', pp 76-90; Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 134; Mytum, H. (1992) *The Origins of Early Christian Ireland*, p. 105.

29 Doherty, C. (1985) 'The monastic town in early medieval Ireland', p. 55.

29 Graham, B.J. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 26.

30 Reeves, W. (1860) *The Ancient Churches of Armagh*, p. 5; Graham, B.J. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 26; Ryan, M. (1990) 'Brian Ború: his beliefs and religion'.

31 Smyth, A.P. (1982) *Celtic Leinster: Towards an Historical Geography of Early Irish Civilisation*

terms throughout the early medieval period.[32] This viewpoint neglects the fact that as the more important church sites evolved into secular centres of power, a uniformity of form persisted from their early origins. Swan uses survival of church fabric - enclosure and market-place as the principal identifiers of continuity from Christian foundation to development of towns, but does not suggest that the religious function persisted in isolation. As these sites evolved they assumed secular administrative functions. Swan suggests that this is particularly visible where Anglo-Norman development immediately succeeded the early church site, but the process is repeated throughout the county as settlements developed.[33]

As early Christian sites developed and evolved into settlements they underwent many changes in layout and function. The concept of change through time is supported by the relatively late date of many churches, round towers and other features. As the towns / sites evolved they were continually rebuilt. Bitel and Hurley both agree that as foundations developed, lay people continued to be excluded from the central sacred space for some time, and their huts were to be found beyond the wall or vallum.[34] Conversely, elements such as round towers, crosses and churches were still located within the enclosure. Thus, during the early periods of settlement development, spatial differentiation between church and secular lands may have been maintained, but this gradually declined as the division between religious and secular function became blurred.

Urbanisation at Early Medieval Church Sites

The period between the ninth and eleventh centuries witnessed a revival and intensification of urbanisation throughout Western Europe. Fortified towns started to develop around the 'crystallisation points' of commercial activity. These foci included churches, monasteries, abbeys, palaces and fortresses.[35] Initially they were few in number, being associated with the most powerful sites, but by the eleventh and twelfth centuries, in Ireland, as in Europe, the evolving society created a demand for and resulted in, increased urbanisation.[36] O'Corráin has argued that the political and social

32 Graham, B.J. (1993), 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 33.
33 Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland', pp 84-89.
34 Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*; Hurley, V. (1982) 'The Early Church in The South-West of Ireland',
35 Graham, B.J. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland', pp 27-28.
36 Ibid, p. 28.

systems established in Ireland at that time were similar to those established throughout Europe, with church centres being prominent as potential urban cores.[37] Graham warns, however, that early Irish urbanisation was not exclusively religious in origin, yet, due to the juxtaposition and often superseding of secular power by church, the development of urbanisation in Ireland has been . . . inextricably linked with the issue of monasticism.[38]

Throughout literature on settlement, the concept of urbanity is notoriously difficult to define . In the introduction to his seminal work 'The City in History', Mumford poses the following question:

What is the city? . . . no single description will apply to all its manifestations and no simple description will cover all its transformations from the embryonic social nucleus to the complex forms of its maturity and the corporeal disintegration of its old age.[39]

In attempting to define urbanity some authors such as Morris have used taxonomies of criteria. These 'urban form determinants', include natural world determinants such as topography, climate, construction materials and technology and also determinants which have their origins in human intervention in the natural settlement process, such as economic, political, religious, pre-existing settlement, defence, aggrandisement, town planning, urban mobility, aesthetics, legislation, urban infrastructure, social, religious and ethnic grouping and leisure.[40]

Graham in an Irish context distils determinants of urban form down to four characteristics, which he considers to be essential for an urban community. If these functions are pre-requisites for urbanisation, the notion of early Irish settlement being centred upon religious cores, is dependent upon the presence of these factors, thus, the factors from Table 5.15. are dealt with separately in the following sections.[41]

37 O'Corráin, D. (1972) *Ireland before the Normans*, cited in Graham, B.J. (1993), 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 29

38 Graham, B.J. (1993), 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 29

39 Mumford, L. (1987) *The City in History*, p. 11.

40 Morris, A.E.J. (1994) *History of Urban Form*, pp 10-18.

41 Graham, B.J. (1993), 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 29

TABLE 5.15 : CHARACTERISTICS OF URBANITY	
Social criteria	Relatively large and differentiated population in diversified employment
Institutional phenomena	Complex religious organisation Juridical functions Mechanism of administration
Economic characteristics	Market Central place roles
Morphological features	Planned or organised street systems House plots Defences
Based on Graham, B. J., 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 30	

Social Criteria

The evidence from early Irish church sites points to a distinct development of social differentiation. While foundations were organised as communities where idealistically the communal good was foremost, there are many examples of specialised activity.[42] This non-religious specialism lead Simms to note that by the eleventh and twelfth centuries Kells had become a secularised site.[43] Intellectual work at church sites included education, meditation, and learning of prayers/scriptures, also the specialist reproduction of texts such as the sixth century Cathach and later masterpieces such as the Book of Durrow and the Book of Kells.[44] Manual work outlined in Adamnán's *Life of St Columba* required specialists for tasks such as ploughing, sowing, reaping, winnowing, milking, tending to cows, attending to the kiln, fishing, brewing, beekeeping and physically demanding tasks such as the construction of roads.[45] Mynm outlines, in detail, the broad range of specialist crafts which were carried out during the early Christian period, including craftworking with; copper, gold, silver, lead, glass, iron, stone, bone, leather, wood and textiles.[46]

Many of these crafts and skills may not have necessitated an increasingly complex divisions of labour, however, the level of skill required for the production of some

---

42 Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 361.

43 Simms, A. and Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*, p. 1.

44 Hughes, K. (1972) *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 256; Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 71; Hughes, K and Hamlin, A. (1977) 'The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church', p. 10.

45 Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 72; Reeves, W. (1857) *The Life of St Columba*, cited in Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 363.

46 Mynm, H. (1992) *The Origins of Early Christian Ireland*, Chapter 6 Technology and Craft Activity.

objects would suggest specialisation. Ambitious church metalwork, of which the Derrynaflan Paten and the Ardagh Chalice are key examples, show 'an astonishing range of techniques', requiring a wide range of skills.[47] It has been shown that church sites at Clonmacnois, Lismore and Armagh had workshops where such activity was carried out.[48] The case study sites under investigation may also have had such workshops. The *Annals of Inisfallen* are thought to have been produced at Killaloe, while the Ardagh Chalice may have been produced at the site of the same name.

Institutional Phenomena

Church sites may also be viewed as institutional phenomena. Ó Carragáin in examining the provision of pastoral care highlights the functional diversity of churches.[49] They carried out a variety of institutional functions: providing hospitality for visitors, acting as a bank by keeping precious or semi-precious objects in safe custody for other people, tending to the sick, and fostering children.[50] In addition, the overall impact of preaching, teaching and provision of spiritual direction provided clear direct influence in the areas of administration and law. This influence ranged from the sixth century canon requiring Christians to avoid secular courts (implying the existence of church courts), to Colmcille in 575 being invited to preside over a convention to deter war.[51] The institutional importance of sites is difficult to gauge, but a number of sites such as Ballingarry, Ardpatrick and Kilfenora were administrative centres of large church areas, thereby filling this urban role.

Economic Characteristics

Doherty has highlighted the transference of traditional activities such as political assemblies, market-fairs and other important social events to church sites.[52] Through this process, fixed markets and redistribution centres emerged at major church sites, sometime between the tenth and early twelfth centuries. This economic transformation was crucial to the emergence of settlements.[53] Swan, in discussing what he terms the 'monastic city', comments that excavations of sites have yielded ample evidence of

47 Ryan, M. (1991) 'Early Medieval Art', p. 150.
48 Hughes, K. (1972) *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 255.
49 Ó Carragáin, T. (2003) 'Church buildings and pastoral care in early medieval Ireland'.
50 Hughes, K and Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, p. 13.
51 Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, p. 45; Ryan, J. (1931) *Irish Monasticism*, p. 306.
52 Doherty, C. (1985) 'The monastic towns in early medieval Ireland',

food production, iron manufacture, metalworking, trade and domestic activity'.[54] In addition to excavation, Glendalough, Armagh and Kells all show evidence of a market place situated to the east of the central church core which is associated with a special market cross',[55] In the case study sites however the market place would appear to have been located to the west, with a number of sites fulfilling an important commercial role. Ennistymon is still an important North Clare shopping town and in the case study discussion Quin was shown to be an important area for the gathering of people and dissemination of information.

Morphological Features

A sense of the scale of church sites may be found in the writings of Cogitosus in describing the crowds at Kildare:

the different crowds and numberless peoples flocking in from all the provinces - some for the abundant feasting, others for the healing of their afflictions, others to watch the pageant of the crowds, others with great gifts and offerings'.[56]

With regard to reporting the size and organisation of foundations, hagiographers and annalists may have been over-enthusiastic with their population estimates. Some medieval sources, for example, claim that monasteries such as Clonard and Bangor had populations of up to 3,000 monks, while the *Lives of the Irish Saints* claim that Rahan housed 847 clerics.[57] Claims such as this may not be too extreme, if, as has been suggested, these numbers refer to all the daughter-houses of a foundation.[58] If the figures are mere exaggeration, such numbers may have been given to elevate the status of a site.

In one such claim, the eleventh century *Annals of Ulster* records a population of several thousand at Armagh. While one could debate the validity of such a claim, it is the mention in this reference of 'quarters and streets for the various subgroups' which is of interest in the context of this discussion regarding the development of church sites.[59] This form of morphological development may be found by the 12th century in many of the larger sites which contained streets with timber buildings. These buildings would

53 Graham, B.J. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 30.

54 Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland', p. 54.

55 Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland', pp 77-101

56 Cogitosus, *Life of Saint Brigit*, cited in Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 80

57 Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 72; Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 81.

58 Ó Fiaich, T. (1978) 'The beginnings of Christianity', p. 72.

have housed monks, students, visiting pilgrims and also a lay population of craft-workers, estate workers and their families.[60] The exact nature of the buildings is unknown but it is likely that they were similar to those in contemporary secular sites. Originally round wattle huts would have been characteristic, being replaced during the 8th and 9th centuries by rectilinear wooden houses which were sometimes set on stone foundations.[61] The various *annalistic* references to the destruction of Killaloe follow these examples, with reference to a large population, a palace and church buildings.

This defence for early 'urbanisation' at church sites uses Graham's model. The argument is still tenuous, with the evidence (social) institutional, economic and morphological) being based upon scant documentation.[62] Thus,

care must be taken not to exaggerate either the scale of urbanisation in general, or that of any one site in particular.[63]

However, it is suggested that urbanisation (as qualified by the aforementioned criteria) did occur at a number of sites throughout Clare and Limerick. The proposal here, based on the analysis of case study sites, is that the origins of settlement evolution was strongly influenced by the presence of church sites, which acted as cores for subsequent development.

59 Bitel, L. (1990) *Isle of the Saints*, p. 80.
60 Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, p. 113.
61 Ibid.
62 Graham, B.J. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland', p. 30.
63 Ibid.

6.1. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

The following points summarise some of the main findings of this work. This leads to the concluding discussion which assesses these findings in the context of the initial aims and objectives of the research project.

When early church features are examined in detail, their form and layout is highly regular and consistent. The relationship between individual elements such as church, graveyard, holy well, is consistent and standardised. Even when one considers sites which do not possess outstanding features of the early Irish Church such as cross(es) and round tower, this pattern is observable and identifiable at the core of many Irish settlements.

Using cartographic analysis, enclosures can be identified in many settlements, and this approach, used in conjunction with other research techniques, can be indicative of a settlement whose origins date back to the early Christian period. Figure 6.1, which illustrates the main enclosures examined in the course of this work demonstrates that these features vary considerably from site to site, but when analysed, an overall pattern may be identified, with enclosures following a distinct concentric pattern centred on a central church site.

A distinct pattern of spatial form can be identified at many of settlements. Roadways, property boundaries and even natural features may either radiate from, or circumnavigate the focal early church site. These features clearly illustrate how ecclesiastical sites can have a profound influence on the surrounding landscape — influencing the overall topography as evidenced in field patterns and communication routes.

The relationship between ecclesiastical and secular features follows a distinct pattern in many sites which appear to be of 'ecclesiastical' provenance. A regular layout was observed in many of the sites, where both settlement and market are located to the west on or near the primary approach route to the central church site. The expectation was that the primary approach road would be eastern in orientation as in the sites observed by Swan, however this was not the case. In almost all of the case studies this western pattern was clearly identifiable, with present day settlement distributed in this manner.

This study clearly demonstrates that many present day settlements have their origins in early church sites. Examination of cartographic evidence, building fabric and

ecclesiastical elements can illustrate continuity of use at these sites from the early Christian period to the present day. Interestingly many of the church sites are now abandoned, yet very well preserved, both spatially and spiritually. Some have remained as places of worship, to the present time, others maintain a burial function, but none of the sites have been entirely abandoned. These sites are preserved to the present day as sacred space which forms both the metaphorical and actual core of settlements that date back to their early church origins.

A number of analytical approaches can be used to aid the identification of early ecclesiastical sites. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) are a useful tool for the matching of church and settlement data. Plan Analysis is valuable for the identification of potential ecclesiastical enclosures, and this can be further supplemented by simple computerised modelling of the results. Used in tandem, the Model of Ecclesiastical Continuity and the related procedure for examination of case studies can be used to identify and classify the form and layout of a settlement influenced by an early church site.

A strong relationship exists between present day settlements and early church sites. In this study 193 present day settlements were identified in Clare and Limerick. Of these 59 were shown to be suitable for further investigation. Of those that were investigated, all can trace their origins to the early Christian period. This would suggest that the ecclesiastical influence on Irish settlement is extensive.

6.2. FUTURE WORK

This work has raised many questions. It is hoped that some of these have been answered, but, in so doing, new questions have arisen. The following are some of the themes which present challenges and potential for further study.

Further work - both documentary investigation and fieldwork should be carried out to examine the models and methodologies developed in this work and their applicability throughout Ireland. This would help to test and further develop the findings of this work, exploring the extent to which ecclesiastical enclosures conform to a regular and planned form. Examination of sites throughout Europe suggests that this is not just an Irish phenomenon.[64] Given the importance of churches at settlements throughout Europe, perhaps the methods developed in this work could be used on the continent.

The regularity of enclosure size and layout of church elements suggests an overall ideology / motivation with regard to the planning and construction of sites. While hints are to be found (for example in the *Book of Moling* - Figure 2.3.), further investigation is required to explore the motives behind the adoption of this practice.

Some apparently unimportant church sites developed into settlements while other seemingly important sites declined into obscurity. While site suitability, political adeptness and ecclesiastical ideology would all appear to influence the process, the precise causation and process of urban evolution needs further study.

Anomalous topographical features appear to exist in a number of sites (i.e. Ardagh, Doon, Killaloe & Ardpatrick). While there is little evidence other than topographical layout, these may be early structures — ecclesiastical or secular. It is possible - considering the location - that these were early focal points which were eclipsed or moved at a later stage to the primary church sites. These tantalising anomalies require closer investigation.

As stated at the outset, there is a poor dataset of archaeological material from church sites. This is particularly the case where sites have evolved into settlements. Notwithstanding this lack of investigation at settlement sites, the two churches from this study which offer potential for excavation would be Ardpatrick and Kilvoydan.

64 Clarke, H.B. and Simms, A. (1985) *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe*; Crowley, C. (Forthcoming) *A Comparative Study of Irish, French and Welsh Church*

Following this, archaeological investigation at urbanised sites i.e. Tulla and Quin would illuminate the theoretical and cartographic investigation carried out in this work. Finally, the aforementioned anomalous features at sites would most likely require archaeological investigation.

A key tool in this project has been the use of Plan Analysis to identify central church plots. The work of Conzen has been adapted in this exploration, with the main emphasis in this regard on the visual classification of units. A more detailed Plan Analysis could be undertaken of one or more of these case studies to explore in a more detailed manner the possibility of this technique for exploring continuity and evolution of sites.

The use of simple computerised techniques has illustrated the potential which such methodology has for analysis in this subject area. The use of accurate three-dimensional surveying and modelling would provide useful insight. Detailed geo-physical surveying could help to highlight features such as the enclosures surrounding the church site at Ardpatrick, and to identify subtle topographical features at some of the settlement sites.

Sites, Pawlowski, D.K. (1993) 'Circulades'; Preston-Jones, A. (1992) 'Decoding Cornish Churchyards'.

6.3. ASSESSMENT OF GOALS

Having identified some of the major findings, this conclusion now examines the extent to which the initial hypothesis of the research has been proved or disproved. Before tackling this, the various findings of the work will be assessed in the context of the operational goals identified in the introduction.

The first goal was:

> To investigate the development of early church sites in Ireland.

This topic was explored in some detail. First, sources for the study of early Ireland were examined. The most useful primary sources were seen to be the various *Annals*, which can be used in conjunction with the wealth of high quality secondary writings. Following this, the introduction of Christianity to Ireland was examined, identifying the functions of church sites and the roles which such sites played. In order to understand sites more fully their morphology was explored, examining the factors influencing the selection of particular sites / plots. The investigation continued by identifying the fabric and other elements which are characteristic of church sites, evaluating their purpose, and their survival to the present day. In order to present these various factors in a practical manner, detailed descriptions of Nendrum and Glendalough were given.

The second operational goal was:

> To explore the role church sites have played in the development of Irish settlements.

The examination of Irish settlement was carried out in parallel with the examination of church sites. In order to establish the origins of Irish settlement patterns the social and spatial organisation of Irish society prior to the introduction of Christianity was briefly discussed. In dealing with the adoption of Christianity, it was seen as important to examine how a society without urban centres, adopted and adapted continental Christianity, which was primarily episcopal. Having dealt with the introduction and form of Christianity, the work then examined the evolution of individual sites to explore the concept of church sites as foci for urbanisation. Two 'urbanised' church sites, Armagh and Kells were investigated in detail, to illustrate how the theoretical findings could be applied to specific, well-established settlements.

