HERITAGE CHURCHES

of County Cork

HERITAGE CHURCHES

of County Cork

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

DANIEL NOONAN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY

Contents

List of Contributors

Adrian Gebruers; Adrian Healy, Aileen Hurley, Cllr. Aindrias Moynihan, Angela O' Donovan, Dr. Aoife Bhreatnach, Audrey Forde, Bob and Avril Cooke, Breda Coakley, Brian Gabriel, Caoímhín De Bhailis, Catherine Culloty, Charlie McCarthy, David Ross, Deborah Baume, Deirdre O' Regan, Denis Power, Dermot Kingston, Donal Fitzgerald, Donal O' Lochlainn, Donie O' Sullivan, Doug Lucey, Dr. Elena Turk, Elizabeth O' Brien, Enda O' Flaherty, Eoghan Nelligan, Frances Hedigan, Frances Jennings, Cllr. Frank O' Flynn, Geraldine and Norman Bateman, Gerard O' Rourke, Hazel Vickery, Helen Mulcahy Walsh, Hugh Kavanagh, Jacqueline Manley, James Buckley, Jerry Larkin, Jim and Ann Wilson, Joan Rockley, Joanne Horgan, Joe Creedon, Joe O' Connell, John Hurley, MacDara Ó Hicí, Mairéad McCarthy, Margaret Shine, Maria McLaughlin, Marie Guillot, Mary Crowley, Mary Nunan, Michael O' Connell, Noreen O' Brien, Patricia Curtin-Kelly, Patricia O' Keeffe, Paul Cotter, Paul Daly, Paul Power, Perry O' Donovan, Rhoda Cronin, Robert Maxwell, Robert Travers, Rose O' Leary, Rose Power, Tadhg O' Keeffe, Ted Cook, Tom Ryan, Tommy Collins, Ursula Egan.

Cllr. John Paul O'Shea
Mayor

Tim Lucey
Chief Executive

This book, a publication of the Heritage Unit of Cork County Council, looks at the wide range of heritage churches in County Cork. It is the third in a series of such Heritage Publications; a series which was shortlisted for the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards in 2015. The initial two books in this series focused on Heritage Bridges of County Cork (2013) and Heritage Houses of County Cork (2014) and this latest offering continues in the same manner, this time, aiming to raise awareness of heritage churches in County Cork.

The Church, as the central focus of Christian worship, has evolved since the advent of Christianity in Ireland. Our heritage churches are a physical representation of this long and interesting story. The church as a building is not only a place of worship but often acted as a focal point for community and social activities. The importance of the church is also manifest in its architectural expression and style. This is most evident during the 19th Century when extensive church construction was undertaken following Catholic Emancipation. A large portion of these impressive churches are still in use as places of public worship today.

This publication gives an understanding of the evolution of heritage churches and furthermore examines how they changed over time to meet changing needs. It is well written in a light and informative manner and is illustrated with fine drawings and photographs demonstrating the rich architectural heritage of the County.

We feel confident that this latest publication by the Heritage Unit of Cork County Council will encourage a greater appreciation and sense of pride in the great variety of churches in our county and commend all those involved in producing this fascinating and very informative publication.

Chapter 1
Introduction

Through the millennia worship has always been a feature of human society. Worship can be explained as an act of devotion, showing the reverent love for a deity or a sacred object. It gave unity, purpose and a strong feeling of community, a collective outlook that provided spiritual security. Worship was conducted by various belief systems in a similar manner, through prayer and meditation, ritual ceremonies, chanting, going on pilgrimage and seasonal festivals. Though each religion has its own specific forms of worship, there is a commonality in the way in which all human societies generally perform worship at a specific location. For Christians this place of worship is the church.

The rise of Christianity is primarily attributed to the Roman Emperor Constantine. In 312 AD, Constantine defeated his rival at the Battle of Milvian Bridge; he believed his success was a result of divine intervention and embraced the Christian God, who had brought him victory. In 325 AD Constantine convened the First Council of Nicaea, a watershed event in Christianity, where the first unified Christian doctrine and canon or church laws were created. By 380 AD, Christianity formally became the professed faith of the powerful Roman Empire. Christianity first arrived in Ireland sometime in the late fourth or early fifth centuries, brought by missionaries from Britain and Gaul (France). At that time Ireland had trading links with the periphery of a newly Christianised Roman Empire and this contact facilitated the arrival of the new religion and the start of the church building tradition.

The earliest churches were small timber structures. Whilst none of these survive today we can get a sense of their form and scale from the stone churches that survive from the late ninth and tenth century. These early stone churches replicate some of the features found in the earlier wooden churches. Church reforms in the twelfth century and the arrival of the Anglo-Normans saw the building of larger churches in the Gothic style, which were internally divided into different sacred spaces like those of today. The first of the Late Medieval monasteries built on the cloistral plan appeared at this time and continued in use until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the sixteenth century. The Reformation and the rise of Protestantism brought about many changes; many of the rural medieval churches were either adapted for the new Protestant religion or fell into ruin. Following the relaxation of the Penal Laws and improved religious tolerance there was a renewed vigour in church building by all denominations in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, giving us many of the large and impressive Heritage Churches that remain in use today.

This publication looks at these heritage churches and aims to create an awareness of the

rich variety in age, size and style of this key part of the heritage of County Cork. To achieve this, an account of the origins and development of our Christian places of worship is presented in chronological order. Each chapter sets out the historical context of the period, including the major religious and societal developments and events that influenced changes in practices and places of Christian worship. The church as a building is sensitive to changes in liturgy and architectural fashion and is constantly evolving over time. It is these changes in the style, scale and location that is discussed and presented. Finally, the prevailing social and cultural context at that time is summarised.