In this context, one of the initial suggestions in selecting a study area was the possibility of a distinctly vernacular church morphology which would differ from that introduced

349

by the Anglo-Normans. For this reason a case study area was selected which would provide variety in terms of Anglo-Norman influence. The areas selected were colonised County Limerick and nearby County Clare, which was generally overlooked by the Anglo-Normans. It was expected that the case studies in these two areas would provide some level of contrast. County Limerick does have a greater number of settlements and higher density of population than County Clare (Table 4.7.). This may relate to historical factors – i.e. the presence of the Anglo-Normans - but these in turn would appear to be topographically influenced – by soil quality, presence of surface water, altitude etc. (Figure 4.2. - Figure 4.7.). Thus, demography would not appear to be as heavily influenced by historical factors as was expected.

It is acknowledged that the exclusion of the larger Anglo-Norman centres (Abbeyfeale, Adare, Askeaton, Limerick, Newcastle West and Rathkeale in County Limerick; Clarecastle & Ennis in County Clare) may have somewhat masked the importance of Anglo-Norman influence on settlement patterns. However, a number of the smaller sites examined clearly display Anglo-Norman influence - most notably Ballingarry, and Kilmallock (and to a lesser extent Ardagh). In all cases, the Anglo-Norman influence does not appear to have totally eliminated the primary church plan unit.

While Quin and Tulla display distinct patterns of site morphology, influenced strongly by pre-Norman church roots, the aforementioned Limerick sites which are often identified as Anglo-Norman foundations, would also appear to be influenced by religious forces. This study has found that through the use of Plan Analysis, evidence of ecclesiastical genesis may be found in many sites both Anglo-Norman and non-Anglo-Norman - irrespective of their latter-day morphology. The survival of enclosures however, is more evident in sites for which continuity through the Anglo-Norman period is less well established. Thus, the identification of an enclosure at Ballingarry and Kilmallock Town is much more hypothetical than at sites which did not experience development throughout this period.

The suggestion is that desertion of a site often resulted in preservation of sanctity and of building fabric - ironically therefore, interruption in continuity resulted in the preservation of ecclesiastical elements. A long period without development may elevate the local importance of church boundaries, or result in their embededness in local property ownership and usage. Conversely, in sites where secular functions and settlement developed throughout the major historical periods, the presence of enclosures

is more difficult to identify. Sites such as Killaloe and Kilfenora where development occurred, the presence of enclosures is difficult to ascertain, while Quin, where the focus of development was shifted across the river, and Ardpatrick where settlement diminished during the Anglo-Norman period, the preservation of enclosures and associated landscape features is much stronger.

The sequence of the work thus, led to the third operational goal:

> To outline models and techniques which will assist in the investigation
> of ecclesiastical impacts / influences on Irish settlements.

Having identified ecclesiastical and settlement theories, a basic methodology was developed, for use in subsequent sections. Chapter 2 concluded with the development of a Spatial Model, which synthesises the characteristics of a number of well-recognised 'urbanised' ecclesiastical sites. This model presents a spatial template to be used for the identification and examination of ecclesiastically influenced settlements. Having used the template in the examination of the case study sites, a number of modifications are suggested. This enhancement of the model led to the identification of a Model of Ecclesiastical Continuity and a checklist for the examination of church sites.

The fourth operational goal in this work was:

> To use data from specific case studies to assess, in a detailed manner,
> the spatial extent of ecclesiastical influence on individual settlements
> and their spatial form, thereby exploring the relationship between
> church sites and subsequent development.

The treatment of this goal forms a key element of this research project, framing this task around individual towns which act as case studies. In order to tackle such a goal, it was first necessary to identify appropriate settlements for investigation within the study area of Limerick and Clare. The choice of towns integrated factors such as settlement status and the presence of ecclesiastical fabric, but also considered availability of cartographic resources, fabric survival, variety in scale and form, and geographical spread. Once identified, the settlements were examined briefly to establish the basic patterns and processes fundamental to their foundation and development.

Following this overall examination, sites were selected for more detailed examination. This in-depth examination of case studies investigated the relationship between church elements and subsequent settlement patterns using three main methodological approaches: cartographic plan-analysis, field research and documentary investigation.

The final operational goal identified in the introduction of this project was:

> To explore the potential wider use of models and techniques, with a view to identifying the ecclesiastical influence on settlement within wider geographical areas (both in Ireland and international settings).

This final objective was dealt with in an analytical manner, bringing together the case study results and combining these with the theoretical and analytical data from the earlier parts of the study, including the revision of the Spatial Model. In addition, further models were developed and refined in order to explore the extent of settlement and ecclesiastical fabric throughout the case study area.

In this examination, the identification of early church sites was not the target. Instead, the purpose of this project was to identify the extent to which present day settlements have evolved from early ecclesiastical sites and the patterns and forms this continuity of settlement has left on these present-day sites.

From their detailed examination it would appear that the twelve case studies in Clare and Limerick have developed from church sites. The selection process undertaken to identify the potential case studies was extensive, and thus, to a certain extent the church influenced genesis of the case studies is to be expected. Extrapolating from these findings, it may be proposed that all of the 38 valid sites for investigation in County Limerick and the 21 sites in County Clare also fit this model.

It is important however to examine how widespread this phenomenon may by. The following table (Table 6.1.) revisits the case study selection process: 193 potential case studies sites were identified; 59 of these (30.6%) were shown to be 'valid' sites as they showed evidence of both ecclesiastical and settlement features.

TABLE 6.1. : PREVALENCE OF VALID SITES				
	Total Number of Potential Sites	Valid Potential Sites*	% of Total Number	% of Census Towns in 'Valid' Category
Total	193	59	30.6	64.6
Clare	90	21	23.3	53.5
Limerick	103	38	36.9	72.9
* 'Validity' of sites based on presence of both settlement and ecclesiastical features				

Examining these, it would appear that the most successful criteria for identifying 'valid' sites is the identification of census towns. Of the 65 census towns (1996) in Counties Clare and Limerick, 42 (64.6%) would appear to be 'valid' sites - and thus it may be proposed towns derived from church sites. A higher percentage (72.9%) of the Limerick

352

census towns would appear to be 'valid' sites. Thus, while it was assumed at the beginning of the study that Clare settlements would display stronger indigenous tendencies than their Limerick counterparts, it would appear that a larger proportion of Limerick settlements are located at early church sites.

Partial explanation for this phenomenon may be found by returning to the maps of settlement evolution (Figure 4.2. - Figure 4.7.), and examination of the following table (Table 6.2.). The higher incidence in the County Limerick sites, of church influenced settlements would appear to be linked to the antiquity of these sites. Many of the settlements in County Clare are not of ancient origin. Approximately 47% of all potential sites are disqualified for absence of settlement, or ecclesiastical features, however 62% of sites in Clare are eliminated due to the absence of ecclesiastical features. When explored in more detail, it would appear that many of the eliminated sites are modern settlements - predominantly chapel villages, established in the nineteenth century. The evidence would suggest that modern settlement is not influenced by the presence of an early church site to the same extent as settlements established in the earlier periods. The absence of church features, in many cases is not just an indicator of secular sites, but is also an indicator of modern origins.

TABLE 6.2. : REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF SITES			
	Reason For disqualification		Total % disqualified*
	No Settlement	No Ecclesiastical Features	
Clare	48.9 %	62.2%	76.7
Limerick	47.6 %	44.7%	63.1
* Total % disqualified is not the sum of both criteria, as many sites have neither settlement nor ecclesiastical features			

From this examination, it appears that settlements which display evidence of early church features would also appear to be settlements with evidence of pre-nineteenth century origin. Ardpatrick, Kilteely and Corofin appear to contradict this statement - with their settlement being Georgian or Victorian, however, in each case the absence of settlement antiquity (i.e. the absence of pre-Georgian structures) does not contradict the continuity of occupation, merely illustrating a gap in the development process. These sites display ample evidence of early church influence.

Thus, while many criteria can be used to identify settlements, and many methods can be used to evaluate the level of church influence on these settlements, it would appear that in order to identify sites of ecclesiastical origin, two main criteria must be satisfied. Settlements with early church roots appear to be:

- Settlements with evidence of pre-nineteenth century origins.

  and / or

- Settlements with evidence of early church features.

Based on the findings in this work, it would appear likely that sites which satisfy both of these criteria are strongly influenced by church forces. It would be expected therefore, that sites which fulfil these criteria would display many of the features proposed for settlements influenced by early church sites.

6.4. ASSESSMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

The treatment of these goals leads to the final question: to what extent does the work which has been undertaken prove or disprove the initial research hypothesis:

> By using appropriate methods of investigation, settlement morphology
> in Ireland can reveal patterns which illustrate the importance of early
> church sites as focal points for subsequent development.

From the work undertaken in this project, the hypothesis would indeed appear to be true. The pattern and form of early church sites has influenced present day settlement patterns, and this influence can be explored using appropriate models and techniques. The initial motivation for this project was the work of Swan who claimed that there are far more ecclesiastical enclosures in Ireland than was previously thought.[65] This work has gone some way towards supporting Swan's claim and has taken the claim further by demonstrating the manner in which these early enclosures have impacted on settlement patterns up to the present day.

In conclusion, it can be stated that church sites have a profound impact on the development of Irish settlement patterns. This impact is both identifiable and quantifiable. 59 of the 193 present day settlements in Counties Limerick and Clare owe their development to the existence of an early church site. From individual studies undertaken elsewhere in Ireland, this phenomenon appears to exist outside the dissimilar counties examined in this work. Thus, it may confidently be proposed that ecclesiastical sites have provided the impetus for the development and continuity of many settlement sites throughout Ireland

---

[65] Swan, L (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland in the early medieval period'

355

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRINTED SOURCES

Aalen, F.H.A. (1978) *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*, Academic Press, London.

Andrews, J.H. (1986) *Kildare*, Vol 1, of the Irish Historical Towns Atlas Series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Andrews, J.H. (1986) *History in the Ordnance Map: An Introduction for Irish Readers*, 2nd Edition, David Archer, Kerry.

Andrews. J. (1994) 'Kildare' in Simms, A. and Andrews, J. (Eds.) 1994 *Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Dublin.

Andrews, J.H. (1995) 'The Study of Irish Country Towns' in Simms, A. and Andrews, J. (Eds.) *More Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Dublin.

Andrews, J.H. (1997) *Interpreting the Irish Landscape: Explorations in Settlement History*, Irish Settlement Studies 6, Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, Kilkenny.

Andrews, J.H. (2000) 'Plantation Ireland: A review of Settlement History', in Barry, T. *A History of Settlement in Ireland*, Routledge, London, pp 140-157.

Andrews, J.H. with Davies, K.M. (1992) *Mullingar*, Vol. 5, Irish Historic Town Atlas series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Antenucci, J.C. (*et al*) (1991) *Geographic Information Systems: a Guide to the Technology*, Chapman and Hall, London.

Aston, M. (2000) *Interpreting the Landscape: Landscape Archaeology and Local History*, Routledge, London.

Bairead, Rev. F. (1944) ' St. Patrick's Itinerary Through County Limerick' in *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, Vol. IV (1), 1944, Limerick, pp 68-73.

Baker, N.J. (1989) *The Archaeology of Walsall*, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit, Birmingham.

Baker, N.J. with Slater, T. R. (1992) 'Morphological regions in English medieval towns', in Whitehand, J.W.R. & Larkham, P.J. (Eds) *Urban Landscapes, International Perspectives*, Routledge, London & New York, pp 43-68.

Barrett, G. (1981) 'Aerial photography and the study of early settlement structures in Ireland' in *Aerial Archaeology*, 6, The Aerial Archaeology Foundation, Norfolk.

Barrett, G. (1982) 'Problems of spatial and temporal continuity of rural settlement in Ireland, AD 400 to 1169', in *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol. 8(3), pp 245-260.

Barrett, G. (1995) 'Recovering the hidden archaeology of Ireland: the impact of aerial survey in the River Barrow Valley, 1989-91', in *Forschungen sur Archaologie im Land Brandenburg 3*, Brandenburgisches Landesmuseum fur Ur- und Fruhgeshichte, Potsdam.

Barrow, G. L. (1972) *Glendalough and St Kevin*, Dundalgan Press, Dundalk.

Barrow, G. L. (1979) *The Round Towers of Ireland: A study and Gazetteer*, The Academy Press, Dublin.

Barry, T. B. (1987) *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland*, Routledge, London and New York.

Barry, T. B. (1997) 'Recent research in medieval rural nucleated settlement in Ireland' in De Boe, G & Verhaeghe, F. (Eds) *Rural Settlements in Medieval Europe*, Papers of the "Medieval Europe Brugge 1997" Conference, (I.A.P. Rapporten, 6) Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium, Wetenschappelijke instelling van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, Zellik, pp 87-92.

Barry, T. B. (Ed.) (2000) *A History of Settlement in Ireland*, Routledge, London & New York.

Bartlett, R. with MacKay, A. (Eds) (1989) *Medieval Frontier Societies*, Clarendon, Oxford.

Beckett, J.C. with Glasscock, R.E (1967) *Belfast: The Origin and Growth of an Industrial City*, BBC, London.

Begley, Rev. J. (1906) *The Diocese of Limerick Ancient and Medieval*, Browne and Nolan Ltd., Dublin.

Beresford, M. (1957) *History on the Ground*, Lutterworth, London.

Binchy, D (1968) 'Saint Patrick's 'First Synod'' in *Studia Hibernica*, No. 8, Dublin, pp 49-59.

Binchy, D.A. (1962) 'Patrick and his Biographers' in *Studia Hibernica* No. 2, Dublin.

Bitel, L.M. (1990) *Isle of the Saints: Monastic Settlement and Christian Community in Early Ireland*, Cork University Press, Cork.

Bond, C.J. (1990) 'Central Place and Medieval New Town: The origins of Thame, Oxfordshire' in Slater, T. R. (Ed) *The Built Form of Western Cities*, Leicester University Press, Leicester.

Bowden, M. (1999) *Unravelling the Landscape: An Inquisitive Approach to Archaeology*, Tempus Publishing, Charleston.

Bowen, E.G. (1977) *Saints, Seaways and Settlements in the Celtic Lands*, University of Wales Press, Cardiff.

Bradley, J. (1985) 'Planned Anglo-Norman towns in Ireland', in Clarke, H.B. and Simms, A. (Eds) *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in non-Roman Europe*, BAR International Series 255, British Archaeological Reports, Oxford.

Bradley, J. (1987) Recent archaeological research on the Irish town, in Jäger, H. (Ed.) *Stadtkernforschung*, Böhlau, Köln, pp 321-370.

Bradley, J. (1988) *Settlement and Society in Early Medieval Ireland*, Studies presented to F.X. Martin, Bothius Press, Kilkenny.

Bradley, J. (1990) 'The early development of the medieval town of Kilkenny' in Nolan, W. & Whelan, K. (Eds) *Kilkenny: History and Society. Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County*, Geography Publications, Dublin.

Bradley, J. (1990) 'The role of town-plan analysis in the study of the medieval Irish town' in Slater, T. (Ed.) *The Built Form of Western Cities*, Leicester University Press Leicester, pp 39-59.

Bradley, J. (1992) 'The Topographical Development of Scandinavian Dublin', in Aalen FHA and Whelan Kevin, (Eds), Dublin City and County: from Prehistory to Present, Dublin, pp 43-56.

Bradley, J. (1994) 'Killaloe: a pre-Norman borough?' in *Peritia*, Journal of the Medieval Academy of Ireland, Vol. 8, pp 170-179.

Bradley, J. (1995) *Walled Towns in Ireland*, Country House, Dublin.

Bradley, J. (2000) *Kilkenny*, Vol. 10, Irish Historic Town Atlas series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Brady, J. with Simms, A. (2001) *Dublin Through Space and Time*, Four Courts Press, Dublin.

Brand, P. (1988) 'The function or a parish' in Bradley, J. (Ed.) *Settlement and Society in Medieval Ireland*, Kilkenny, pp 261-276.

Breathnach, L. (1996) 'Poets and Poetry', in McCone, K. & Simms, K. (Eds) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, Department of Old Irish, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, pp 65-79.

Breathnach, L. (1996) 'Law', in McCone, K. & Simms, K. (Eds) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, Department of Old Irish, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, pp 107-123.

Breathnach, L. (1987) *Uraicecht na ríar: the Poetic Grades in Early Irish Law*, with English translation, School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin.

Brook, D. (1992) 'The Early Christian Church East and West of Offa's Dyke' in Edwards, N. and Lane, A. *The Early Church in Wales and the West,* Oxbow Monographs, Oxford, pp 77-89.

Buchanan, R.A. with McCourt, D (1976) *Fields, Farms and Settlement in Europe*, Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Hollywood.

Buchanan, R.H. (1994) 'Downpatrick' in Simms, A. and Andrews, J. (Eds.) *Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Dublin.

Buchanan, R.H. with Wilson A. (1997) *Downpatrick*, Vol. 8, Irish Historic Town Atlas series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Buckley, M.J.C. (1900) 'Notes on Boundary Crosses' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XXX, pp 247-252.

Burgess, J. (1996) 'The future for landscape research' in *Landscape Research*, vol. 21(1), pp 5-12.

Butler L. with Wilson C.G. (1979) *Medieval Monasteries of Great Britain*, Michael Joseph, London.

Butlin, R.A. (1977) *The Development of the Irish Town*, Croom Helm, London.