Given that there are over a thousand heritage churches both ruined and in use in the county, it is not possible to include every church and therefore thirty exemplars have been carefully selected to best illustrate the typical sequence of church building. Every church has its own story, and a photographic essay is included in the back of this book which provides the reader with a variety of further illustrations of churches within the County. The aim of this book is to equip the reader with a good knowledge, to allow them to follow the story of church development and to appreciate our Heritage Churches in a new light.

The history of churches in Cork County has been at least 1,500 years in the making. Churches are first and foremost places of Christian worship, and while many by virtue of their scale and design are awe-inspiring buildings, all are spiritual sanctuaries. Churches along with the many associated ecclesiastical buildings and features are among the most important parts of our collective heritage. It is this shared heritage, manifest in the belief systems, history, traditions, archaeology, architecture, aesthetic beauty and sanctity of these sacred places that appeals to both the believer and the interested observer alike.

Chapter 2
Early Medieval Period
5th to 11th century

The arrival of Christianity was an important event in Ireland's history which had a profound and long-lasting impact. In Munster, tradition holds that Christianity was brought by three missionary saints, before the arrival of Saint Patrick in Ireland (Ó Rian-Raedel 1998). They were Saint Ailbe of Emly in Tipperary, Saint Déclán of Ardmore in Waterford and Saint Ciarán of Cape Clear Island in West Cork. Through their work, and that of the many later Irish saints, the country was gradually converted to Christianity by the end of the sixth century. Many of these saints are associated with and actively venerated in various places across Cork, for example, the patron saints, Colmán, Finbarr and Fachtna of the respective modern Dioceses of Cloyne, Cork and Ross and Saint Gobnait of Ballyvourney, Saint Fanahan of Brigown (modern-day Mitchelstown) and Saint Molaga of Aghacross.

As a result of trading which existed amongst coastal communities along the Irish Sea, there was likely to have been a strong awareness of the Christian religion, which was spreading westward from the Roman Empire. When the Christian missionaries did arrive, they encountered a Celtic people, whose economy and society was rurally based. The pre-Christian beliefs focused on the worship of a range of deities associated with nature and infused with mythological meaning, with the pagan gods to be found in the natural world of mountains, rivers, caves, lakes and man-made prehistoric monuments. For example, one local earth goddess was Anu, whose *"domain was the province of Munster where twin hills* [located just off the N22 on the Cork-Kerry border and part of the Derrynasaggart Mountain-range] *were named The Paps of Anu"* (Stacey, 1998, p. 15).

The priest-like Druids of the time were a religious and social elite, who performed rights and worship to entice favour from the deities and made offerings of precious objects to the gods of the rivers, lakes and springs. The Christians adapted pagan rituals and customs that were familiar to potentially sceptical converts. The Christian tradition of the pilgrimage to holy wells may have its origin in this. In the latter stages of the fourth century, Christianity from the continent was beginning to take hold across Ireland. "As it did so the old religion of the druids died out, although its traces would linger in ancient festivals turned into holy days and pagan gods transformed into Christian Saints" (Stacey, 1998. p. 9); for instance, the Celtic festival of Samhain on October 31st and its association with All Saints Day on November 1st and the association of Saint Brigit with an earlier Pagan Goddess also named Brigit, both of whom had the same festival/feast day of Feburary 1st (Stacey, 1998, p. 53).

The arrival of Christianity had an impact on the social and cultural fabric of the country and

further manifested itself by the emergence of a new building type within the landscape: the church. In the Early Christian Period, while there was a Diocesan system with associated individual churches, it was the monastic orders that emerged as the dominant centres of religious administration and worship.

In building their churches and homes, the early Christian monastic system tended to adopt the native Irish settlement style, by enclosing their early monasteries with earthen banks. The boundary of the early monastic enclosure was called a vallum, and inside it was considered sacred. Carved stone crosses often mark the boundary of this sacred ground. Within these enclosures churches for worship and prayer were built in timber and normally located at the centre of the enclosure and surrounded by ancillary structures. Over time the early monasteries developed, adding schools for religious teaching; scriptoriums for writing, libraries, workshops for religiously themed metalwork, guesthouses, and formal gateways. Some of the bigger monasteries, such as Clonmacnoise in Offaly attracted people who settled on the fringes and engaged in trade and craftwork. This form of settlement is believed to have represented the first towns and villages that appeared in Ireland, before the Viking cities and towns of the ninth and tenth centuries. The early monasteries became powerful independent religious, political, economic and educational centres.

An Early Christian Monastery circa 9th century.
Image courtesy of Limerick Education Centre (www.itsabouttime.ie)

The circular Vallum enclosure at Templebryan remains clearly visible on modern Ordnance Survey maps.
© Ordnance Survey Ireland. All rights reserved. Licence number 2013/06/CCMA/ CorkCountyCouncil

The church site and graveyard within these early ecclesiastical enclosures continued in use for centuries; the graveyards in particular are often in use up to the present day. Christians were normally buried in sacred ground, as close to the church as possible. It was not until the late 17th century that burials were marked with individual headstones that are seen in graveyards today. The exception to this rule would have been for the elite members of society. In the 18th and 19th Centuries, graveyards were enclosed by stone boundary walls. By this time the *vallum* had lost its significance and got fossilised into the later field systems. Many have been identified throughout Cork, as a result of archaeological fieldwork and research. Examples of these ecclesiastical enclosures can be found at Kilmacow, Killeenemer, Tullylease **(Exemplar 1)**, Coole **(Exemplar 2)** and Labbamolaga **(Exemplar 3)** in North Cork, Templebryan and Caheravart in West Cork, Killquane in East Cork and Desertmore, Aghabullogue and Bawnatemple in Mid-Cork. Other features of an early ecclesiastical site include holy wells, bullaun stones (curious large stones with bowl-like depressions), carved stone grave slabs and crosses. The Kilnaruane Pillar Stone near Bantry may be part of a high cross, and is the sole example in Cork. Round towers are also associated with early monasteries, although they are not common; in Cork we have two surviving examples in Cloyne and Kinneigh.

The churches of the Early Christian Period in Cork, and throughout Ireland, from the arrival of Christianity to the start of the High Medieval Period (1100 – 1400 AD), were small, rectangular shaped buildings, with a single door in the west wall. They were built on an East – West orientation, with the altar to the east, as were all Christian churches generally throughout Christendom. This is owing to the commonly held belief that the congregation looked together toward the Lord in the East and to face the rising sun. These churches were first built in timber or sod, using the most readily available building materials of the time. Unfortunately, none of these

TOP:
Bullaun Stone, Aghacross.
ABOVE:
Grave Slab of Saint Berihert at Tullylease.
BELOW LEFT:
Kilnaruane Pillar Stone near Bantry.
BELOW RIGHT:
Cloyne Round Tower.

churches survive and we have to rely on the archaeological record and documentary sources to piece together what they may have looked like. The space inside the church was usually small, at around 3-5m long by 2-3m wide. It only needed to be large enough to accommodate the priest and other persons officiating at the Mass. Other attendees could join in the worship from the outside. It is thought that this small size of church may have come with the early missionaries, from similar ones that were found in Roman Britain and France (Ó Carragáin 2014).

These wooden churches are referred to in documentary sources as *dairthech*, - literally 'oak house'. To-date only a total of eight potential timber churches have been found through archaeological excavation in Ireland (Ó Carragáin 2010). The evidence for them is patchy, due to the decay of the timbers and sod and the regular building of later stone churches on top of them. However, it is very likely that some evidence for timber churches remains below ground at most early monastic sites. The first excavation of a timber church was carried out by Professor M. J. O'Kelly of the Department of Archaeology, University College Cork, at Church Island, Co. Kerry in 1958. Here, the excavation uncovered holes that once held timber posts for the walls of the church, laid out in a rough rectangle, with a graveyard surrounding it to the northwest. Typically, it was found that the later mortared stone church on the site was built on top of a timber one. Another excavation by O'Kelly in Ballyvourney, Co. Cork **(Exemplar 11)** did uncover evidence for a timber building beneath the later stone building known as St. Gobnet's House (O'Kelly 1952); although it was not possible to determine whether or not it was a church.

While the archaeological record is limited we are fortunate to have two key artistic sources; the illustration of the *Temptation of Jesus by the Devil* from the Book of Kells (created c. 790 AD) and carvings on the caps of ninth/tenth century high

TOP:
The Book of Kells (c. 790 A.D.) depicting a typical church of the time.

ABOVE:
Muiredhach's Cross. The cap, circled in red, gives a depiction of our Early Christian Churches.

BELOW:
Church at Labbamologa with trabeated doorway at west end.

crosses (the reproduction of which became popular during the Celtic Revival of the early 20th century). Both sources depict what the timber and later stone churches of this time might have looked like. These stone built churches, based on the same design as the earlier timber structures, became commonplace from the late ninth/tenth century, though few survive in the County.

The previously referenced illustrations indicate that the rectangular door on the gable end had a flat lintel for a head and side jambs that were straight or slightly inclined towards the top. This feature is known as a trabeate doorway. The walls had four pronounced posts in each corner, which rose to support a sloping thatched or timber shingled roof. A carved finial sat on top of the gable, tying the roof together, while giving an opportunity for the carpenter to use a bit of decorative flare. Many of the features of the earlier timber churches were deliberately and symbolically carried through into the later stone churches, an idea known as skeuomorphism. Coming from the Roman world, and before that ancient Greece, the copying of architectural details from one medium to another was a way to make the new building medium (in this case stone) look familiar and importantly, to maintain the symbolism of what came before. The eleventh century stone-built church on Mac Dara's Island off the

The features of a typical Early Christian Church.
Image courtesy of Limerick Education Centre (www.itsabouttime.ie)

A closer look at St. Mac Dara's Church in Galway.
Image courtesy of Limerick Education Centre (www.itsabouttime.ie)
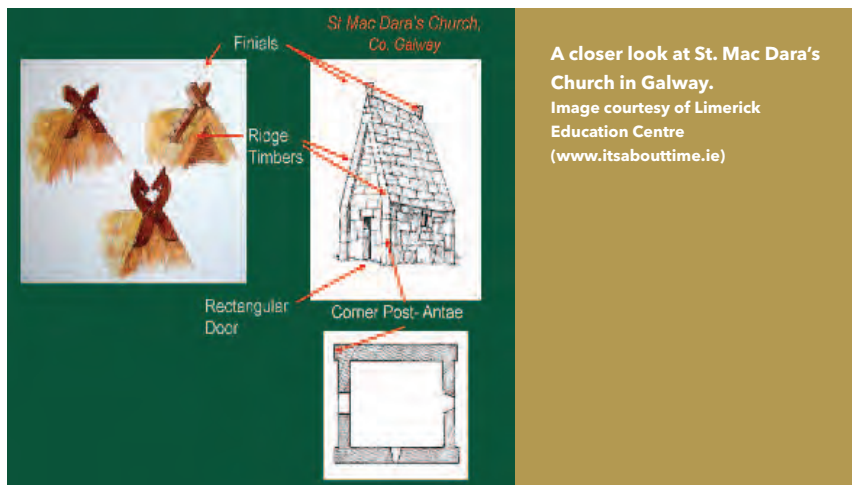
Galway coast is the most complete example in Ireland of an early stone church, with the skeuomorphic features of a timber church.

Timber was the main building material utilised up to the 17th century in Ireland, with the exception of prominent buildings. It is not fully understood why churches were built of stone from the early ninth and tenth centuries. Harold Leask (1955) thought that the Viking raids and burning of churches and monasteries in the ninth century may have prompted a more permanent replacement. Equally it could be a reflection of the importance of the church held by the community.