Butlin, R.A. (1977) 'Urban and proto-urban settlements in pre-Norman Ireland' in Butlin, R.A. (Ed.) *The Development of the Irish Town*, Croom Helm, London.

Butlin, R.A. (1993) 'Historical Geographies of Landscape', in Butlin R.A. (Ed.) *Historical Geography Through the Gates of Time and Space*, Edward Arnold, London.

Byrne, F.J. (1978) 'Early Irish Society, 1st-9th Century' in Moody, T.W. and Martin, F.X. (Eds) *The Course of Irish History*, Mercier Press, Cork.

Cairns, C.T. (1987) *Irish Tower Houses: a Co Tipperary Case Study*, Irish Settlement Studies 2, Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, Kilkenny.

Calvert, J.A. (1978) *The Early Development of Irish High Crosses and their Relationship to Scottish Sculpture in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, Doctorate Dissertation, University of California Berkeley.

Camblin, G. (1951) *The Town in Ulster*, Mullan & Son, Belfast.

Camier, J.W. (1932) The Early Irish Church, Association for Promotion of Christian Knowledge, Dublin.

Carew-Hynes, G. (1990) *Dún Bleisce: A History*, Cumann Forbartha Dhún Bleisce, Doon.

Carey, J. Herbert, M. and O Riain, P. (Eds) (2001) *Studies in Irish Hagiography: Saints and Scholars*, Four Courts Press, Dublin.

Carter, H. (1965) *The Towns in Wales: A Study in Urban Geography*, University of Wales Press, Cardiff.

Carter, H. (1981) *The Study of Urban Geography*, 3rd Ed., E. Arnold, London (Chapter 3 - 'Town plan and townscape' pp 357-377).

Carter, H. (1983) *An Introduction to Urban Historical Geography*, Edward Arnold, London.

Carter, H. (1990) *Urban and Rural Settlement*, Longman, London.

Cerbelaud-Salagnac, G. (1960) 'The Monasteries of Ireland, Nurseries of Saints' in Daniel-Rops, H. (Ed) *The Miracle of Ireland*, Translated from French by The Earl of Wicklow, Clonmore and Reynolds, Dublin.

Chadwick, Hughes, Brooke and Jackson (1973) *Studies in the Early British Church*, University Press, Cambridge.

Champneys, A.C. (1910) *Irish Ecclesiastical Architecture*, 1970 reprint, Irish University Press, Shannon.

Charles-Edwards, T. (1984) 'The Church and Settlement' in Ní Chatháin, P. and Richter, M. (Eds) *Ireland and Europe*, Klett-Cotta Stuttgart.

Charles-Edwards, T. with Kelly F. (Eds) (1983) *Bechbretha: an Old Irish law-tract on bee-keeping*, with English translation, School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin.

Clare, L. (1998) *Victorian Bray: a town adapts to changing times*, Maynooth Studies in Local History, Gillespie, R. (Ed), Irish Academic Press, Dublin.

Clarke, H.B. (1990) *Medieval Dublin. The Living City*, Irish Academic Press, Dublin.

Clarke, H.B. (1990) *Medieval Dublin. The making of a Metropolis,* Irish Academic Press, Dublin.

Clarke, H.B. (1995) *Irish Cities*, Mercier, Dublin.

Clarke, H.B. (1998) 'Proto-towns and towns in Ireland and Britain in the ninth and tenth centuries' in Clarke, H.B., Ní Mhaonaigh, M. & Ó Floinn, R (Eds) *Ireland and Scandinavia in the Early Viking Age*, Four Courts Press, Dublin, pp 331-380 .

Clarke, H.B. (2002) *Dublin, Part 1, to 1610*, Vol. 11 Irish Historic Town Atlas series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Clarke, H.B. with Simms, A. (1985) 'Towards a comparative history of urban origins' in Clarke, H.B. and Simms (Eds) *Comparative Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe*, BAR International Series, Oxford, pp 619-714.

Clarke, H.B. with Simms, A. (Eds) (1985) *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe* BAR International Series, Oxford.

Colgrave, B. (1969) *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English people*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Comber, M. (Ed.) (1997) *The Antiquities of County Clare: as recorded by John O'Donovan and Eugene Curry in 1839/41*, CLASP Press, Ennis.

Conrad-O'Briain, H, D'Arcy, A. and Scattergood, J. (Eds) (1999) *Text and Gloss: Studies in Insular Language and Literature*, Four Courts Press, Dublin.

Conzen, M.P. (1978) 'Analytical approaches to the urban landscape', in Butzer, K.W. (Ed.) *Dimensions of Human Geography: Essays on Some Familiar and Neglected Themes*, University of Chicago Dept. of Geography, Chicago, pp 128-165.

Conzen, M.R.G. (1960) *Alnwick, Northumberland - A Study in Town-Plan Analysis*, Transactions of Institute of British Geographers, 27, London.

Conzen, M.R.G. (1962) 'The plan analysis of an English city centre', in Norborg, K. (Ed) *Proceedings of the IGU Symposium in Urban Geography, Lund, 1960*, Lund Studies in Geography series B, 24.

Conzen, M.R.G. (1968) 'The use of town plans in the study of urban history' in Dyos, H.J. (Ed.) *The Study of Urban History* - proceedings of international round-table conference of the Urban History Group, University of Leicester, September, 1966 - Edward Arnold, London, pp 113-130.

Conzen, M.R.G. (1981) 'The morphology of towns in Britain during the industrial era' in Whitehand, J.W.R. (Ed.) *The Urban Landscape: Historical Development and Management*, Academic Press, London.

Conzen, M.R.G. (1981) 'The plan analysis of an English city centre' in Whitehand, J.W.R. (Ed.) *The Urban Landscape: Historical Development and Management*, Academic Press, London.

Conzen, M.R.G. (1988) 'Morphogenesis, morphological regions and secular human agency in the historic townscape, as exemplified by Ludlow', in Denecke, D. and Shaw, G. (Eds) *Urban Historical Geography: Recent Progress in Britain and Germany*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cooney, G. (2000) 'Reading a landscape manuscript: a review of progress in prehistoric settlement studies in Ireland', in Barry, T. (Ed.) *A History of Settlement in Ireland*, Routledge, London & New York), pp 1-49.

Cooney, G. Condit, T. and Byrnes, E. (2000) 'The Archaeological Landscape' in Buttimer, N. Rynne, E. & Guerin, H. (Ed.) *The Heritage of Ireland*, The Collins Press, Cork, pp 18-28.

Cosgrave, D.E. (1984) *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, Croom Helm, London.

Crang, M. (1998) 'The Symbolic Landscape' in Crang, M. *Cultural Geography*, Routledge, London pp 27-41.

Crawford, H.S. (1980/1926) *Irish Carved Ornament*, 2nd Edition, Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Kilkenny.

Crawford, H.S. (1907) 'A descriptive list of the early Irish crosses', *Journal of Royal Society Antiquarians Ireland*, 37, pp 187-239.

Crawford, H.S. (1913) 'A descriptive list of early cross-slabs and pillars', *Journal of Royal Society Antiquarians Ireland*, 43, pp 151-169.

Crowley, C. (2000) Pers. Comm. with author regarding ongoing for PhD research .

Cullen, L.M. with Furet, F. (1980) *Ireland and France, 17th-20th Centuries : Towards a Comparative Study of Rural History*, Proceedings of the First Franco-Irish Symposium on Social and Economic History, Ann Arbor, MI.

Cunningham, G. (1995) 'Roscrea' in Simms, A. and Andrews, J. (Eds.), *More Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Dublin.

Cuppage, J. et al (1986) *Dingle Peninsula Archaeological Survey*, Oidhereacht Chorca Dhuibhne, Ballyferriter.

Curran, M. (1984) *The Antiphonary of Bangor and the Early Irish Monastic Liturgy*, Irish Academic Press, Blackrock.

d'Arbois de Jubainville, H. (1886) 'Chartes données en Irlande en faveur de l'ordre de Citeaux' in *Revue Celtique*, Vol. VII, pp 80-96.

Daly, M. (1984) *Dublin: The Deposed Capital : A Social and Economic History*, Cork University Press, Cork.

Daniel-Rops, H. (Ed.) (1960) *The Miracle of Ireland* Translated from French by The Earl of Wicklow, Clonmore and Reynolds / Burns Oates and Washbourne, Dublin / London.

Darby, H.C. (1968) *The Draining of the Fens*, 2nd Ed. University Press, Cambridge.

Darby, H.C. (Ed.) (1969) *An Historical Geography of England Before A. D. 1800: Fourteen Studies*, University Press, Cambridge.

Darby, H.C. (Ed.) (1973) *A New Historical Geography of England*, University Press, Cambridge.

Dargan, P. (1994) 'The Morphology of Irish Towns, Part 1 - Urban Genesis' in *Geographical Viewpoint*, Vol 22, 1994.

Dargan, P. (1995) 'Celtic Settlement Forms in Irish Towns: Part 1 Identification' in *INSITE* Summer 1995 pp 16-17.

Dargan, P. (1998) 'Nobber an Anglo-Norman Village' in *Rioch na Midhe*, Vol IX, No 4, pp 28-39.

Dargan, P. Byrne, M. Griffin, K. (1997) *Nobber Architecture and Development*, O'Carolan Harp, Cultural and Heritage Committee.

Davies, K.M (1998) *Bray*, Vol. 9, Irish Historic Town Atlas series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

De Breffny B. with Mott, G. (1976) *The Churches and Abbeys of Ireland*, Thames and Hudson, London.

De Paor, L. (1986) *Milestones in Irish History*, Mercier Press & RTE.

De Paor, L. (1986) *Portrait of Ireland - Past and Present*, Rainbow Publishers.

De Paor, L. (1986) *The Peoples of Ireland from Pre-History to Modern Times*, Hutchinson, London.

De Paor, L. (1993) *Saint Patrick's World : The Christian Culture of Ireland's Apostolic Age*, Dublin, Four Courts Press, Dublin.

De Paor, M with De Paor L (1978) *Early Christian Ireland*, Thames and Hudson, London.

de Valera, R. (1960) 'The Court Cairns of Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*. Vol. 60c, pp 9-140.

de Valera, R. with Ó Nualláin, S. (1972) *Survey of the Megalithic Tombs of Ireland, Vol. III: Counties Galway, Roscommon, Leitrim, Longford, Westmeath, Laoighis, Offaly, Kildare, Cavan*. The Stationery Office, Dublin.

Dennison, P. Palliser, D.M. with Slater T. R. (2001) 'The built environment 650-1300', in Palliser, D.M. (Ed.) *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain I*, University Press, Cambridge.

Dinneen, P. S. (1927) *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla*, Irish Texts Society, Dublin.

Dinneen, P. S. with Comyn, D. (Eds) (1902-14) *The History of Ireland by Geoffrey Keating*, Vol I-IV, Irish Texts Society, London.

Doherty, C. (1980) 'Exchange and Trade in Early Medieval Ireland' *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 110 (1980), Dublin, pp 67-89.

Doherty, C. (1982) 'Some Aspects of Hagiography as a Source for Irish Economic History' in *Peritia* 1, 1982 pp 300-28.

Doherty, C. (1985) 'The Monastic Towns in Early Medieval Ireland' in Clarke and Simms (Eds) *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe*, BAR International Series, Oxford.

Doherty, C. (2000) 'Settlement in early Ireland: a review' in Barry, T. *A History of Settlement in Ireland*, Routledge, London, pp 50-80.

Doyle, D. (1967) *The Story of Glendaloch*, Kamac Publications, Dublin.

Duffy, P. (1981) 'The territorial organisation of Gaelic landownership', in *Irish Geography*, vol. 14, pp 1-26.

Duffy, P. (1997) 'Writing Ireland: Literature and Art in the Representation of Irish Place', in Graham, B. (Ed.) *In Search of Ireland: a Cultural Geography*, Routledge, London, 64-83.

Duffy, P. (1998) 'Locality and Changing Landscape: Geography and Local History', in Gillespie, R. and Hill, M. (Eds) *Doing Irish Local History – Pursuit and Practice*, Institute of Irish Studies, Belfast; 24-46.

Duffy, P. Edwards, D. and FitzPatrick, E. (Eds) (2001) *Gaelic Ireland, c.1250-c.1650 : Land, Lordship, and Settlement*, Irish Settlement Studies, Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, Kilkenny & Four Courts Press, Dublin.

Duncan, J with Duncan, N. (1988) '(Re)reading the landscape' in *Environment and Planning: Society and Space*, Vol. 6, pp 117-126.

Duncan, J. (1995) 'Landscape Geography, 1993-94' in *Progress in Human Geography*, 19(3), pp 414-422.

Edwards, A.W. (1866) 'Historical Sketch of the Church in Ireland' in Byrne, J, et. al. *Essays on the Irish Church*, James Parker and Co., Oxford.

Edwards, N. (1990) *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, B.T. Batsford, London.

Edwards, N. with Lane, A. (1992) *The Early Church in Wales and the West*, Oxbow Monographs, Oxford.

Ennen, E. (1967) 'The different types of formation of European Towns', in Thrupp , S.L. (Ed.) *Early Medieval Society*, Appleton-Century-Craofts, New York, pp 174-82.

Etchingham, C. (1991) 'The early Irish Church: some observations on pastoral care and dues', *Eriu* 42, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, pp 99-118.

Etchingham, C. (1993) 'The implications of paruchia' in *Eriu* 44, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, pp 139-62.

Etchingham, C. (1996) 'Early Medieval Irish History', in McCone, K. & Simms, K. (Eds) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, Department of Old Irish, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, pp 7-55.

Etchingham, C. (1999) *Church Organisation in Ireland AD 650 to 1000*, Laigin Publications, Maynooth.

Evans, E.E. (1992 / 1973) *The Personality of Ireland: Habitat, Heritage and History*, Lilliput Press, Dublin.

Evans, E.E. (1942) *Irish Heritage: the Landscape, the People and Their Work*, Dundalgan Press, Dundalk.

Evans, E.E. (1967) *Mourne Country: Landscape and Life in South Down*, Dundalgan Press, Dundalk.

F.A. (1877) *Remarks on the Franciscans in Ennis: from the earliest period of the order to 1877*, Clare Independent Office, Ennis.

Ferguson, Sir. S. (1888) *The Remains of St. Patrick Apostle of Ireland: The Confessio and Epistle to Coroticus*, Sealy, Bryers & Walker, Dublin.

Fitzgerald, W. (1925) *The Historical Geography of Early Ireland*, George Philip & Son, London.

Fitzgerald, S. (1980) *Cappawhite and Doon*, Salesian Press Trust Ltd., Pallaskenry.

Flanagan, J. (1992) *Kilfenora: a History*, Flanagan, J., Kilfenora.

Fleming, J. (1979) *Ardpatrick: Reflections, Historical and Topographical, on Ardpatrick, Co. Limerick*, J. Fleming, Limerick.

Flood, J.M. (1920) *Ireland and the Early Church*, Talbot Press, Dublin.

Freeman, T.W. (1957) *Pre Famine Ireland*, Manchester U.P., Manchester.

Freeman, T.W. (1969) *Ireland: a General and Regional Geography*, Methuen, London.

Frost, J. (1893) *The History and Topography of The County of Clare*, Sealy, Bryers and Walker, Dublin.

Frost, J. (1906) *County of Clare Irish Local Names Explained*, George McKern & Sons, Limerick.

Gasquet, F.A. (Cardinal) (1922) *Monastic Life in the Middle Ages, with a Note on Great Britain and the Holy See, 1792-1806*, G. Bell and Sons Ltd, London.

Gleeson, D.F. (1958) 'Saint Patrick in Ormond' in *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, Vol. VIII (1) pp 42-44.

Gleeson, D.F. with Gwynn, A. (1962) *A History of the Diocese of Killaloe*, Vol. 1, Dublin.

Gosling, P. (1991) 'From Dún Delca to Dundalk: the topography and archaeology of a medieval frontier town, *c.* 1187-1700', in *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society*, vol. 22(3) pp 221-353.

Gougaud, L. (1923) *Gaelic pioneers of Christianity: the work and influence of Irish monks and saints in continental Europe*, M.H. Gill & Son, Dublin.

Gougaud, L. (1932) *Christianity in Celtic Lands: a history of the churches of the Celts, their origin, their development, influence and mutual relations*, Sheed and Ward, London.

Graham B.J. with Nash, C. (2000) *Modern Historical Geographies*, Longman, Harlow.

Graham, B.J. (1976) 'The Evolution of The Settlement Pattern of Anglo-Norman Eastmeath' in Buchanan, R.A. and McCourt, D (Eds.) *Fields Farms and Settlement in Europe*, Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Hollywood, pp 38-47.

Graham, B.J. (1979) 'The evolution of urbanization in medieval Ireland' in *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol. 5(2), pp 111-125.

Graham, B.J. (1985) *Anglo-Norman Settlement in Ireland*, Irish Settlement Studies 1, Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, Kilkenny.

Graham, B.J. (1985) 'Anglo-Norman colonization and the size and spread of the colonial town in medieval Ireland' in Simms A. and Clarke, H.B. (Eds) *The Comparative history of urban origins in Non-Roman Europe. Ireland, Wales, Denmark, Germany, Poland and Russia from the ninth to the thirteenth century*, Vol. 2, B.A.R., Oxford, pp 355-371.

Graham, B.J. (1987) 'Urban Genesis in Early Medieval Ireland' in *Journal of Historic Geography*, Vol 13, No 1, Academic Press inc., London, pp 3-16.

Graham, B.J. (1987) 'Urbanisation in medieval Ireland, *ca.* AD 900 to *ca.* AD 1300' in *Journal of Urban History*, XIII, No 2 (Feb, 1987), pp 169-96.