The early timber and stone churches were simple in design but may have been a physical metaphor for the four orders or pillars that the early Christian church was founded on – the congregation of believers, the revered saints, the four evangelists (Mathew, Mark, Luke and John) and Christ himself. The four upright corner posts of the rectangular timber churches, possibly reproduced as antae in the stone churches, are thought to be an expression of this. Thus the four-cornered symbolism of the small church held its appeal for the early Irish church, even though many advances in terms of size and design of church were occurring on the Continent.

Evidence of eight early stone churches has been identified in Cork (Ó Carragáin 2010). They all broadly date from the tenth century and have some of the features associated with early stone churches. All of them are on the sites of early monasteries, have small rectangular footprints and some have antae in the surviving walls. Saint Fanahan's church at Brigown Mitchelstown, the church at Britway, Coole's two churches, **(Exemplar 2)**, Killeenemer; and Skeam West all have antae. Both Croagh and Skeam West have surviving trabeate doorways in their west walls and the smaller Coole church has a pointed or gable-headed window in its east gable, over the altar. Another intriguing church is the smaller one at Labbamolaga **(Exemplar 3)**, which has antae and a three-stone trabeate doorway. These plain, rectangular mortared stone churches remained in style until the early twelfth century when the unique Irish or Hiberno-Romanesque style developed, to accommodate the congregation.

Christianity, as a whole had a significant and enduring change on belief systems in Ireland. It rapidly brought about a new social order, which was strongly guided by the new religious beliefs, and led to significant social and cultural changes for the people. John O' Donovan, editor of the Annals of the Four Masters, noted that Christianity was engrafted on the pagan superstition with so much skill that people were "won over to the Christian religion before they understood the exact difference between the two systems of belief" (O' Donovan, 1990). Christianity also led to a landscape of the Early Medieval period manifested in the new architecture of churches and their associated monasteries.

Importantly, Christianity also brought with it a great emphasis

on the written word and as such written history; creating a move away from the more organic oral tradition that was prevalent at the time. While it is known that the druids also had a literature, writing in Ireland took on a new lease of life following the arrival of Christianity from the continent. Many manuscripts were reproduced in the scriptoriums of these monasteries such as the Book of Lismore, produced in Fermoy, Co. Cork.

Christianity has also provided us with an intriguing legacy of placenames. 'Kil/kill' is the most common form which was used for churches from many periods. The placenames with 'dysert/desert', 'donagh' or 'temple' suggest the location of an early monastery or church, even though it may no longer stand over ground. The barely evident ruined church on a hill at Kilbarry, near Macroom is known locally as *An Teampaill* and is associated with Saint Finbarr, alleged to be the Saint's first establishment on the way to Gougane Barra. Donoughmore, near Rylane, comes from the Irish Domhnach Mór, which commonly means a great or big church and according to local tradition it has been suggested that a monastery was established here sometime in the fifth/sixth century. In the absence of physical remains, this invaluable placename evidence can give us a positive intangible link with our Christian heritage.

Perhaps the most enduring legacy, apart from the continuation of Christianity as the dominant system of worship, is the veneration of the early saints. From the beginning, Irish Christianity maintained a strong connection to the foundation saints of many of the early churches and monasteries. The connection continues today, through pilgrimages and patterns on commemorative feast days to holy wells and monastic church sites throughout County Cork. Cork has many local saints associated with early monastic churches. Saint Gobnait, the patron saint of bee keepers and metal workers, is revered at Ballyvourney **(Exemplar 11)** and attracts huge crowds on her pattern day of the 11th of February.
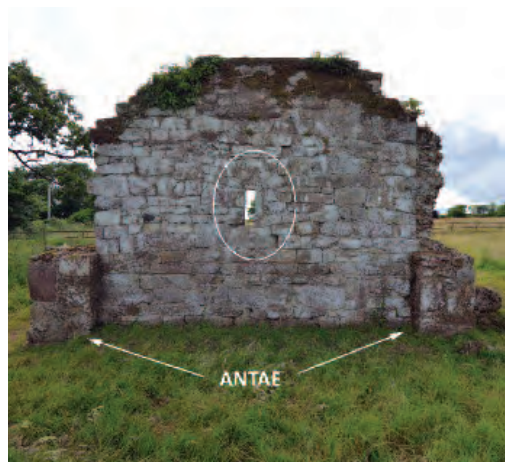
TOP:
The antae are clearly visible at this Early Christian Church in Coole.

ABOVE:
The barely identifiable ruined church known locally as An Teampaill in Kilbarry.

OPPOSITE:
Statue of St. Gobnait, patron Saint of Beekeepers – note bees on base of statue, Ballyvourney.

Pilgrimage, as a form of Christian worship continues to this day. One well known example in Cork County is St Finbarr's pilgrim path from Drimoleague to Gougane Barra.

Veneration of the body of the saint is also important and was carried out since the Early Christian period. The church of Saint Molaga, is though to be a shrine-chapel; the monks at Labbamolaga having built it to house his grave in the ninth century. Portable metalwork reliquaries that held the bones of saints, such as the impressive early twelfth century relic of Saint Lachtin's Arm, from Donoughmore church, are important religious objects that were venerated for curative properties. They also served secular purposes, such as touching them when swearing an oath, similar to the use of the Bible in courtrooms today.

The Early Medieval church in Cork has interesting physical and cultural heritage surviving in our remaining stone churches, monastic enclosures; the naming of places in our landscape and the enduring veneration of their founding saints. Gregorian church reforms in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, brought changes in the liturgy and increased participation in the Mass. This led to changes in church building styles. First came the nave and chancel churches of the short-lived Irish Romanesque, and then the substantial increase in church size and complexity of the thirteenth-century Gothic churches, which coincided with the establishment of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland.

TOP:
St. Gobnait's Holy Well in Baile Mhúirne.
Photo courtesy of Enda O' Flaherty.

ABOVE:
St. Finbarr's Pilgrim Path near Drimoleague.

The 12th to 14th centuries in Ireland witnessed a great change to the buildings and architectural style of Churches due to a number of influences. Europe at the time was undergoing a period of economic expansion, population growth, intellectual advances and written legal codes and texts.

In the secular world, the arrival of the Normans in Ireland from Britain in 1169 A.D had a major impact on the area they controlled. The Normans built castles, set up administrations, issued charters and granted lands in return for homage and military service: what is referred to as the feudal system. The invasion of Ireland by the Normans was approved of by Pope Adrian IV (pontificate 1154 – 1159 A.D.), the only English Pope, and as a result, "Ireland legally became a feudal possession of the King of England, who was subject to the Pope" (Tsarion, 2007, p. 144). The Normans increased trade through an expansion of the existing coastal towns established by the Vikings and developed a network of inland towns. In Cork, they developed the coastal bases at Cork, Youghal and Kinsale, and founded an inland town at Buttevant. These towns were walled by the Normans to maintain their foothold, and also built within these walled towns were new parish churches and a cathedral in the case of Cork City.

Across Western Europe in the 12th century, Christianity was undergoing a major reform resulting in a spiritual and intellectual renewal of Church beliefs and practises. Known broadly as the Gregorian Reforms, introduced by Pope Gregory VII (pontificate 1073-85 AD), they were concerned with a renewed spiritual purity for the Church, and to make it independent of secular influence and control. Gregory did this by returning the focus of the Church to the teachings of the life of Jesus Christ, as told by the Apostles. He also addressed the problems of simony or the buying of positions of power and influence in the Church; confirmed that the clergy was to be celibate, and that the appointment of bishops and abbots was the sole right of the Church, to exclude the influence of secular rulers. The Church was establishing itself as the leading Europe-wide institution, reforming itself to shape the spiritual destiny of humanity as well as fighting war in the Holy Land to the East, with the Crusades of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Up to this point in Ireland, Christianity largely revolved around the relatively independent monasteries. The clergy of the Irish Church was largely married and several families of Church clerics had succeeded in controlling their churches through inheritance from father to son. Lay people were also in charge, having bought Church offices and committed the sin of simony. The ancient Irish Brehon Law was also at odds with Church teachings, as it

permitted divorce and the marriage of close relatives. Given this, there was a growing unease amongst Church reformers as to whether the levels of pastoral care and spiritual teachings in Ireland were consistent with that of the rest of Christendom. Through pilgrimage to Rome and other places across Europe, some of the Irish clerics were in regular contact with their continental counterparts and were aware of the changes that were happening. Also, apart from ensuring that everybody was 'singing from the same hymn sheet', other practical matters such as Church properties, sources of income and the management and distribution of these, were also up for reform.

There was also a general support for Church reforms from some of the powerful elite in Irish society. *Muirchertach Ua Briain* (1050-1119 AD), King of Munster, facilitated two important synods, at Cashel in 1101 and Rath Breasil in 1111. At Cashel he symbolically gave Cashel, the traditional seat of the Kings of Munster, to the Church, thereby confirming its supremacy. The reforms at Cashel forbade simony, clerical marriage, incest and the holding of Church offices by lay people. The Synod of Rath Breasil introduced a modern administrative system for the Church. It also formally established diocese and parish boundaries. Armagh and Cashel were established as the country's two arch-bishoprics, with each having twelve dioceses and associated parishes.

The Church reform of the 12th century also opened the door to the new continental monastic orders, especially the Cistercians, 'where they originated in a Christian environment, heavily indebted to Ireland and Irish missionaries of an earlier age for its health and personality' (O'Keeffe, 1999).

Two distinct Church architectural styles developed during this period – firstly the Romanesque and later the Gothic. The Romanesque is based on ancient Roman architecture, and it derived three main elements from Rome: plan and form from the Roman basilica; from the thermae it got the rounded vault and from Roman building in general it got the semicircular arch. Despite the large architecturally sophisticated Romanesque buildings being erected in Europe, Irish building design remained conservative and developed a distinctive style of its own known as Hiberno-Romanesque. The Hiberno-Romanesque features are best expressed in the emphasizing of the rounded arches with low relief sculptures using a combination of native and continental inspired motifs.

Romanesque Style Church.
Courtesy of Limerick Education Centre.

One of the earliest examples of Romanesque architecture in Ireland is Cormac's Chapel built in 1127 at the Rock of Cashel, County Tipperary. The chapel has a nave and chancel, and is very elaborately constructed of chiselled sandstone blocks with a stone roof. All the windows and doors have the distinct rounded arches characteristic of Romanesque Church architecture. The doorways are framed in a series of decreasing arches referred to as 'orders' and elaborately decorated carved zig-zag motifs. Wall surfaces are enlivened by string courses, corbel tables and blank arcading carved with human mask and scalloped capitals. The north and south doors have a tympana, which is a rare decorative feature of this period. Cormac's Chapel, while it was influential to the Romanesque style in Ireland, is an exception as opposed to a typical example of Hiberno-Romanesque architecture.

The vast majority of Hiberno-Romanesque Churches were small, solidly built rectangular structures making use of what was the most characteristic feature of the Romanesque style - the rounded arches over windows, doors and chancel arch. The windows tended to be small openings. The openings were often highly decorated with distinctive motifs such as chevrons and zigzags, as well as floral and geometrical decoration, animal and human heads. As time went by the Irish stonemasons developed their own style of ornamentation.

The Church was sometimes extended with the addition of a chancel; reserved for the priest and those officiating at the Mass around the altar. During this period the rituals of the Church placed great emphasis on the sanctity and mystery of the sacrament of holy communion. The clergy, following the fourth Lateran Council of 1215, was instructed to protect the sacrament and so timber screens, known as rood screens, were built across the chancel. The nave was a larger, usually wider space, located to the west of the chancel and was where the mass-goers would congregate to observe and participate.