Graham, B.J. (1988) 'The town in the Norman colonisations of the British Isles' in Denecke, D. & Shaw, G. (Eds) *Urban Historical Geography. Recent progress in Britain and Germany.* (Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography, 10), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 37-52.

Graham, B.J. (1988) 'Medieval settlement in County Roscommon' in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*. Section C, Vol. 88(2), pp 19-38.

Graham, B.J. (1989) 'Secular urban origins in early medieval Ireland', in *Irish Economic and Social History*, The Journal of the Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, Vol. 16, pp 5-22.

Graham, B.J. (1993) 'Early Medieval Ireland: Settlement as an Indicator of Economic and Social Transformation, *c.*500-1100' in Graham, B.J and Proudfoot, L.J. (Eds.) *An Historical Geography of Ireland*, Academic Press, London.

Graham, B.J. (Ed.) (1997) *In Search of Ireland: a Cultural Geography*, Routledge, London.

Graham, B.J. (1998) 'The town and the monastery: early medieval urbanization in Ireland, AD800-1150' in Slater, T.R. & Rosser, G. (Eds) *The Church in the Medieval Town*, Ashgate, Aldershot, pp 131-154.

Graham, B.J. (2000) 'Urbanisation in Ireland during the high Middle Ages, c. 1100 to 1350' in Barry, T. (Ed.) *A History of Settlement in Ireland*, Routledge, London, pp 124-139.

Graham, B.J. with Proudfoot, L. (1994) *Urban Improvement in Provincial Ireland*, Irish Settlement Studies 4, Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, Kilkenny.

Graham, H. (1923) *The Early Irish Monastic Schools*, Talbot Press, Dublin.

Griffin K.M. with Griffin, K.A. (2000) Ballina - Boher Our History and Traditions, Ballina Killaloe Print., Killaloe.

Grogan, E. (1996) 'Changing Places: Settlement Patterns in Prehistory' in *The Other Clare* Vol. 20, pp 48-52.

Gurrin, B. (2000) *A century of struggle and decline in Delgany and Kilcoole, An exploration of the social implications of population change in north-east Wicklow, 1666-1779*, Maynooth Studies in Local History, Gillespie, R. (Ed), Irish Academic Press, Dublin.

Gwynn, A. (1962) *A History of The Diocese of Killaloe*, M.H. Gill & Son, Dublin.

Gwynn, A. (1992) *The Irish Church in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Four Courts Press, Dublin.

Gwynn, A. with Gleeson, D.F. (1961) *History of the Diocese of Killaloe*, M. H. Gill & Son Ltd, Dublin.

Gwynn, A. with Hadcock, N. (1970) *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, Irish Academic Press, Blackrock, Dublin.

Hamilton, G.F. (1928) *Records of Ballingarry*, George McKern & Sons, Limerick.

Hamlin A. (1992) 'The Early Irish Church Problems of Identification' in Edwards, N. & Lane, A. (Eds.) *The Early Church in Wales and the West*, Oxbow, Oxford.

Hamlin, A. (1984) 'The study of early Irish churches' in Ní Chatháin, P. and Richter, M. (Eds) *Ireland and Europe*, Klett-Cotta Stuttgart, pp 105-16.

Hanson, W.G. (1972-1927) *The Early Monastic Schools of Ireland: their Missionaries, Saints and Scholars*, B. Franklin/W. Heffer, New York/Cambridge.

Harbison, P. (1979) 'Early Irish churches' in *Die Iren und Europa im früheren Mittelalter*, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart, pp 618-29, .

Harbison, P. (1989) 'Prehistory and the Middle Ages' in Delany, R. (Ed.) *Shell Guide to the Shannon*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.

Harbison, P. (1991) *Pilgrimage in Ireland: The Monuments and the People*, Barrie & Jenkins, London, Chapter 13.

Harbison, P. (1992) *Guide to National and Historic Monuments of Ireland*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.

Harbison, P. (1992) *The High Crosses of Ireland: an Iconographical and Photographic Survey*, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Harbison, P. (1988) *Pre-Christian Ireland: From the First Settlers to the Early Celts*, Thames and Hudson, London.

Haslam, J. (Ed.) (1985) *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England*, Phillimore, Chichester.

Hennessy, M. (1996) 'Manorial organisation in early thirteenth-century Tipperary', in *Irish Geography*, vol. 29(2), pp 116-125.

Henry, F. (1964) *Irish High Crosses*, Published for the Cultural Relations Committee of Ireland, Three Candles, Dublin.

Henry, F. (1967) *Irish Art During the Viking Invasions (800-1020 AD)*, Methuen, London.

Heraughty, P. (1982) *Inishmurray: Ancient Monastic Island*, O'Brien Press, Dublin.

Herbermann, C.G. *et al* (1907-1914) *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Robert Appleton, New York (now available on line at: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/).

Herbert, M. (1988) *Iona, Kells and Derry: the History and Hagiography of the Monastic Familia of Columba 400-1200*, Clarendon, Oxford.

Herbert, M. (1994) 'The Legacy of Colum Cille and his monastic community' in Mackey, J.P. (Ed.) *The Cultures of Europe: The Irish Contribution*, Institute of Irish Studies, Belfast.

Herbert, M. (1996) 'Hagiography', in McCone, K. & Simms, K. (Eds) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, Department of Old Irish, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, pp 79-91.

Herity, M. (1983) 'The building and layout of Early Irish Monasteries before the year 1000' in *Monastic Studies*, Vol 14, 247-84, Mount Saviour Monastery and The Benedictine Priory of Montreal.

Herity, M. (1984) 'The Layout of Irish Early Christian Monasteries' in Ní Chatháin, P. and Richter, M. (Eds) *Ireland and Europe*, Klett-Cotta Stuttgart, pp 105-16.

Heron, J. (1898) *The Celtic Church in Ireland*, Service and Patton, London.

Hewison G.J. (1890) 'Kilmallock &c.' in *Miscellanea, Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XX, pp 322.

Hewson, A. (1995) *Inspiring Stones: A History of the Church of Ireland Dioceses of Limerick, Ardfert, Aghadoe, Killaloe, Kilfenora, Clonfert, Kilmacduagh and Emly*, Diocesan Council of Limerick et. al., Limerick.

Hodges, R. (1978) 'Ports of trade in early medieval Europe' in *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, II pp 97-117.

Hodges, R. (1982) *Dark Age Economics: The Origins of Towns and Trade AD 600-1000*, Duckworth, London.

Hogan, M. (1903) *Glendalough: its Records, Ruins and Romance*, Browne and Nolan Limited, Dublin .

Horner A. (1993) 'Reviews of Maps and Mapping' in *Irish Geography*, 26 (2) pp 174-175.

Horner, A. (1995) *Maynooth*, Vol. 7, Irish Historic Town Atlas series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Hoskins, W.G. (1955) *The Making of the English Landscape*, Hodder and Stoughton London.

Hoskins, W.G. (1955) *The Making of the English Landscape*, Hodder and Stoughton, London.

Hoskins, W.G. (1957) *Fieldwork in Local History*, Faber, London.

Hughes, K. (1966) *The Church in Early Irish Society*, Methuen & Co., London.

Hughes, K. (1972) *Early Christian Ireland: Introduction to the Sources*, Hodder and Stoughton, London.

Hughes, K. (1977) 'The Early Celtic Idea of History and the Modern Historian' Inaugural lecture by K, Hughes as Nora Chadwick reader in Celtic studies in the University of Cambridge and fellow of Newnham College, University Press Cambridge.

Hughes, K. (1978) 'The Golden Age of Early Christian Ireland (7th and 8th Centuries) ' in Moody, T.W. with Martin, F.X. (Eds.) *The Course of Irish History*, Mercier Press, Cork.

Hughes, K. (1987) *Church and Society in Ireland AD 400-1200*, Ed Variorum, London.

Hughes, K. with Hamlin, A. (1977) *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, SPCK, London.

Hurley, V (1982) 'The Early Church in The southwest of Ireland: Settlement and Organisation' in Pearce, S. (Ed.) *The Early Church in Britain and Ireland*, BAR British Series 102, Oxford, pp 297-322.

Hynes, J.P. (1986) *A Short Guide to Kilmacduagh*, J.P.Hynes, Flintshire.

Johnson, N. (1996) 'Where Geography and History Meet; Heritage Tourism and the Big House in Ireland', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 86, pp 551-566.

Jones-Hughes, T. (1959) 'The Origin and Growth of Towns in Ireland' in *University Review* II, Vol. 7.

Joyce, P. W. (1870) *Irish Local Names Explained*, McGlashan & Gill, Dublin.

Joyce, P. W. (1903) *A Social History of Ancient Ireland*, Longman, Green & Co, London.

Kelly, F. (1988) *A guide to early Irish law*, with English translation, School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin.

Kelly, F. (1998) *Early Irish farming*, with English translation, School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin.

Kenney, J.F. (1929) *Sources For The Early History Of Ireland : An Introduction and Guide*, Volume 1, Ecclesiastical, Columbia University Press, New York.

Kierse, S. (1983) *Historic Killaloe: A Guide to its Antiquities*, Boru Books, Killaloe.

Kierse, S. (2001) Pers. Comm. with Sean Kierse, Local Historian, Killaloe, regarding the origins of St. John's Church in Killaloe.

Killanin, M.M. (Baron) with Duignan, M.V. (1995) *The Shell Guide to Ireland*, 1995 Edition revised by Peter Harbison, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.

Killanin, Lord with Duignan, M.V. (1989) *Shell Guide to Ireland*, (This edition revised and updated by Harbison, P.) Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.

Laing, L. (1975) *The Archaeology of Late Celtic Britain and Ireland c.400-1200 AD*, Methuen and Co., London.

Lavelle, D. (1993) *The Skellig Story: Ancient Monastic Outpost*, O'Brien Press, Dublin.

Lawlor, C. (2000) *Canon Frederick Donovan's Dunlavin 1884-1896, a west Wicklow village in the late nineteenth century*, Maynooth Studies in Local History, Gillespie, R. (Ed.), Irish Academic Press, Dublin.

Le Duc, G. (1994) 'The Contribution to the making of European culture of Irish monks and scholars in medieval times' in Mackey, J.P. (Ed.) *The Cultures of Europe: The Irish Contribution*, Institute of Irish Studies, Belfast.

Leask, H. G. (1955-60) *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, Vol. (3rd ed. In 1987) I, II & III, Dundalgan Press, Dundalk .

Leask, H. G. (1929) 'Friar's Island - Further notes on The Church' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. LIX, pp 16-26.

Leask, H. G. (1930) 'The Church of St. Lua' in *Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. LX, Part II, pp 130-136.

Leask, H. G. (1963) *Glendalough Co. Wicklow: Official Historical and Descriptive Guide*, Stationery Office, Dublin.

Lenihan, M. (1866) *Limerick its History and Antiquity*, (1991 facsimile edition), Mercier Press, Limerick.

Lennon C. with Gillespie, R. (1997) 'Reformation to Restoration' in Duffy, S. (Ed.) *Atlas of Irish History*, Gill & Macmillan, Dublin, pp 50-69.

Lewis, S. (1837) *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* Vol. 1 & 2, Genealogical Pub. Co, Baltimore, Maryland, 1984 Facsimile edition (original by S. Lewis & Co., London).

Lilley, K. (2000) 'Mapping the medieval city' in *Urban History*, Vol. 27(1), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Loeber, R. (1991) *The Geography and Practice of English Colonisation in Ireland*, Irish Settlement Studies 3, Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, Kilkenny.

Logan, P. (1980) *The Holy Wells of Ireland*, Smythe, Gerrards Cross.

Long, H. (1994) 'Three settlements of Gaelic Wicklow 1169-1600: Rathgall, Ballinacar and Glendalough' in Halligan, K. & Nolan, W. (Eds.) *Wicklow History & Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on an Irish County*, Geography Publications, Dublin, pp 237-265.

Lyttleton, J with O'Keeffe, T. (Eds) (2003 - forthcoming) *The Manor in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland*, Irish Settlement Studies, Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, Kilkenny & Four Courts Press, Dublin.

Mac an Bhaird, A. (1993) 'Ptolemy Revisited', in *Ainm*, Bullitin of Ulster Place-Names Society, Volume 5, Belfast, pp 1-20.

Mac Mahon, M. (2000) 'The Cult of Inghin Bhaoith and the Church of Killinaboy' in *The Other Clare*, Vol. 24, Ennis, pp 12-17.

Mac Niocaill, G. (1959) *Na Manaigh Liath in Eirinn 1142-1600 : The Cistercians in Ireland*, Clo Morainn, Dublin.

Mac Shamhráin, A.S. (1996) *Church And Polity in Pre-Norman Ireland: The Case of Glendalough*, An Sagart, Maynooth.

Macalister, R.A. (1929) 'Some Excavations Recently Conducted on Friar's Island' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. LIX, pp 16-26.

MacCaffrey, J. (Ed.) (1907) *Black Book of Limerick*, M.H. Gill & Son, Dublin.

MacCurtain, M. (1994) 'Ennistymon', in Simms, A. & Andrews, J.H. (Eds.) *Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Cork.

MacDonald, A. (2001) 'Aspects of the monastic landscape in Adomnán's Life of Columba' in Carey, J, Herbert, M. & Ó Riain, P. (Eds) *Studies in Irish Hagiography. Saints and Scholars*, Four Courts Press, Dublin pp 15-30.

MacGowan, K. (1988) *Glendaloch: an Illustrated History and Guide to St. Kevin's Monastic City*, Revised ed., Kamac Publications, Dublin.

Mackey, J. P. (1994) *The Cultures of Europe: the Irish Contribution*, Queen's University Institute of Irish Studies, Belfast.

MacNamara, G.U. (1899) 'The Ancient Stone Crosses of Ui Fearmaic, Co. Clare - Part 1' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XXIX, pp 244-255.

MacNamara, G.U. (1900) 'The Ancient Stone Crosses of Ui Fearmaic, Co. Clare - Part 2' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XXX, pp 22-33.

MacNeill, E. (1921) *Celtic Ireland*, 1981 reprint with introduction and notes by Ó Corráin, D., Academy Press, Dublin.

Mallory, J.P. with McNeill, T.E. (1991) *The Archaeology of Ulster from Colonization to Plantation*, The Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University of Belfast.

Manning, C. (1985) *Irish Field Monuments*, National Parks and Monuments Service / Stationery Office, Dublin.

Martin, D. (1991) Geographic Information Systems and Their Socio-Economic Applications, Routledge, London.

Masterson, R. (2000) 'The church and the Anglo-Norman colonisation of Ireland: a case study of the priory of Fore' in *Riocht na Midhe*, Records of the Meath Archaeological and Historical Society, vol. 11, pp 58-70.

McCone, K. (1984) 'An Introduction to the early saint's lives' in *Maynooth Review*, Vol. 11, Maynooth, pp 26-59.

McCone, K. (1990) *Pagan Past and Christian Present in Early Irish Literature*, An Sagart, Maynooth.

McCone, K. (1996) 'Prehistoric, Old and Middle Irish', in McCone, K. & Simms, K. (Eds) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, Department of Old Irish, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, pp 7-55.

McCone, K. with Simms, K. (Eds) (1996) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, Department of Old Irish, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.

McCormick, F. (1995) 'Cows, ringforts and the origins of early Christian Ireland' in *Emania*, Bulletin of the Navan Research Group, vol. 13, pp 33-37.

McGuane, J. T. (1984) *Kilrush from Olden Times*, Clódórí Lurgan, Inverin, Co. Galway.

McManus, D. (1991) *A Guide to Ogham*, An Sagart, Maynooth.

McManus, R. (2002) *Dublin, 1910-40: shaping the city and suburbs*, Simms A. & Brady J. Series Editors, Four Courts Press, Dublin .

McNeill, T. (1997) *Castles in Ireland*, Routledge, London.

Mescal, D. (1902) *The story of Inis Cathaigh*, O'Donoghue & Co., Dublin.

Mitchell, B. (1986) *A New Genealogical Atlas of Ireland*, Genealogical Pub. Co, Baltimore, Maryland.

Mitchell, G.F. (1978) 'Prehistoric Ireland' in Moody, T.W. and Martin F.X. (Eds) *The Course of Irish History*, The Mercier Press, Cork.

Mitchell, G.F. with Ryan M. (1998) *Reading the Irish Landscape* (Formerly published as *The Irish Landscape* - 1976 or *The Shell Guide to Reading the Irish Landscape* – 1986) Town House, Dublin.

Moody, Martin with Byrne (Eds) (1982) *A Chronology of Irish History*. A companion to Irish History part I, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Moody, T.W. with Martin F.X. (1978) *The Course of Irish History*, The Mercier Press, Cork.

Morris, A.E.J. (1994) *History of Urban Form: Before the Industrial Revolution*, 3rd Edition, Longman Scientific & Technical, New York.

Morris, R. (1988) *Churches in the Landscape*, Dent, London.

Mould, D.D.C.P. (1955) *Irish Pilgrimage*, M.H. Gill, Dublin.

Muir, R. (1998) 'Landscape a wasted legacy', in *Area*, 30:3, pp 263-271.

Mumford, L. (1987) *The City in History: its origins, its transformations and its prospects*, Penguin Books, London.

Murphy, I. (1974) *County Clare from Earliest Times to the Sixteenth Century*, Shannon.

Murtagh, H. (1994) *Athlone*, Vol. 6, Irish Historic Town Atlas series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Mytum, H. (1992) *The Origins of Early Christian Ireland*, Routledge, London.

Nash, C. (1999) 'Landscapes', in Cloke P. Crang, P & Goodwin, M. (Eds) *Introducing Human Geographies*, Arnold, London.

Newmann, C. (1997) *Tara : An Archaeological Survey*, Discovery programme monograph 2, Royal Irish Academy for the Discovery Programme, Dublin.