ABOVE:
Cormac's Chapel in Cashel.
BELOW:
Romanesque head at Cormac's Chapel.
Courtesy of Paul Power

The decorative emphasis of the entrance doors through which the worshippers entered and the windows through which the light of God lit the interior, is the most distinguishing feature of the Hiberno-Romanesque. Movement through the sacred space inside the church, from the nave to the chancel, was marked by a decorated chancel arch; the decorative features emphasising the building as being the house of God. The entrance doorway to the Nun's Chapel (1167 AD) at Clonmacnoise and the west door of Clonfert Cathedral in Galway are good surviving examples of the embellishment applied to portals in Hiberno-Romanesque Churches.

With the exception of Cormac's Chapel, whose walls are built of dressed blocks of stone (ashlar), the walls of Irish Romanesque Churches were rubble built of roughly quarried local stone. For the finely carved details around door and window surrounds fine-grained sandstone was often used. This was soft and easily carved but if a church or abbey could afford it the preferred stone for carving was Dundry, a cream-coloured limestone imported from quarries in the Bristol area. The best building stone in Ireland is carboniferous limestone but it is a hard stone and therefore difficult to carve. However, by 1400 the technology of stone carving had advanced enough for this to be used and it is the universal building stone for churches and abbeys in Ireland in the 15th and 16th centuries.

In Cork, no complete Hiberno-Romanesque Church survives. A small number of rural Churches contain fragments of carved decorative stones. Based on the type of stone; dressing, shape and decoration applied, it is believed that these elements are indicative of an earlier Hiberno-Romanesque Church. One such Church is Aghacross **(Exemplar 3)** near Kildorrery, where Romanesque-style door fragments are rebuilt into the existing west door. This suggests that the sandstone nave of this Church was built in the mid-twelfth century. The limestone chancel is a later fifteenth-century addition. Similarly at Tullylease in North Cork, **(Exemplar 1)**, there are early thirteenth-century Romanesque-style fragments in a rebuilt door in the south wall of a later chancel.

Several other locations have Romanesque features of note, although the Churches have been altered and added to over time. The ruined medieval rural parish churches at Ardskeagh near Fermoy, Britway near Ballynoe, Ballyhay near Charleville and Killeenemer near Glanworth, have evidence for Romanesque-style doorways. The door at Britway is in the west gable and has a rounded arch, with a carved architrave or frame around the opening. The central voussoir stone of the arch has a carving that suggests it may once have had a cross on it, which is now weathered away. Romanesque fragments from an urban setting in County Cork include the twelfth-century door into the tower of the medieval parish Church of Saint Multose in Kinsale and some voussoirs with carved human heads from the cathedral in Cork City.
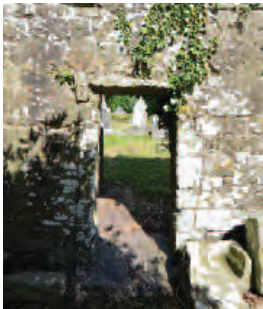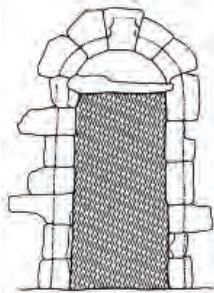

Romanesque Door at Britway

Illustration of Britway Door by Tadhg O' Keeffe

Romanesque Door at Ballyhea

Illustration of Ballyhea Door
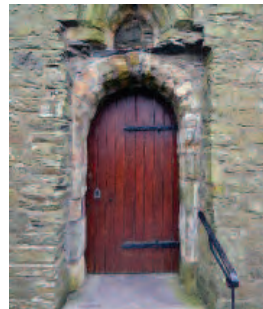
Romanesque Door at St. Multose's, Kinsale

In Ireland at this time a local distinctive style of ecclesiastical architecture identified by Harold Leask (1966) as the School of the West was beginning to occur. It was a transitional style between Romanesque and Gothic and flourished west of the Shannon between 1200 and 1235. In a recent appraisal by Britta Kalkreuter (2001) she noted Holycross and Kilcooly in Tipperary and Monasteranenagh in Limerick as examples of its influence which are all Cistercian abbeys; the style having had a particular affinity with that order. The style could be described as a mixture of Hiberno-Romanesque with new ideas coming in from the west of England via the Cistercians. Eamon Cotter (2012) suggests that some of the elaborate decorated stone at Kildorrery Church is evidence of the influence of the School of the West extending into Cork.
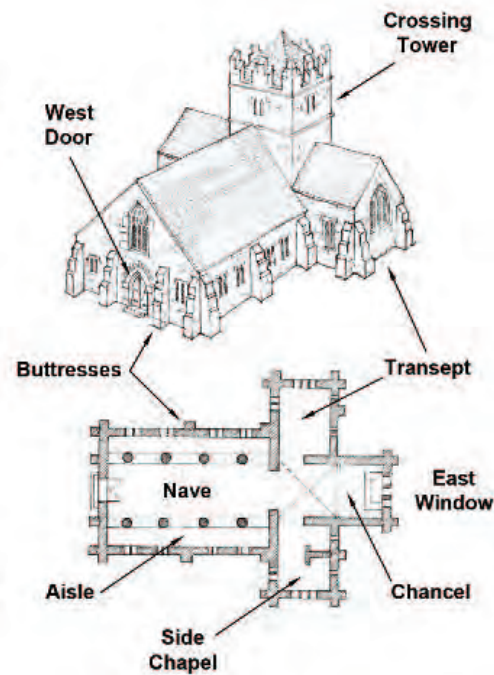
The Romanesque style, including the transitional style just referred to, continued up until the early 13th century in Ireland when it began to be replaced by one of the most dominant and long lasting ecclesiastical building styles – Gothic architecture. Gothic style developed out of the Romanesque in response to the need to fulfil an ever-increasing need for bigger churches both as a statement of spiritual commitment and to accommodate larger congregations. This was achieved by using new engineering techniques based principally on a pointed as opposed to a rounded arch. It was used in churches in Europe from the late 12th century, right through to the start of the Renaissance in the 16th century and enjoyed a revival in the mid-late nineteenth century, when churches of all the post-Reformation denominations used it. From the 1220s onwards monastic orders also were building in the Gothic style and all the churches were larger, taller, more spacious with larger windows than their Romanesque predecessors.

Gothic architecture was extremely systemized. Function, structure and decoration were, more than in any other style, an absolute trinity (Jordan, 1971).
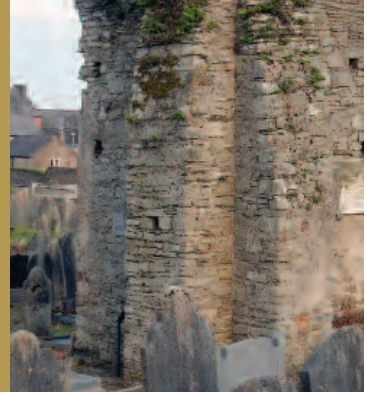
The key features of gothic architecture were the pointed arch, buttresses, vaulting and mouldings, which were all held in equilibrium by the combination of oblique and vertical forces neutralising each other (Fletcher, 1958). This allowed for higher walls, plus the angle of the pointed arch could be made steep, meaning there was less heavy wall fabric above it, again allowing greater height. Because there was less weight to support, the walls were made thinner, but to ensure stability and strength to carry the weight of the roof, buttresses were added. The buttress helped to transfer the load from the weight of the roof to the ground, as it was thicker than the surrounding sections of wall. In Irish churches the buttresses were usually on the outside; on the corner or slightly set back on either side of it, to give the strength where it was most needed. The taller and thinner walls also allowed for bigger windows which let in more light.

Some of the greatest expressions of Gothic architecture are the monumental Gothic cathedrals of Europe and Britain, such as Notre Dame (1163 - 1345 AD) in Paris and Salisbury (1220 - 1266 AD) in Wiltshire; buildings remarkable for their sheer size and elaborate decoration. New monastic orders founded at the same time also built in the grand Gothic style, such as the Cistercian Tintern Abbey (1136 - 1301 AD) at Chepstow in Wales. As well as the larger monumental buildings, Gothic elements were also used in smaller medieval parish churches and smaller monastic churches of the new orders, and so the style quickly spread throughout Christendom. Every part of medieval Europe put its own stamp on Gothic Architecture. Irish Gothic corresponds most closely with the development of Gothic Architecture in England.

LEFT:
Notre Dame Gothic Cathedral.
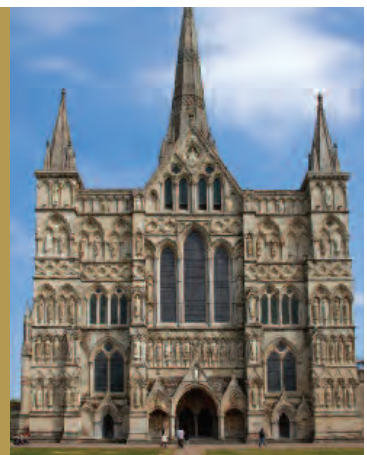
RIGHT:
Salisbury Gothic Cathedral.
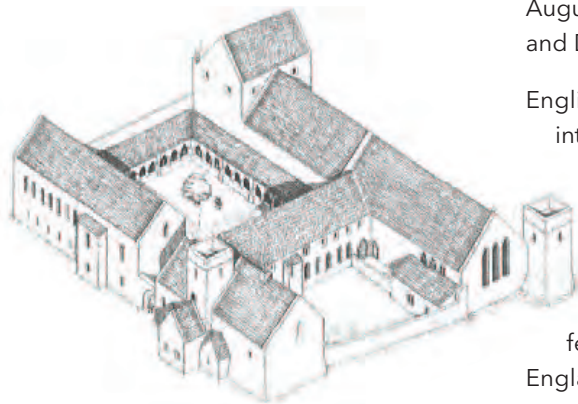
In Ireland, the Normans were influential in introducing Gothic architecture in the 13th Century. The two ecclesiastical structures that best display the Gothic style are the parish church and the new monastic complexes, which were built around a formal cloistral plan. Between the 12th and the 16th centuries, Ireland was a host to no less than eighteen of these continental orders, most notably the Augustinians, Benedictines, Cistercians, Franciscans and Dominicans.

English Gothic Church architecture is categorised into three phases; these are: the Early English, the Decorated and the Perpendicular. The categorisations are based broadly on window types, which are very often used to date medieval buildings. The first phase is known as Early English Gothic because its features were the same as those found in England. This phase lasted in Ireland from approximately 1200 – 1300 AD. Amongst the features of this phase was the use of a closely spaced series of individual tall narrow windows with pointed arches and hood-mouldings; these were known as lancet windows. Examples in Cork include the west window of the nave of Saint Mary's Collegiate Church in Youghal **(Exemplar 5)**; Ballybeg Abbey, Buttevant, or those in the south transept of Saint Colman's Cathedral **(Exemplar 6)**, Cloyne. Another feature is the stone decoration that was applied to

the capitals (top of the columns); they could either be plain or elaborately decorated with foliage-like stone carving such as 'stiff leaf', as can be seen at the thirteenth century Augustinian Priory at Ballybeg and some have also been discovered in Kildorrery Church.