Ní Chatháin, P. with Richter, M. (Eds) (1984) *Ireland and Europe*, Klett-Cotta Stuttgart.

Ní Ghaghláin, S. (1995) 'Church and Community in Medieval Ireland: the diocese of Kilfenora' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 125, pp 61-84.

Ní Ghaghláin, S. (1996) 'The origin of medieval parishes in Gaelic Ireland: the evidence of Kilfenora' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 126, pp 37-61.

Nicholls, K. (1972) *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the Middle Ages*, Gill & Macmillan, Dublin.

Nolan, J. (1871) *The History and Antiquities of Glendalough*, McGlashan & Gill, Dublin.

Nolan, W. (1986) 'Some Civil and Ecclesiastical Territorial Divisions and their Geographical Significance' in Nolan, W. (Ed.) *The Shaping of Ireland*, RTE / Mercier Press, Cork.

Nolan, W. with Simms, A. (1998) *Irish Towns: Guide to Sources*, Geography Publications, Dublin.

Norman E.R. with St Joseph, J.K.S. (1969) 'Early Christian Sites' in Norman E.R. and St Joseph, J.K.S. *The Early Development of Irish Society: the evidence of aerial photography*, University Press, Cambridge.

Ó Cathasaigh, T. (1996) 'Early Irish Narrative Literature', in McCone, K. & Simms, K. (Eds) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, Department of Old Irish, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, pp 55-65.

Ó Corráin, D. (1981/1921) *Celtic Ireland* by Eoin MacNeill, new intro etc. by O'Corrain, Academy Press in association with the Medieval Academy of Ireland, Dublin.

Ó Corráin, D. (1972) *Ireland Before the Normans*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.

Ó Corráin, D. (1976) 'A Handlist of Publications on Early Irish Society' in *Historical Studies* 10 pp 172-203.

Ó Corráin, D. (1981) 'The Early Irish Churches: Some Aspects of Organisation' in O'Corrain D. (Ed.) *Irish Antiquity*: Essays and Studies Presented to Professor O'Kelly, Cork, pp 327-41.

Ó Corráin, D. (1987) 'Irish Vernacular Law and the Old Testament' in Ní Chatháin, P. and Richter, M. (Eds) *Ireland and Europe*, Klett-Cotta Stuttgart, pp 105-16.

Ó Corráin, D. (1989) 'Prehistoric and early Christian Ireland' in R.F. Foster (Ed.) *The Oxford Illustrated History of Ireland*, University Press, Oxford, pp 1-52.

Ó Fiaich, T. (An T-Athair) (1978) 'The Beginnings of Christianity (5th and 6th Centuries)' in Moody, T.W. and Martin, F.X. (Eds.) *The Course of Irish History*, Mercier Press, Cork.

Ó Maolfabhail, A. (1990) *Logainmneacha Contae Luimnigh*, Logainmneacha na hÉireann. - Imleabhar 1, Oifig an tSoláthair, Baile Átha Cliath.

Ó Morónaigh, S. (1996) *Townlands in the parish of Oola*, Oola Community Centre Committee, Oola.

Ó Riain-Raedel, D. (1998) 'The Question of the 'Pre-Patrician' Saints of Munster' p. 17. in Monk, M.A. and Sheehan, J. (Eds.) *Early Medieval Munster: Archaeology, History and Society*, Cork University Press, cork, pp 9-16.

O'Brien, A.F. (1994) 'Economy, Growth and Settlement in Medieval Ireland' in Newsletter of the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, Autumn 1994, Kilkenny.

O'Connell, J. R. (1909) *Glendalough: its Story and its Ruins*, Catholic Truth Society of Ireland, Dublin.

O'Connor, D. (1997) *Cill Íde*, Killeedy GAA Publications, Killeedy.

O'Connor, K. (1998) *The Archaeology of Medieval Rural Settlement in Ireland*, Discovery programme monograph 3, Royal Irish Academy for the Discovery Programme, Dublin.

O'Connor, P. (1987) *Exploring Limerick's Past*, Oireacht na Mumhan Books, Newcastle West.

O'Crónín, D. (1991) 'Early Irish Christianity', in Ryan, Michael (Ed.) *The Illustrated Archaeology of Ireland*, Country House, Dublin.

O'Donovan J. with Curry, E. (1839/41) *The Antiquities of County Clare*, 1997 edited edition of *Ordnance Survey Letters for County Clare* by Comber, M. CLASP Press, Ennis.

O'Dwyer, P. (1981) *Céli Dé Spiritual Reform in Ireland 750-900*, Editions Tailliura, Dublin.

O'Flanagan, P. (1981) 'Surveys, maps and the study of rural settlement development' in O'Corrain D (Ed.) *Irish Antiquity*, Essays and Studies Presented to Professor O'Kelly, Four Courts Press, Dublin.

O'Flanagan, P. (1988) *Bandon*, Vol. 3, Irish Historic Town Atlas series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

O'Keeffe, T. (1995) 'Cashel' in Simms, A. and Andrews, J. (Eds.) *More Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Dublin.

O'Lochlainn, C. (1940) 'Roadways in Ancient Ireland' in Ryan, J. (Ed.) *Feil-sgribhinn Eoin mhic Neill*, Faoi Chomhartha na dTrí gCoinneal, Áth Cliath (Dublin).

O'Loughlin, T. (1996) 'The Latin Sources of Medieval Irish Culture', in McCone, K. & Simms, K. (Eds) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, Department of Old Irish, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, pp 91-107.

O'Russel, T. (1897) *Beauties and Antiquities of Ireland*. Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co, London.

O'Sullivan, A. with Sheehan, J. (1996) *The Iveragh Peninsula: An Archaeological Survey of South Kerry*, Cork University Press, Cork.

Olwig, K. R. (1996) 'Recovering the substantive nature of landscape' in *Annals of American Geographers*, 86(4), pp 630-653.

Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1991) *Ordnance Survey in Ireland an Illustrated record*, Ordnance Survey of Ireland & Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland, Dublin.

Ordnance Survey of Ireland and Hadcock, N. (1965) *Monastic Ireland* map and 30 page text and index, Ordnance Survey of Ireland, Dublin.

373

Pawlowski, D.K. (1993) 'Circulades: un cas specifique d'application du cercle pour l'ensemble du systeme parcellaire et defensif des agglomerations medievales', pp 152-53' in Fabre, G. et al, *Morphogenèese du Village Medieval (IXe – XIIe siecles)*, Association Pour la Connaissance du Patrimone du Languedoc Roussillon. - Compilation of the 'Actes de la table ronde de Montpellier, 22-23 février, 1993'.

Petrie, G. (1845) *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland: An Essay on the Origin and Uses of the Round Towers of Ireland*, reprint c.1970 introduced by Liam de Paor, Irish University Press, Shannon.

Preston-Jones, A. (1992) 'Decoding Cornish Churchyards' in Edwards, N. and Lane, A. (Eds) *The Early Church in Wales and the West*, Oxbow Monographs, Oxford, pp 105-124.

Proudfoot, V. (1961) 'The economy of the Irish rath', in *Medieval Archaeology* V, pp 94-122.

Prunty, J. (1999) *Dublin Slums 1800-1925 : A Study in Urban Geography*, Irish Academic Press, Dublin.

Przemysław, U. (1994) 'The origins of towns on the outskirts of medieval Europe -- Poland, Norway and Ireland' in *Archaeologia Polona*, Vol 32, pp 109-127.

Raftery, B. (1972) *Irish Hill Forts in The Iron Age in The Irish Sea Province*, CBA Research Reports, No. 9, pp 37-58.

Raftery, B. (1984) *La Tène in Ireland: Problems of Origin and Chronology*, Veröffentlichung des Vorgeschichtlichen Seminars Marburg, Sonderband 2, Wasmuth K.G., Marburgh.

Reves, W. (1860) *The Ancient Churches of Armagh*, J.F. Fowler, Dublin.

Reves-Smyth, R. with Hammond, F. (1983) *Landscape Archaeology in Ireland*, BAR Series No. 116, Oxford.

Richardson, H. (1984) 'The Concept of the High Cross' in Ní Chatháin, P. and Richter, M. (Eds) *Ireland and Europe*, Klett-Cotta Stuttgart, pp 105-16.

Richardson, H. with Scarry, J. (1990) *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses*, Mercier Press, Cork.

Richter, M. (1988) *Medieval Ireland: The Enduring Tradition [Irland im Mittelalter]*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.

Robinson, P. (1986) *Carrickfergus*, Vol. 2, Irish Historic Town Atlas series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Robinson, P. (1995) 'Bangor' in Simms, A. and Andrews, J. (Eds.) 1995 *More Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Dublin.

Rofé, Y. (1995) 'Space and Community - the spatial foundations of urban neighbourhoods' in *Berkley Planning Journal*, No. 10, pp 107-125.

Rosser, G. with Slater, T. R. (Eds) (1998) *The Church in the Medieval Town*, Ashgate, Aldershot.

Ryan, G. (1985) 'Pre-reformation church and monastic sites in the Barony of Bunratty Lower c.500 AD-1550- AD' in *The Other Clare*, Vol. 9 pp 44-50, Ennis.

Ryan, J. (S.J.) (1931) *Irish Monasticism - Origins and Early Development*, Talbot Press, Dublin and Cork.

Ryan, J. (S.J.) (1961) 'The Early Irish Church and the See of Peter' in Watt, J.A. Morrall, J.B. and Martin, F.X. (Eds) *Medieval Studies* Presented to Aubrey Gwynn, S.J., The Three Candles, Dublin.

Ryan, J. (S.J.) (1972) *The Monastic Institute*, vol 1 - 2 of *A history of Irish Catholicism*, Series Editor Corish, P.J., Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.

Ryan, J. (S.J.) (1976) *Clonmacnois a Historical Summary*, Issued by OPW, Stationary Office, Dublin.

Ryan, M. (1991) 'Early Medieval Art' in Ryan, M. (Ed.) *The Illustrated Archaeology of Ireland*, Country House, Dublin, pp 146-153.

Ryan, M. (1996) 'Archaeology', in McCone, K. & Simms, K. (Eds) *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, Department of Old Irish, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, pp 155-165.

Ryan, M. (Ed.) (1991) *The Illustrated Archaeology of Ireland*, Country House, Dublin.

Scrase, A.J. (n.d.) 'The Study of Urban Form and the Emergent Town Planning Profession' from *Fourth International Seminar on Urban Form*.

Sharpe, R. (1979) 'Hiberno-Latin *laicus*, Irish *láech*, and the Devil's Men', in *Ériu*, 30, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 75-92.

Sharpe, R. (1984) 'Some Problems Concerning The Organisation of The Church in Early Medieval Ireland' in *Peritia* Vol. 3, pp 230-70.

Sharpe, R. (1989) 'Quatuor Sanctissimi Episcope: Irish Saints Before Patrick' in Ó Corráin, D. Breahach, L. and McCone, K. (Eds) *Sages, Saints and Storytellers: Celtic Studies in Honour of Professor James Carney*, Maynooth.

Sharpe, R. (1992) 'Churches and communities in early medieval Ireland: towards a pastoral model' in Sharpe, R. and Blair, J. (Eds), *Pastoral Care Before the parish*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, pp 81-109.

Sheehan, J. (1982) 'The Early Historic Church Sites of North Clare', in *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, Vol. 24, pp 29-45.

Simms, A. (1979) 'Medieval Dublin: a topographical analysis' in *Irish Geography, Vol. 12, pp 25-42*.

Simms, A. (1986) 'Continuity and Change: Settlement and Society in Medieval Ireland c.500-1500' in Nolan, W. (Ed.) *The Shaping of Ireland: The Geographical Perspective*, RTE / Mercier Press, Cork.

Simms, A. (1990) 'Medieval Dublin in a European context: from proto-town to chartered town', in Clarke, H. (Ed.) *Medieval Dublin: the Making of a Metropolis*, Irish Academic Press, Blackrock, pp 261-264.

Simms, A. (1992) 'The early origins and morphological inheritance of European towns' in Whitehand, J.W.R. & Larkham, P.J. (Eds) *Urban Landscapes: International Perspectives*, Routledge, London & New York, pp 43-68.

Simms, A. (1994) 'Kells' in Simms, A. and Andrews, J. (Eds.) 1994 *Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Dublin.

Simms, A. (1994) 'The Origin of Irish Towns' in Simms, A. and Andrews, J. (Eds.) *Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Dublin.

Simms, A. (1995) 'The origins of towns in medieval Ireland. The European context' in Duvosquel, J. & Thoen, E. (Eds) *Peasants and Townsmen in Medieval Europe: Studia in honorem Adriaan Verhulst*, Snoeck-Ducaju, Gent, pp 99-116.

Simms, A. (2000) 'Perspectives on Irish settlement studies' in Barry, T. (Ed.) *A History of Settlement in Ireland*, Routledge, London, pp 228-247.

Simms, A. with Andrews, J.H. (Eds) (1994) *Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Dublin.

Simms, A. with Andrews, J.H. (Eds) (1995) *More Irish Country Towns*, Mercier Press, Dublin.

Simms, A. with Fagan, P. (1992) 'Villages in County Dublin: Their Origins and Inheritance' in Aalen F.H.A. and Whelan, K. (Eds.) *Dublin City and County: from Prehistory to Present*, Geography Publications, Dublin.

Simms, A. with Simms, K. (1990) *Kells*, Vol. 4 Irish Historic Town Atlas series, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Simms, K. (1995) 'Late medieval Donegal' in Nolan, W. Ronayne, L. & Dunleavy, M. (Eds.) *Donegal History and Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County*, Geography Publications, Dublin, pp 183-202.

Sjoberg, G. (1960) *The Pre-Industrial City*, Collier-Macmillan, London..

Sjoberg, G. (1965) 'The Origin and Evolution of Cities' in *Scientific American* Vol. 213, pp 55-63.

Slater, T.R. (1981) 'The analysis of burgage patterns in medieval towns', *Area* 13, 3: 211-216.

Slater, T.R. (1985) 'Medieval new town and port: a plan-analysis of Hedon, East Yorkshire', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 57: 23-51.

Slater, T.R. (1987) 'Ideal and reality in English episcopal medieval town planning', *Transactions, Institute of British Geographers* NS 12, 2: 191-203.

Slater, T.R. (1988) 'English medieval town planning', in Denecke, D. and Shaw, G. (Eds) *Urban Historical Geography: Recent Progress in Britain and Germany*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Slater, T.R. (1989) 'Doncaster's town plan: an analysis', in Buckland, P.C., Magilton, J.R. and Hayfield, C. (Eds.) *The Archaeology of Doncaster, 2 - the Medieval and Later Town*, BAR British Series 202, Oxford: British Archaeological Reports.

Slater, T.R. (1990) 'English medieval new towns with composite plans', in Slater, T. R. (Ed.) *The Built Form of Western Cities*, Leicester: Leicester University Press.

Slater, T.R. (1990) 'Urban morphology in 1990: developments in international co-operation', in Slater, T. R. (Ed.) *The Built Form of Western Cities*, University Press, Leicester, pp 3-22.

Slater, T.R. (Ed.) (1990) *The Built Form of Western Cities*, Essays for M.R.G. Conzen on the occasion of his eightieth birthday, Leicester University Press, Leicester.

Slater, T.R. (Ed.) (2000) *Towns in Decline, AD 100-1600*, Ashgate, Aldershot.

Smyth, A.P. (1982) *Celtic Leinster: Towards an Historical Geography of Early Irish Civilisation*, Irish Academic Press, Blackrock.

Smyth, W. J. (2000) 'Ireland a Colony' in Barry, T. (Ed.) *A History of Settlement in Ireland*, Routledge, London, pp 158-201.

Spearman, R.M. (1988) 'The medieval townscape of Perth', in Lynch, M. Spearman, M. and Stell, G. (Eds) *The Scottish Medieval Town*, John Donald, Edinburgh.

Spellissy, S. with O'Brien, J. (1989) *Limerick: The Rich Land*, Spellissy/O'Brien, Ennis.

Spellissy, S. with O'Brien, J. (1989) *Clare: County of Contrasts*, Spellissy/O'Brien, Ennis.

Stalley R. (1987) *The Cistercian Monasteries of Ireland: An Account of the History, Art and Architecture of the White Monks in Ireland from 1142 to 1540*, Yale University Press, London.

Stalley, R. (1996) *Irish High Crosses*, Country House, Dublin.

Stokes, W. (Ed.) (1877) *Three Middle-Irish Homilies on the Lives of Saints Patrick, Brigit and Columba*, Privately Printed, Calcutta.

Stout, G. (1997) 'The Bend of the Boyne, County Meath' in Aalen, F.H.A. Whelan, K. and Stout, M. (Eds) *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, University Press, Cork, pp 299-315.

Stout, G. with Stout M. (1992) 'Patterns in the past: County Dublin 5000 BC - 1000 AD' in Aalen F.H.A. and Whelan, K. (Eds.) *Dublin City and County from Prehistory to Present*, Geography Publications, Dublin.

Stout, G. with Stout M. (1997) 'Early landscapes, from prehistory to plantation' in Aalen, F.H.A. Whelan, K. and Stout, M. (Eds) *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, pp 31-63.

Stout, M. (1997) *The Irish Ringfort*, Irish Settlement Studies 5, Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, Kilkenny & Four Courts Press, Dublin.

Stout, M. (2000) 'Early Christian Ireland: settlement and environment' in Barry, T. (Ed.) *A History of Settlement in Ireland*, Routledge, London, pp 81-109.

Swan, L. (1983) 'Enclosed ecclesiastical sites and their relevance to settlement patterns of the first millennium AD' in Reeves Smyth, T. and Hammond, F. (Eds.) *Landscape Archaeology in Ireland*, BAR British series 116, Oxford.

Swan, L. (1985) 'Monastic proto-towns in early medieval Ireland: the evidence of aerial photography, plan analysis and survey' in Clarke and Simms (Eds) *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe*, BAR International Series, Oxford.

Swan, L. (1989) 'Ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland in the early medieval period', in Fixot, M. and Zadora-Rio, E. (Eds) *L'environnement des églises et la topographie religieuse des campagnes medievales*: IIIe congrès international d'archeologie medievale, Aix-en-Provence, pp 50-56.

Swan, L. (1991) 'Some Ecclesiastical Sites in Co. Clare' in *The Other Clare*, Vol. 15, Ennis, pp 61-63.

Swan, L. (1994) 'Excavations at Kilpatrick, Killucan, Co. Westmeath' in *Riocht na Midhe, Records of Meath Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol 9, No 1, 1994/1995.

Swan, L. (1994) 'Fine Metalwork from the Early Christian site at Kilpatrick, Co Westmeath' in Bourke, Cormac (Ed.) *From the Isles of the North*, Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Insular Art, Belfast.

Swift, C. (1998) 'Forts and Fields: a study of 'monastic towns' in seventh and eight century Ireland', in *The Journal of Irish Archaeology*, Vol. IX, pp 105-126.

Swinfen, A. (1992) *Forgotten Stones : Ancient Church Sites of the Burren and Environs*, Lilliput Press, Dublin.

Thomas, A. (1992) *The Walled Towns of Ireland*, Irish Academic Press, Dublin.

Thomas, C. (1971) *Britain and Ireland in Early Christian Times: A.D. 400-800*, Thames and Hudson, London.

Thomas, C. (1971) *The Early Christian Archaeology of North Britain*, Oxford University Press, London.

Thomas, C. (1981) *Christianity in Roman Britain to AD 500*, Batsford, London.

Thomas, C. (1986) *Celtic Britain*, Thames & Hudson, London.

Thomas, C. (1998) 'Early Medieval Munster: Thoughts Upon Its Primary Christian Phase' in Monk, M.A. and Sheehan, J. (Eds) *Early Medieval Munster: Archaeology, History and Society*, Cork University Press, cork, pp 9-16.

Valante, M.A. (1998) 'Reassessing the Irish "monastic town"' in *Irish Historical Studies*, Joint Journal of the Irish Historical Society and the Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies, Vol. 31, pp 1-18.

Wakeman, W.F. (1891) *Handbook of Irish Antiquities*, Hodges, Figgis and Co., Dublin.

Walsh, J.R. with Bradley, T. (1990) *A History of the Irish Church 400-700 AD*, Columba Press, Blackrock.

Watt, J.A. (1970) *The Church and the Two Nations in Medieval Ireland*, University Press, Cambridge.

Watt, J.A. (1972) *The Church in Medieval Ireland*, Gill and Macmillan / Macmillan, Dublin / London.

Westropp , T.J. (1911-12) 'Types of Ring-Forts Remaining in Eastern Clare' in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. XXIX, pp 186-212.

Westropp , T.J. (1887) 'Notes on the Franciscan Abbey, Manister Cuinche, or Quin, Co. Clare' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XVII, pp 334-335.

Westropp , T.J. (1892) 'Killaloe its ancient Places and Cathedral - Part 1', in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XXII, pp 398-410.

Westropp , T.J. (1893) 'Killaloe its ancient Places and Cathedral - Part II', in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XXIII, pp 187-201.

Westropp , T.J. (1894) 'Churches with round towers in Northern Clare - Part II', in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XXIV, pp 150-159.

Westropp , T.J. (1900) 'Excursions of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XXX, pp 273-306; 392-450.

Westropp , T.J. (1900) 'The churches of County Clare, and the origin of the ecclesiastical divisions in that County' in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Series III, Vol. VI, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, pp 100-180.

Westropp , T.J. (1905) 'A Survey of the Ancient Churches in the County of Limerick' in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol XXV, Sec. C.

Westropp , T.J. (1911) 'St. Mochulla of Tulla County Clare, His legend and the Entrenchments' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XLI, pp 5-19; pp 187-8.

Westropp , T.J. (1916) '1916 Proceedings' in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. XLVI pg. 197.

Westropp , T.J. (1916) 'Limerick City', Westropp , Macalister & MacNamara, *The Antiquities of Limerick and Its Neighbourhood*, Hodgis Figgis and Co., Dublin, pp 7-26.

Westropp , T.J. Macalister, R.A.S. and MacNamara, G.U. (1916) *The Antiquities of Limerick and Its Neighbourhood*, Hodgis Figgis and Co., Dublin.

Whelan, K. (1985) 'The Catholic Church in County Tipperary 1700-1900', in Nolan, W. (Ed.) *Tipperary History & Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on an Irish County*, Geography Publications, Dublin.

Whelan, Y. (2001) 'Monuments, Power and Contested Space – The Iconography of Sackville Street (O'Connell St.) Before Independence (1922)' in *Irish Geography*, Vol 34 (I), Journal of the Geographical Society of Ireland, Dublin, pp 11-33.

Whelan, Y. (2001) 'Symbolising the State— the iconography of O'Connell Street and environs after Independence (1922) ' in *Irish Geography*, Vol 34 (II), Journal of the Geographical Society of Ireland, Dublin, pp 135-156.

White, Rev. P. (1893 / 1973) *History of Clare and the Dalcassian Clans of Tipperary, Limerick and Galway with an Ancient and Modern Map*, Fercor Press, Cork.

Whitehand, J.W.R. (1981) 'Background to the Urban Morphogenetic Tradition' in Conzen, M.R.G. (Ed.) *The Urban Landscape: Historical Development and Management*, Academic Press, London.

Whitehand, J.W.R. (1988) 'Recent developments in urban morphology' in Denecke, D. and Shaw, G. (Eds) *Urban Historical Geography: recent progress in Britain and Germany*, University Press, Cambridge, pp 285-296.

Zimmer, H. (1902) *The Celtic Church in Britain and Ireland*, David Nutt, London.

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PERSONAL CONTACT

Doherty, C. (2003) 'The concept of parish' at *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Settlement and Pastoral Care*, 2nd Thematic Conference of Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, All Hallows, Dublin, 28 Feb-2 March.

Duffy, P. (2003) 'The geography of the Irish parish' at *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Settlement and Pastoral Care*, 2nd Thematic Conference of Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, All Hallows, 28 Feb-2 March.

Etchingham, C. (1997) *Paper to the conference of Irish Historians*, NUI Maynooth.

Etchingham, C. (2003) 'Pastoral provision in the first millennium: a two tiered service?' at *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Settlement and Pastoral Care*, 2nd Thematic Conference of Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, All Hallows, 28 Feb-2 March.

Lacy, B. (1998) 'The Legacy of Columba / Columcille', paper presented to *Saints Shrines and Scholars* seminar, National Museum of Ireland, 25/02/1998.

Long, H. (1998) Guided tour of Glendalough - part of Conference of Group for the Study of Irish Historical Settlement, May 1998.

Nicholls, K. (2003) 'Parishes and their clergy in late medieval Ireland' at *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Settlement and Pastoral Care*, 2nd Thematic Conference of Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, All Hallows, 28 Feb-2 March.

Ó Carragáin, T. (2003) 'Church buildings and pastoral care in early medieval Ireland' at *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Settlement and Pastoral Care*, 2nd Thematic Conference of Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, All Hallows, Dublin, 28 Feb-2 March.

Ó Corráin, D. (2003) 'Is there parish in the early medieval Irish Church' at *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Settlement and Pastoral Care*, 2nd Thematic Conference of Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, All Hallows, 28 Feb-2 March.

Ó Floinn, R. (1998) 'Irish Shrines and Reliquaries in the National Museum of Ireland', paper presented to *Saints Shrines and Scholars* seminar, National Museum of Ireland, 11/03/1998.

Ó Maidín, U. (1998) 'The Celtic Monk' paper presented in the *Saints Shrines and Scholars* series at the National Museum of Ireland 18/3/1998.

Ó Paircín, L. (2000-2001) Pers. Comm. with Dr. Liam Ó Paircín, Roinn na Gaeilge, Coláiste Mhuire Gan Smál, Limerick, regarding origins of Irish placenames.

Ó Riain-Raedel, D. (1998) 'Irish Pilgrims on the Continent', paper presented to *Saints Shrines and Scholars* seminar, National Museum of Ireland, 04/03/1998.

O'Dea, P. (1999) Interview with native of Kilteely, August 1999.

O'Keeffe, T. (2000) Pers. Comm. with Dr. Tadhg O'Keeffe, Dept. of Archaeology, University College Dublin.

O'Keeffe, T. (2003) 'Colonising worship: first generation parish churches of Anglo-Norman Ireland' at *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland: Community, Settlement and Pastoral Care*, 2nd Thematic Conference of Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement, All Hallows, 28 Feb-2 March.

Swan, L. (1997) Pers. Comm. regarding excavation work at Finglas, Dublin.

WORKING PAPERS AND OTHER UN-PUBLISHED WORK

Bell, C. J. (1975) *The Role of Monastic Women in the Life and Letters of Early England and Ireland* Unpublished Thesis from the University of West Virginia, Mich Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor.

Bitel, L.M. (1987) *Insula Sanctorum: Monastic Settlement and Community in Early Ireland*, PhD thesis from Harvard University, Mich. Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor.

Crowley, C. (Forthcoming) *A Comparative Study of Irish, French and Welsh Church Sites*, PhD thesis to be submitted to the Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin.

Griffin, K.A. (1990-1992) *Killaloe / Ballina*, Unpublished Local History Research Project.

Naughton, B. (1999) 'An analysis of the portrayal of women in fairytales', unpublished research paper on imagery and character portrayal in children's literature, p. 5.

Ryan, M. (1990) *Brian Boru: his Beliefs and Religion*, working paper by Martina Ryan, produced for Derg Canal Developments Ltd, Killaloe.

Ryan, M. (1990) *Brian Boru: Imperator Scotorum (Emperor of Ireland)*, working paper by Martina Ryan, produced for Derg Canal Developments Ltd, Killaloe.

Slater, T.R. (1980) *The analysis of Burgage Patterns in Medieval Towns*, Working Paper 4, Department of Geography, University of Birmingham.

INTERNET *SOURCES*

Catholic Encyclopedia Online (2002) http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/ Originally published as Herbermann, C.G. et al (1907-1914) *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Robert Appleton, New York.

Clare Library Service (2002) *People & Places*, Internet page http://www.clarelibrary.ie using links for 'places' and then relevant settlement- full web addresses not included, site is currently being changed.

CUCAP (2001(b)) 'CUCAP Archaeology and History', http://www.aerial.cam.ac.uk/ULM/Gen%20Info.htm#Tag2, Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography website

CUCAP (2001) 'CUCAP Library', http://www.aerial.cam.ac.uk/ULM/CUCAP%20Library.htm, Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography.

Doneus, M. (1996) 'Introduction to Aerial Archaeology', http://www.univie.ac.at/Luftbildarchiv/intro/aa_aaint.htm#HORNS, Aerial Archive, Institute for Prehistory and Protohistory University of Vienna.

Doneus, M. (1996) 'Brief History of Aerial Archaeology', http://www.univie.ac.at/Luftbildarchiv/intro/aa_hist.htm, Aerial Archive, Institute for Prehistory and Protohistory University of Vienna

Doneus, M. (1996) 'How do Archaeological Sites Show', http://www.univie.ac.at/Luftbildarchiv/intro/aa_marks.htm, Aerial Archive, Institute for Prehistory and Protohistory University of Vienna

Doneus, M. (2002) 'Short Introduction to Aerial Archaeology' http://aarg.univie.ac.at/, website of Aerial Archaeology Research Group

Ordnance Survey of Ireland (2002) 'Price List for Aerial Photography and Survey Control', http://www.osi.ie/mapping/aerial/index.shtml, Ordnance Survey of Ireland.

MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

Archdall, M. (1786) *Monasticon Hibernicum: an History of the Abbies, Priories and other Religious Houses in Ireland*, Luke White, Dublin.

Best, R.I. Bergin, O. and O'Brien, M.A. (1954-1967) *The Book of Leinster*, 5 fascs., Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin.

Best, R.I. with Mac Neill, E. (1933) *The Annals of Inisfallen Reproduced in Facsimile*, Hodges, Figgis & Co. Dublin.

Bliss, Johnson, Twemlow, (1893-1933) *Calendar of Papal Registers: Relating to Great Britain and Ireland 1198-1471*, Vol. I-XII, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London.

Colgan, J. (1948) *The 'Acta Sanctorum Hiberniae'* (reproduction of 1645 edition with introduction by Brendan Jennings), Stationery Office, Dublin.

Freeman, A.M. (1944) *The Annals of Connacht*, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin.

Gleeson, D. with Mac Airt, S. (1958) 'The Annals of Roscrea' in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol LIX: C137-80.

Hadcock, R.N. (1964) *Ordnance Survey Map of Monastic Ireland*, 2nd Ed., Ordnance Survey of Ireland, Dublin.

Hancock, W. N. et al. (Eds) (1865-1901) *The Ancient Laws of Ireland*, HMSO, London.

Haren with Fuller, (1978-1989) *Calendar of Papal Registers: Relating to Great Britain and Ireland 1198-1471*, Vol. XV-XVIII, Irish Manuscripts Commission, Dublin.

Hayes-McCoy, G.A. (Ed.) (1964) *Ulster and Other Irish Maps c.1600*, Dublin Stationery Office / Irish Manuscript Commission, Dublin.

Hennessy, W.M. (Ed.) (1871) *Annals of Loch Cé*, Vol. I & II, A. Thom, Dublin.

Hennessy, W.M. (Ed.) (1887-1901) *Annals of Ulster*, Stationery Office / A. Thom & Co, Dublin.

Mac Airt, S. (1951) *The Annals of Inisfallen*, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin.

Mac Airt, S. and Mac Niocaill, G. (Eds) (1983) *The Annals of Ulster*, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin.

Mac Carthy, B. (1893) *Annala Uladh : Annals of Ulster, A Chronicle of Irish Affairs AD 430-1131; 1155-1541*, Alex Thom & Co, Dublin.

Murphy, D. (S.J.) (1896) *The Annals Of Clonmacnoise: Being Annals Of Ireland From The Earliest Period To A.D. 1408*, Translated into English A.D. 1627 by Conell Mageoghagan, (1993 edition), University Press, Dublin.

National Library of Ireland (various) Miscellaneous maps such as (1787) *Phelam Maps of County Clare*, (15 B 10-12) and *Longfield Maps of County Limerick* (21 F 40).

National Museum of Ireland (ND) *Correspondence Files*, in National Museum of Ireland.

Ó Hinnse, S. (Ed.) (1947) *Miscellaneous Irish Annals*, Dublin.

O'Curry, E. (1861) *Letters on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History*, (1995 reprint by Four Courts Press, Dublin.

O'Donovan, J. (1840) *Letters Containing Information Relative to the Antiquities of the County of Limerick, collected during the progress of the Ordnance Survey in 1840*, Manuscript volume made for Rev. Michael O'Flanagan by Miss Margaret Staunton.

O'Donovan, J. (1851) *Annals of the Four Masters: Annala Rioghachta Eireann: Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616*, Hodges and Smith, Dublin.

O'Donovan, J. (Ed.) (1856) *Annals of Ireland by the Four Masters*, 7 Vols., Dublin.

Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1840-1842) 6 inch maps of Clare, housed in National Library of Ireland - Ref. 20 A 9, Ordnance Survey of Ireland, Dublin.

Ordnance Survey of Ireland (1840-1842) 6 inch maps of Limerick, housed in National Library of Ireland - Ref. 20 B 15, Ordnance Survey of Ireland, Dublin.

Plummer, C. (1910) *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae Partim Hactenus Ineditae*, Typographeo Clarendoniano, Oxonii.

Plummer, C. (1968) *Lives of Irish Saints*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Plummer, C. (Ed.) (1997/1922) *Bethada Náem nErenn*, Reproduction of 1922 volume, Clarendon Press for Sandpiper Books, Oxford.

Reeves W.(1857 / 1874)*Vita Columbae, Founder of Hy; written by Adomnan*, Edmonston and Douglas, Edinburgh.

Reeves, W. (1857) *The Life of St. Columba, Founder of Hy*, reproduction of early history by Saint Adamnán (628-704), Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society/ University Press, Dublin.

Sharpe, R. (1991) *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives: An Introduction to Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Stokes, W. (Ed.) (1887) *The Tripartite Life of Patrick and Other Documents Relating to the Saint*, H. M. Stationery Office and Eyre & Spottiswoode, London.

Stokes, W. (Ed.) (1895-97) 'Annals of Tigernach' in *Revue Celtique*, Vols. XVI-XVIII.

Stokes, W. (various) 'Annals of Tigernach' in *Revue Celtique*, XVI (1895), 374-419; XVII (1896), 6-33, 116-263, 337-420; XVII (1897), 9-59, 150-303, 374-91.

Todd, J.H. (Ed.) (1867) *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh: The war of the Gaedhil with The Gaill, or, The invasions of Ireland by the Danes and other Norsemen*, - original Irish text, edited with translation and introduction, Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, London.

White, N.B. (Ed.) (1936) *Irish monastic and episcopal deeds, A.D. 1200-1600, transcribed from the originals preserved at Kilkenny Castle : with an appendix of documents of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries relating to monastic property after the Dissolution*, Irish Manuscript Commission, Stationery Office, Dublin.

White, N.B. (Ed.) (1943) *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions, 1540-1541*, Irish Manuscript Commission publication from manuscripts in the PRO, London, Stationary Office, Dublin.

APPENDICES

HISTORICAL AND CARTOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF 193 POTENTIAL SETTLEMENTS

(HIGHLIGHTING EARLY CHURCH SITES)

Co.	Name on Map	1996 Popul-ation	1/ 250k	1/ 50 k	Mon-astic	Cathe-dral	Nor-man	OS Mon Map	P.O.	6' Map	East-ing	Nor-th-ing
Cl	Ardnacrusha	655	-	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	63	15850	16220
Cl	Ballycannan	662	-	y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	63	15580	16125
Cl	Ballynacally / Ballinacally	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	50	12810	16360
Cl	Ballyvaughan	257	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	2	12325	20775
Cl	Barefield	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	25	13610	18240
Cl	Bealaclugga / Bell Harbour	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	3	12840	20840
Cl	Bealaha	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	46	9270	16430
Cl	Bodyke	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	28	15960	18150
Cl	Boston	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	11	13750	19830
Cl	Bridgetown	-	-	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	54	16475	16800
Cl	Broadford	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	44	15730	17290
Cl	Bunratty	-	-	Y	- - -	- - -	Doubt-ful	- - -	-	61	14476	16090
Cl	Burren	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	3	12830	21130
Cl	Caher	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	20	15650	19050
Cl	Carran / Carron	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	10	12780	19890
Cl	Carrigaholt	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	65	8440	15160
Cl	Clarecastle	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	41	13480	17420
Cl	Cloghera	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	53	15840	16640
Cl	Clonlara / Cloonlara	401	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	53	16270	16380
Cl	Connolly	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	32	12020	17620
Cl	Coolmeen	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	59	11780	15720
Cl	Cooraclare	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	57	10420	16220
Cl	Corbally	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	46/56	8950	16260
Cl	Corrofin / Corofin	418	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	17	12850	18875
Cl	Craggagh	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	4	11310	20640
Cl	Cratloe	557	-	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	62	14850	16102
Cl	Creegh/Cree	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	47	10340	16690
Cl	Cross	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	65	7980	15120
Cl	Crusheen	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	18	13975	18775
Cl	Darragh / Derragh	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	41	12850	17220
Cl	Doolin (Roadford)	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	8	10700	19660
Cl	Doonaha	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	66	8860	15360
Cl	Doonbeg	220	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	47	9690	16540
Cl	Dromindoora/Drumandoora	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	12/19	15140	19430
Cl	Dunsallagh/Donnsallagh	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	31/32	11150	17610
Cl	Ennis	17726	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	Yes	y	33	13350	17750
Cl	Ennistymon	920	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	Yes	y	15	11321	18832
Cl	Feakle	159	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	28	15650	18630
Cl	Feeard	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	64/5,71/2	7650	15070
Cl	Flagmount	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	20	15650	19330
Cl	Hurlers Cross	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	51	14280	16302
Cl	Inagh	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	32	12075	18140
Cl	Kilbaha	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	71	7350	14790
Cl	Kilbane	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	44	16210	17260
Cl	Kilclaran	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	20	15650	18940
Cl	Kilfearagh	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	56	8850	15740
Cl	Kilfenora	-	Y	Y	Early Mon.	Yes	- - -	Yes	Y	16	11850	19390
Cl	Kilkee	1331	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	56	8850	16000
Cl	Kilkishen	379	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	43	14975	17320
Cl	Killadsert / Kildysart	301	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	Yes	y	59	12533	15819
Cl	Killaloe	972	Y	Y	Early Mon.	Yes	- - -	Yes	Y	45	17030	17260
Cl	Killimer	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	67	10450	15240
Cl	Killinaboy/Kilnaboy	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	17	12701	19160

Cl	Kilmaley	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	40	12553	17478
Cl	Kilmihill	357	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	48	11080	16420
Cl	Kilmore	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	53	16000	16720
Cl	Kilmurry	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	43	14730	16970
Cl	Kilmurry McMahon	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	58	11248	15647
Cl	Kilnamona	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	25	12740	18030
Cl	Kilrush	2594	y	y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	y	67	10000	15497
Cl	Knock	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	68	10975	15370
Cl	Labasheeda	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	68	11570	15325
Cl	Lahinch / Lehinch	580	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	23	10950	18750
Cl	Liscannor	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	15	10650	18840
Cl	Lisdeen	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	56	9150	15940
Cl	Lisdoonvarna	890	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	15	11350	19850
Cl	Lissycasey	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	49	12210	16670
Cl	Mauricemills	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	24	12290	18360
Cl	Milltown Malbay	626	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	30	10560	17930
Cl	Mountshannon	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	29	17130	18675
Cl	Moveen/Moneen	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	65	8500	15660
Cl	Moyasta	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	56	9600	15840
Cl	Mullagh	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	38	10475	17295
Cl	Newmarket on Fergus	1542	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	51	13950	16820
Cl	O'Briensbridge – Montpelier	409	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	54	16630	16680
Cl	O'Callaghansmills	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	35	15475	17680
Cl	Ogonnelloe	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	29	16920	18190
Cl	Parteen	-	-	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	63	15840	16050
Cl	Querin/Querrin	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	66	9090	15490
Cl	Quilty	259	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	38	10190	17490
Cl	Quin / Quinn	242	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	Yes	y	42	14187	17458
Cl	Ruan	-	-	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	25	13350	18690
Cl	Scarriff	763	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	28	16430	18450
Cl	Shannakea	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	69	12140	15375
Cl	Shannon	7937	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	51	14100	16205
Cl	Sixmilebridge	1144	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	52	14770	16580
Cl	Spanish Point	-	-	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	30	10300	17850
Cl	Tuamgraney	-	Y	Y	Early Mon.	- - -	- - -	Yes	-	28	16374	18298
Cl	Tulla	382	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	Yes	Y	35	14900	17975
Cl	Whitegate	200	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	21	17480	18870
Lk	Abbeyfeale	1486	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	Yes	Y	42	11150	12670
Lk	Abington / Abbeyowney	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	14	17141	15359
Lk	Adare	1042	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	Walled	Yes	Y	21	14650	14620
Lk	Anglesborough	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	57	18040	12110
Lk	Annacotty	586	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	5	16430	15770
Lk	Ardagh	328	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	28	12800	13850
Lk	Ardpatrick	-	Y	-	Early Mon.	- - -	- - -	Yes	Y	56	16440	12130
Lk	Askeaton	851	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	Un-proven	Yes	Y	11	13400	15025
Lk	Athea	443	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	34	11250	13520
Lk	Athlacca	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	39	15600	13410
Lk	Ballagh/Ashford	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	44	12650	12510
Lk	Ballingarrane	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	20	13650	14460
Lk	Ballingarry	389	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	Yes	Y	29	14140	13615
Lk	Ballinleeny	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	38	14980	13400
Lk	Ballyagran	215	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	46	14675	12825
Lk	Ballybrood	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	23	16975	14550
Lk	Ballyhaght	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	55	16000	11975
Lk	Ballyhahill	-	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	18	11925	14600
Lk	Ballylanders	318	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	49	17650	12440
Lk	Ballyneety	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	14	16290	14975
Lk	Ballyorgan	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	Yes	-	56	16810	11840
Lk	Ballysteen	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	11	13540	15540
Lk	Boher	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	14	16910	15210
Lk	Brittas	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	14/15	17150	15100
Lk	Broadford	271	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	54	13360	12190
Lk	Bruff	700	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	32	16270	13630
Lk	Bruree	261	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	39	15490	13050
Lk	Bulgaden	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	40	16370	12970
Lk	Caherconlish	636	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	Un-	- - -	Y	14	16790	14940

Lk							proven					
Lk	Caherelly	-	-	-	---	---	---	---	Y	23	16570	14630
Lk	Cappagh	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	20	13910	14540
Lk	Cappamore	665	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	15	17700	15140
Lk	Carrigkerry	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	27	12210	13850
Lk	Castleconnell	1414	Y	Y	---	---	---	Yes	Y	1	16630	16250
Lk	Castletown	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	38	14470	13050
Lk	Castletroy	-	-	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	5	16130	15740
Lk	Clarina	-	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	12	15075	15375
Lk	Coonagh	215	Y		---	---	---	---	-	5	15350	15750
Lk	Crecora	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	22	15445	14780
Lk	Creeves	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	19	13010	14610
Lk	Croagh	-	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	20	14002	14522
Lk	Croom	1009	Y	Y	---	---	Un-proven	---	Y	30	15150	14120
Lk	Doon	388	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	16	18340	15030
Lk	Dromin	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	39	16050	13240
Lk	Dromkeen	-	-	-	---	---	---	---	Y	24	17360	14790
Lk	Dromtrasna	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	43	11550	12400
Lk	Drumcollogher / Dromcolliher	485	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	54	13811	12125
Lk	Effin	-	-	-	---	---	---	---	Y	47	15799	12352
Lk	Elton	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	40	16890	13060
Lk	Fedamore	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	22	15920	14390
Lk	Feenagh	-	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	45	14030	12670
Lk	Feohanagh	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	45	13400	12620
Lk	Ferrybridge	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	12	14830	15230
Lk	Foynes	558	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	10	12530	15160
Lk	Galbally	246	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	49	18020	12772
Lk	Garryfine	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	46	15050	12930
Lk	Garryspillane	-	-	-	---	---	---	---	Y	49	17450	12840
Lk	Glenbrohane	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	49	17370	12620
Lk	Glenroe	-	-	-	---	---	---	---	Y	56	17220	11890
Lk	Glin	554	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	17	11290	14725
Lk	Herbertstown	-	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	32	16830	14100
Lk	Holycross	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	32	16340	13960
Lk	Hospital (of Any)	723	Y	Y	---	---	---	Yes	Y	32	17069	13623
Lk	Kilbeheny	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	60	18610	11580
Lk	Kilcolman	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	19	12650	14290
Lk	Kilcornan	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	11	14030	15180
Lk	Kildimo (New)	-	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	12	14510	15280
Lk	Kildimo (old)	-	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	-	12	14529	15136
Lk	Kilfinane / Kilfinnane	766	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	48	16820	12320
Lk	Kilfinny	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	30	14550	14050
Lk	Killacolla	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	46	14850	12870
Lk	Kilmallock	1231	Y	Y	Early Mon.	---	Walled	Yes	Y	47	16100	12750
Lk	Kilmeedy	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	37/45	13770	12970
Lk	Kilmurry	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	14	17100	14900
Lk	Kilteely	-	Y	Y	---	---	---	Yes	Y	33	17296	14118
Lk	Knockaderry	-	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	37	13450	13530
Lk	Knockainey	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	32	16830	13580
Lk	Knocklong	248	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	40/41	17220	13170
Lk	Limerick	79137	Y	Y	Early Mon.	Yes	Walled	---	Y	5	15800	15700
Lk	Lisnagry	-	-	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	6	16550	15890
Lk	Loghill / Loughill	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	9	11950	14990
Lk	Mahoonagh	-	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	-	36	13130	13130
Lk	Martinstown	-	-	-	---	---	---	---	Y	48	16730	12740
Lk	Meanus	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	31	15880	14010
Lk	Monaster/Mainistir	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	31	15450	14130
Lk	Morenane	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	30	14940	13660
Lk	Moroe/Murroe	435	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	7	17300	15550
Lk	Mountcollins	271	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	52	11580	11930
Lk	Mungret	292	Y	Y	Early Mon.	Yes	---	---	Y	13	15320	15400
Lk	Newbridge	-	Y	-	---	---	---	---	-	19	13290	14520
Lk	Newcastle (West)	3618	Y	Y	---	---	Doubt-ful	Yes	y	36	12752	13440
Lk	Oola	444	Y	Y	---	---	---	---	Y	25	18240	14220
Lk	Pallas Green (New)	303	Y	-	---	---	---	---	Y	24	17730	14660

388

Lk	Pallas Green (Old) / Old Pallas	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	24	17590	14390
Lk	Pallaskenry	519	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	11	14140	15475
Lk	Patrickswell (St.)	1022	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	12	15220	14980
Lk	Rathkeale	1546	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	Un-proven	Yes	Y	29	13650	14170
Lk	Rockhill	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	38/39	15250	12975
Lk	Shanagolden	412	Y	Y	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	19	12550	14750
Lk	Strand	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	44	12460	12770
Lk	Templeglantine / Templeglentan	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	43	11886	12547
Lk	Tooraree	-	Y	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	-	18	11520	14280
Lk	Toornafulla / Tournafulla	-	-	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Y	43	12120	12430

= Site identified in literature as 'Early Ecclesiastical'

BASIC PLAN ANALYSIS OF 193 SETTLEMENTS

(A)Valid Potential Sites				
▮	= Shading denotes site selected as Case Study			
Co.	Name on Map	Category	Ecclesiastical Fabric Within 1km	Examination of 6 Inch Map
Cl	Feakle	Adjacent	Ch, Gy	F Gn, RC, Barracks, Linear, Gyd to NE.
Cl	Killadsert / Kildysart	Adjacent	Ch, GY	Estuarine, F Gn., RC, Old Ch. Curv. Encl. To S., Present Settlement inland and -.
Cl	Kilrush	Adjacent	Ch, Gy, Rem, HW.	Ch Ruins to E, Poss Encl, Churches, Schls, F. Gn, Ford, Harbour, Scattery proximate,
Lk	Ardpatrick	Adjacent	Ch, Gy, Encl, 2 HW, RT	Ch in definite enclosure, proximate cluster Ch, Sch, PO, - V strong example
Lk	Ballylanders	Adjacent	Ch, Gy, Hw	X Rds, Linear, Hses, RC, Sch etc, Ch ruins to SE end of Street, - good Encl Ch to -.
Lk	Bruree	Adjacent	Ch, Gy, Hw	Ford, Ch Gyd & Castle S bank, Stn, RC, Sch, Hses on -. - possible site
Lk	Castleconnell	Adjacent	2 Inscribed stones, friary, cemetery, ch, gy	Central Ch, Nearby Isl - Cloon Isl with Ch in ruins, Castle Ruins - potential
Lk	Croom	Adjacent	HW	Ford, Stn, RC, Sch, Castle, Central Ch on W Bank, HW, Dysert 1 Mile to W, Strong possibility
Lk	Galbally	Adjacent	Ch	Ch ruins in Encl - Good, CastleSite, RC, & Ch, HW
Lk	Glin	Adjacent	- - -	Harbour / Ford, Castle ruins, sch, RC, St. Pauls Ch in Good Encl to W.
Lk	Hospital (of Any)	Adjacent	Ch, Gy, HW	X Rds, F Gn, PO, Schs, Castle, Older fabrid to - - Ch ruind & Gyd, newer town S - organised
Lk	Kildimo (old)	Adjacent	Ch, Gy.	X Rds, Ch & Gyd, RC, Good Encl.
Lk	Kilmeedy	Adjacent	Ch, Gy	X Rds, RC, Sch, Ch Ruins SE no curvelinear, some hses - slight possibility
Lk	Kilteely	Adjacent	2 Ch, Gy, 2 HW	X Rds, Settlement, RC, Sch, PO, V Strong encl with Ch site.
Lk	Pallas Grean (Old) / Old Pallas	Adjacent	- - -	X Rds, F. Gn., Castle Site, Gyd & Ch ruins - possible Encl. Few hses.
Cl	Ennistymon	Central	Bg., Ch. Gy.	Market, Central Ch Ruins, Curvilinear, Fording, Churches, Approach Rds.
Cl	Kilfenora	Central	Cath, 2 Ch, 2 Gy, Encl, Rem, 6 Cross	Cathedral, Crosses, Radiating roads, wells, possible Encl, Fair Gn.
Cl	Killaloe	Central	Cath, 2 HW, Cross, Ch, Historic Town	Fording, F. Gn, Cath, HW, Services, Radiating Rds, Churches, Curvelinear ?
Cl	Kilmihill	Central	HW, Gy, Rem, Ch.	Central Ch, HW, F. Gn, Raidating Rds, possible curv. Influence
Cl	Quin / Quinn	Central	2HW, Friary, Ch, Gy	Ford, FGn, Churches, Hses, Central Ch ruins, Curvelinear VG.
Cl	Tuamgraney	Central	Ch, Gy, RT, Cross Slab	Curvelinear Layout?, Ch & Gyd central, Castle
Cl	Tulla	Central	2 Ch, Rem, Encl.	Central Ch, Definite Curvelinear, Radiating Rds, Fieldscape
Lk	Ardagh	Central	- - -	Central Gyd & Ch Ruins, RC, Sch, Possible Encl
Lk	Ballingarry	Central	Ch, Gy, 3 HW, Friary	Central Ch, PO, Schs, RC, Gyd, Radiating Rds, Abbey Rums, HW, Placenames, potential site
Lk	Bruff	Central	3 Ch, 2 Gy	Ford, Central Ch& Gyd Some curvelinear, F Gn, Radiating Rds, Sch, RC, Streets - possibility
Lk	Caherconlish	Central	Ch	Central Ch ruins, Ch Site To E, Radiating Rds, Sch, Ch, Castle Site, Some Curvelinear
Lk	Croagh	Central	Ch, Gy	Central Ch in ruins - in Gyd, RC, Sch, Not much Curvelinear
Lk	Doon	Central	Ch, Gy, 2 HW	Central Gyd & Ch Site, RC, HW, Some Curvelinear
Lk	Drumcollogher / Dromcolliher	Central	Ch, Gy	Ch Ruins central, Mkt triangle, RC, Radiating roads - possible
Lk	Kilfinane / Kilfinnane	Central	Ch, Bg, Hw	Central Ch ruins possible Encl, Ch to S - V good, Streets, Castle, RC, Sch, Motte? Pillar Stn, Riverside
Lk	Knockainey	Central	- - -	Central Ch & Gyd, HW, F Gn, ancient fabrid, some

				Hses - possible
Lk	Oola	Central	Ch, Bg	Central BGd, Linear, Railway disruption
Lk	Shanagolden	Central	- - -	Ch Ruins, Gyd, Sch, Ch, RC, Radiating Rds - Possible Encl.
Cl	Clarecastle	Complex	GY	Ford, F. Gn. Churches, Castle, Train Stn. Planned & Organic Settlement
Cl	Ennis	Complex	Historic Town	Complex. Multiple churches & Abbey, Fair Gn. Trade Focus,
Lk	Abbeyfeale	Complex	Abbey, Gy	Ford, Radiating Rds, Stn, central abbey & Gyd, Sch, RC, etc, Streets - Good encl.
Lk	Adare	Complex	Historic Town	Manor Town, Churches, Castle, 3 Abbeys, Ch Ruins & Gyd to -., Ford, Train Stn
Lk	Askeaton	Complex	Historic Town	Ford, Abbey & Ch Ruins, RC, Sch, Castle, Streets.
Lk	Limerick	Complex	Cath, Ch, Gy, Historic Town	Fording Pt, Harbour, Cath, Many Churches, Ancient Fabric on King John's Island, Castle etc.
Lk	Newcastle (West)	Complex	Ch, Gy, Historic Town	Complex settlement, Ch, castles, stn, ford, Ch in encl to NW
Lk	Rathkeale	Complex	Historic Town	Abbey, Churches, Ford, Streets, Schs, Stn, Castle
Cl	Ballynacally / Ballinacally	Proximate	Ch, Gy, HW.	F. Gn / Sch / Small Cluster. Proximate Deer Isl. / Coney Isl - Old Ch Sites
Cl	Ballyvaughan	Proximate	- - -	Fair Gn. Older Fabric to East. Harbour ch.
Cl	Corrofin / Corofin	Proximate	Cross, 2 Gy, Rem. Encl, 2 Ch	Fording pt. Fair Gn. Central Ch. Old Ch. To E.
Cl	Doolin (Roadford)	Proximate	- - -	Riverside, Roadford / Fisherstreet, Dispersed Settlement, Killilagh Ch nearby
Cl	Kilkee	Proximate	HW, BG	Train Terminus, Planned Seaside - Prom etc., Churches, HW, Gyd.
Cl	Kilkishen	Proximate	Ch, Gy	Linear / Planned, Central RC, Ch ruins to E, Strong enclosure @ lakeside
Cl	Mullagh	Proximate	Gy, HW, Rem.	Gyd & HW to S. RC. FGn,
Cl	O'Briensbridge – Montpelier	Proximate	Ch, 2 GY.	Ch & Gyd central, Riverside, Proximate to Inishlosky, Disturbed by Headrace
Cl	Whitegate	Proximate	- - -	Linear, Regular Field pattern - planned, Old Gyd SE, HW, RC
Lk	Athea	Proximate	- - -	X Rds, ford, RC, Sch, Old Ch to NE
Lk	Ballyorgan	Proximate	Priory, Gy, Ch, Gy, HW, Foundation	X Rds,Linear, Modern, RC, Sch, PO, Abbey, HW Etc to E. - possible
Lk	Castletown	Proximate	- - -	X Rds, Sch, HE, Castle, Barracks, Ch ruins SW (V Small)
Lk	Glenbrohane	Proximate	Ch, 2 Gy, Hw	Sch, PO, RC, Dispersed Linear, Ch ruins to E
Lk	Kilmallock	Proximate	BG, HW, Historic Town	Complex, Churches, Abbey, Town wall, F Gn, RC, Sch, HW, Ch & G Yd to -, Central Ch, Streets - possible (Proximate & Central)
Lk	Knocklong	Proximate	Ch, Gy, 4HW	Ch & Good encl to S, Sch, newer settlement to - @ stn, 3 HW (Mix of Ardpatrick/Kilmallock style)
Lk	Mahoonagh	Proximate	Ch, Gy	Ford, RC, Sch, some hses, Old Ch in encl & Castle to SE (Corofin style)
Lk	Mungret	Proximate	Cath, 3 Ch, HW, Abbey	X Rds, PO, Few Hses, Eccl fabric to E, Abbey, Churches, HW etc,
Lk	Pallaskenry	Proximate	Ch, Gy.	Estate Village? Planned, Old Ch & Gyd to E, Some Curvelinear

(B) Disqualified Potential Sites

Co.	Name on Map	Topography / Fabric Deficiencies	Ecclesiastical Fabric Within 1km	Examination of 6 Inch Map
Cl	Barefield	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element.	Bg	X Rds. RC / Sch / No Eccl
Cl	Bridgetown	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	HW, BG	F Gn. B Gd, RC, HW to S.
Cl	Broadford	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Fording Pt. Fair Gn., Services, Churches, No Eccl
Cl	Burren	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	Bg.	X Rds, Little Fabric, Houses
Cl	Caher	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	V Dispersed, No Ch., Lakeside Site
Cl	Carrigaholt	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	HW	Quay/Harbour, Fair Gn. Linear / Modern, RC, Sch, Castle
Cl	Cloghera	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	X Rds, RC
Cl	Clonlara / Cloonlara	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Sch, Churches, Services, Much altered by canals
Cl	Cooraclare	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	HW	Ford, F. Gn, RC, Sch, No Clear Antiquity
Cl	Doonaha	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	X Rds, RC & Ch, Possible Curvilinear - no antiquity
Cl	Doonbeg	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Fair Gn. Fording Pt, Castle, Services
Cl	Dromindoora/Druma ndoora	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	HW, Ch, GY, Sch, Scattered
Cl	Labasheeda	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Modern Linear, RC
Cl	Lahinch / Lehinch	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	RC, Seaside Resort, Railway
Cl	Liscannor	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	HW	Castle, Harbour, Modern Ch.
Cl	Lisdoonvarna	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Spa Town X Rds, No Historical Fabric, Central RC, houses
Cl	Mauricemills	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	BG.	X Rds, Barracks
Cl	Milltown Malbay	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Linear, Planned, RC, FGn, Railway Stn.
Cl	Mountshannon	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Linear Harbour, RC to W.
Cl	Newmarket on Fergus	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	Ch, Gy.	FGn, Lakeside, Schools, Churches, No Eccl Antiquity
Cl	O'Callaghansmills	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	Bg	New & Old Section, FGn, RC, No Eccl Fabric
Cl	Quilty	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	HW	Seaside Railway Stn, Linear, RC
Cl	Scarriff	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	RC - of Settlement, Planned, No Antiquity
Cl	Shannon	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Modern, No Evidence
Cl	Sixmilebridge	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	HW, Gy, Bg, Ch.	Ford, Mkt & FGn, Churches, Gyd, No clear Antiquity
Lk	Ballingarrane	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Train Jct, Bgd, Methodist Ch, No Eccl antiquity
Lk	Ballyhahill	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	X Rds, Linear, Ford, Sch, RC, No Eccl Evidence, Small No. Hses
Lk	Boher	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	BG, HW	X Rds RC, Sch
Lk	Broadford	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	X Rds, Modern, RC, Sch, Services, No antiquity
Lk	Cappamore	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Riverside, Planned, RC, Modern, Radiating Rds, No Eccl Fab.
Lk	Carrigkerry	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	X Rds, RC, Sch, No Eccl Fab.
Lk	Creeves	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	HW	Radiating Rds, Bridge, Sch, HW.
Lk	Ferrybridge	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Fording Pt., Castle Ruins, No Eccl Remains,

392

Lk	Foynes	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Harbour, Train terminus, RC, Sch, Castle SE, No Eccl Antiq
Lk	Herbertstown	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	Ch, Bg	X Rds, F Gn. RC, Sch, Modern Appearance
Lk	Kildimo (New)	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	X Rds, Sch, PO, No Eccl Rem.
Lk	Kilfinny	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	Linear, PO, Sch, RC, Castle nearby
Lk	Knockaderry	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	X Rds, RC, Sch, Dispersed, some Hses.
Lk	Meanus	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	Bg, Inscribed Stone	Ford, X Rds, RC, Gyd, Sch, Dispersed
Lk	Moroe/Murroe	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	RC, PO, Sch, Estate Village? Glenstal Castle?
Lk	Pallas Grean (New)	Disqualified - No Ecclesiastical Element	- - -	X Rds, Train Stn, Ch, Po, No Eccl Fab.
Cl	Bunratty	Disqualified - No Settlement	- - -	Curvelinear Enclosed Ch, Castle, Ford, No Hses
Cl	Cratloe	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy.	X Rds, Train Stn, Old churches, - & SE, Sch, RC, No Focus to Settlement
Cl	Cross	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy, Rem, Unclassified House	Dispersed Linear, RC, Sch, Ch ruins & Friary, Possible Enclosure, no Neucleus
Cl	Inagh	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy	Riverside, RC, Site of Ch & Gyd, Promising, but few hses.
Cl	Kilbaha	Disqualified - No Settlement	HW, BG	V. Dispersed, Old BGd, HW, RC, Sch,
Cl	Kilfearagh	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy, HW.	Ch Ruins, Gyd, HW, V. Good Curvilinear, No Settl., Dispersed
Cl	Killinaboy/Kilnaboy	Disqualified - No Settlement	3 Ch, 2 Gy, RT, 2 Gr Slab, Remains, Cross, 2 HW	Ch in ruins, RT, Castle site, Curvilinear, Wells, few Hses.
Cl	Kilmurry	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy, Rem, Encl	Dispersed, FGn, PO, RC, Sch, Ch, GYd, Curvelinear, no Sett.
Cl	Kilmurry McMahon	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy	X Rds, Ch, Gyd, Poss. Encl, F.Gn, PO, Dispersed, few Hses.
Cl	Kilnamona	Disqualified - No Settlement	3HW, Gy, Rem, Ch.	Sch, RC, Ch Ruins, Clear Encl, 4 HWs, No Hses
Cl	Knock	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy,	Estuarine Quay, Kilmore Ch Site to East, Small no Hses
Cl	Parteen	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy	VG Old Ch Encl to S. RC, Sch, Few Hses
Cl	Ruan	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy.	X Rds, Central Ch ruins, few hses - possible
Lk	Abington / Abbeyowney	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, 2 Gy, Abbey	X Rds, Ch, Dispersed, Ruins of Abbey & Gyd, Ho Hses
Lk	Athlacca	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy, Hw	Ford, Central Ch & Gyd, RC, Sch, HW, Few Hses
Lk	Ballybrood	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy, Friary	X Rds, F. Gn, Friary site, Ch ruins in G Yd., No Settl.
Lk	Ballyhaght	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy, 2 Hw	Tld, Ancient Ch, No hses
Lk	Caherelly	Disqualified - No Settlement	- - -	X Rds, Sch, PO, Ch Ruins, Few Hses, 2 Castles
Lk	Cappagh	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy	X Rds, Castle, Ch ruins in Encl. To E., Dispersed, few Hses.
Lk	Castletroy	Disqualified - No Settlement	- - -	PO, RC, Dispersed, no focus, Castle, Kilmurry Ch in Good Encl.
Lk	Coonagh	Disqualified - No Settlement	BG	BG, Curv. Encl, Castle, Near Shannon, No Settl.
Lk	Crecora	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy	X Rds, RC, Sch, Ch Ruins in Gyd, Dispersed, Few Hses.
Lk	Dromin	Disqualified - No Settlement	- - -	X Rds, dispersed, F Gn, Ch ruins, HW, RC, No Hses
Lk	Dromkeen	Disqualified - No Settlement	- - -	Ford, Stn, Gyd, RC, Ch ruins & Gyd, No focus/Fragmented
Lk	Effin	Disqualified - No Settlement	2 HW	Ch Ruins, HW, RC, No focus / Sett.
Lk	Elton	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, gy, Hw	X Rds, F Gn, Ch site SW, Few Hses
Lk	Holycross	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Convent, 2 GY, Bullaun	Xrds, Ancient fabric incl monastery Gyd etc, No Hses
Lk	Kilbeheny	Disqualified - No	Ch, Gy, Bg, Hw	Ford, X Rds, Ch in Curv encl, Few Hses RC & Ch,

				- Possibility.
Lk	Kilcolman	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, HW	X Rds, Ch ruins, Gyd, RC, PO, Few Hses
Lk	Kilmurry	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Bg	X Rds, BGd, Castle Ruins, No Hses
Lk	Loghill / Loughill	Disqualified - No Settlement	Ch, Gy, HW, Foundation	Fording Pt., Estuarine, RC, Ch Ruins to SE. Few Hses.
Lk	Monaster/Mainistir	Disqualified - No Settlement	2 Bg, Gy, Ch, Abbey	Ford, Ch & Abbey ruins, No hses
Cl	Ardnacrusha	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Modern, Linear, Few Houses, No Eccl
Cl	Ballycannan	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Gy, HW	Tld. HW, No hses.
Cl	Bealaclugga / Bell Harbour	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, No Ch.
Cl	Bealaha	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, RC to S. Few Hses
Cl	Bodyke	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Bg.	X Rds, RC, Sch, Few Hses
Cl	Boston	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Bg.	Ch, Sch, Small No Hses
Cl	Carran / Carron	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Gy	RC, Sch, Castle, Barracks, dispersed, no Focus
Cl	Connolly	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, RC, Sch, Few Hses
Cl	Coolmeen	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	RC, PO, Dispersed, no hses
Cl	Corbally	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Sch, No Settl.
Cl	Craggagh	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Gy	Tld, No fabric
Cl	Creegh/Cree	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, RC Sch, PO, Dispersed few houses
Cl	Crusheen	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Mass Rock, Bg, 2 HW	Dispersed Settlement, RC, Sch, Small nucleus
Cl	Darragh / Derragh	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	BG, HW	X Rds, PO, No hses
Cl	Dunsallagh/Donnsallagh	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	PO
Cl	Feeard	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Nothing
Cl	Flagmount	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	HW, BG	V. Dispersed, RC, HW, Dispersed
Cl	Hurlers Cross	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	HW	X Rds, Sch, Few Hses
Cl	Kilbane	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Ch, Sch, PO, Linear Dispersed, Few Hses.
Cl	Kilclaran	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, RC, Sch, No Hses, FGn.
Cl	Killimer	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	RC, Sch, No Settl.
Cl	Kilmaley	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	2HW, Ch, Gy	Dispersed, Fording Pt, Ch, GY, HW, Few Hses
Cl	Kilmore	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	2 HW	RC, Gyd, No Settl.
Cl	Lisdeen	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, PO, No hses
Cl	Lissycasey	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Linear dispersed, RC, PO, Sch, no Focus Good example of linear
Cl	Moveen/Moneen	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Tld. RC, Sch, No Hses, Ch & Gyd to S, Moveen ch to E.
Cl	Moyasta	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Train Junctn, Sch, Fording Pt, No Settl.
Cl	Ogonnelloe	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Gy, HW.	RC, Sch, PO, Dispersed, No focus.
Cl	Querin/Querrin	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, Sch, PO, No Settl.
Cl	Shannakea	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	PO
Cl	Spanish Point	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	HW	Dispersed Seaside - Large Hses
Lk	Anglesborough	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, RC, Sch, Few Hses, No Fab
Lk	Annacotty	Disqualified - No	- - -	Ford, No Services, Few Hses

Lk		Settl./Eccl Element		
Lk	Ballagh/Ashford	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, PO, No Fabric
Lk	Ballinleeny	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Gy	X Rds, V. Few Hses, Ch Site to SW, No fabric
Lk	Ballyagran	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	HW	X Rds, PO, RC, Sch, Creamery, No fabric, Few Hses (Good example of this style)
Lk	Ballyneety	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, Ch, Castle Site, No Eccl Fabric, Few Hses
Lk	Ballysteen	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Gy,	X Rds, No Fabric
Lk	Brittas	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Ford, PO, Castle, No Hses
Lk	Bulgaden	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, Sch, Rc, Dispersed, Castle, HW
Lk	Clarina	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Gy	X Rds, Sch, Ch ruins & Gyd to -, RC, V. dispersed, Few Hses
Lk	Dromtrasna	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	HW	Ford, Few hses, no fabric,
Lk	Fedamore	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Gy, HW.	Dispersed, Castle site, Gyd & Ch, PO, No Eccl Fab
Lk	Feenagh	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Linear, RC, Sch, Few Hses / Fabric
Lk	Feohanagh	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Linear, RC, Sch, PO, No Fab.
Lk	Garryfine	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, PO, No hses / Fab
Lk	Garryspillane	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	2 HW	Dispersed, No focus,
Lk	Glenroe	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, Sch, No hses/Fab
Lk	Kilcornan	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Dispersed, Linear, F. Gn, RC, PO, Sch, No Focus
Lk	Killacolla	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Bg	Tld, X Rds, Sch, No Fab / Hses
Lk	Lisnagry	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Nothing
Lk	Martinstown	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	RC, Sch, PO cluster, Linear, No fabric - interesting field pattern, 'Bishopsland' townland to NE
Lk	Morenane	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Bg	Tld, no Fabric/hses
Lk	Mountcollins	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Bg	PO, Sch, RC, Dispersed, Few Hses
Lk	Newbridge	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	HW	X Rds, No Fabric
Lk	Patrickswell (St.)	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	HW	Linear, PO, Stn to S, HW, Few Hses.
Lk	Rockhill	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Linear RC, Sch, dispersed
Lk	Strand	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Encl	X Rds, Ch ruins, few hses
Lk	Templeglantine / Templeglentan	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	Ch, Gy	Linear, RC, Sch, PO, Dispersed, No focus
Lk	Tooraree	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	X Rds, No Fabric
Lk	Toornafulla / Tournafulla	Disqualified - No Settl./Eccl Element	- - -	Ford, RC, Sch, PO, Dispersed, No focus

| | = No Ecclesiastical Elements | | = No Settlement | | = Neither Ecclesiastical Elements or Settlement |