The second phase is known as Decorated Gothic, which as the name suggests was typified by a profusion of decoration or decorative structural forms (Cole et al, 2002). Its most distinctive features were the treatment of the windows and the application of decoration to same. The earlier individual lancet windows were replaced by large decorative windows. These windows were divided by a series of vertical stone mullions, which rise up and intersect at the apex of the window creating a decorative effect called tracery, which created geometric, reticulated and flowing patterns. Surviving examples of decorated gothic windows can be found at the Dominican Friary, Youghal and Cloyne Cathedral in East Cork. The third phase, Perpendicular Gothic, was characterised by an emphasis on vertical lines popular in England (c. 1350 to c. 1530), but made no significant impact in Ireland.

Lancet windows at Inch Abbey.

'Stiff-leaf' capital decoration at Ballybeg.

'Stiff-leaf' capital decoration, Kildorrery.

Decorated tracery window at the west gable of the Dominican Friary in Youghal.

The new Gothic Churches built in Ireland during this period continued to keep the east west orientation of the earlier churches. A key feature was the door through the west gable. It was the main, but usually not the only, entrance into the church. Like earlier churches, it was decorated above and to the sides, as it marked entry into a place of worship. Gothic doorways had a pointed arch with a projecting band of stone above it, known as hood-moulding. Nearly all the doors and windows in Churches in the Gothic style in Ireland had a hood-moulding externally, which could be highly decorative, the purpose of which, was to throw rainwater off the face of the window or door.

In the larger churches more space was created with the addition of side aisles and projecting transepts. The transepts were added to the north and south elevations giving an overall cruciform plan at the point where the nave and chancel met. The transepts often housed side-chapels for extra Masses, and their building and upkeep was often endowed or sponsored by different groups or individuals who may have been buried there. The point where all

four spaces met is called *the crossing*. On some Gothic Churches a bell tower was located above this point, breaking the roofline. Tall narrow bell towers were a characteristic feature of Irish Franciscan monasteries.

To make more room in the nave, side aisles were often added. They were created by inserting a series of open pointed arches, known as an arcade, in the side walls of the nave creating a single storey side aisle covered by a sloping roof. The nave was lit by clerestory windows which occurred in the nave wall above the arcading.

The east end of the chancel contained the high altar, above which was the large east window, usually the most elaborate window in the church. The flood of morning light through this window at first Mass provided essential light but also was seen as a strong symbol of renewal and the resurrection. The east windows in Gothic Churches are notably larger than those in Romanesque Churches. Windows were also placed along the side walls, particularly the south wall, to bring light into the body of the Church. Behind the altar was the *reredos*, a decorative screen that had religious paintings or iconography.

The chancel had other fixed furnishings around the altar which were used during mass that was embellished with Gothic design. To the south of the altar was a *piscina*, a carved stone bowl with a drain, set in a small niche often with a decorative arch to the top. Here the communion vessels were washed. A *sedilla*, or arrangement of seats, usually three, was built into the wall beside the piscina, to allow the priest and attending deacons to sit during singing by the choir. In some instances the seat closest to the altar was set a little higher, for the chief celebrant of the Mass. A wall cupboard, known as an *aumbry*, is found in some churches, close to the altar; it was here that the communion vessels, anointing oils, and religious books were stored. The tomb of an important benefactor or founder, clerical or lay, is often found set into a niche in the side wall of the chancel such as the Roche family in Bridgetown Abbey.
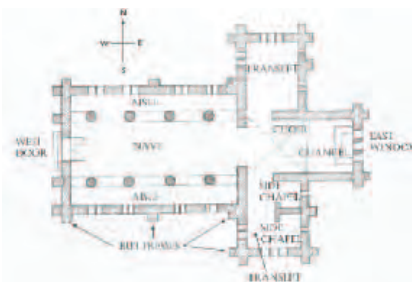
Sample Gothic Style Church Plan 1.
Image courtesy of Limerick Education Centre.

The fine Sedilla located in the Chancel of St. Mary's Collegiate Church Youghal.

Sketch of Gothic Chancel.
Image courtesy of Limerick Education Centre.

In the larger churches, further west along the chancel was the *choir*. Here the walls were lined with benches or stalls that faced each other; an arrangement known as antiphonal. In the monastic churches this was where the monks sang or chanted, and in the cathedrals and larger parish churches, where the singing priests and choristers sat. Saint Mary's Collegiate Church in Youghal **(Exemplar 5)** has a unique medieval amplification in the choir, which is discussed in Chapter 6.

As was the case in Romanesque Churches, the public area of the Gothic Church, the *nave*, was kept separate from the chancel by the wooden *rood screen*. In cathedrals and parish churches the lay people worshipped from the nave while in monastic churches it was used primarily by the lay brothers (members of a religious institute who commit to a life of prayer and service but usually are not bound by the requirement to pray the Divine Office). The Gothic rood screens got bigger and more elaborate over time, sometimes, growing to two-storeys, with a gallery above and were elaborately carved, and decorated with religious paintings and symbols. No rood screens survive in Ireland though their location can sometimes be detected by marks on the church walls into which they were set.

Gothic Churches contained other furnishings, other than those associated with the sacrament of communion. The baptismal font was located in the nave, close to the west door, as it was symbolically the first place that a Christian had contact with the faith, at baptism. Its position also served as a reminder of purity and sin when entering the Church. A pulpit, from which the priest would give sermons, readings and homilies, was often located at the top of the nave, close to the chancel, but visible by the congregation. Both of these pieces of church furniture could be highly decorative, with the fonts made of carved stone and the pulpit in wood.

The three largest surviving thirteenth-century Gothic Churches in County Cork are Cloyne Cathedral **(Exemplar 6)**, and the parish churches of Saint Mary's Collegiate **(Exemplar 5)** Youghal and Saint Multose Church in Kinsale. The monastic Churches of the abbeys and religious houses founded in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries are nearly all built in the Gothic style. Among the still upstanding remains of the thirteenth-century Gothic monasteries across Cork are: the almost intact ruin of the Augustinian Canons at Bridgetown Priory **(Exemplar 9)**; parts of the Church and surrounding enclosure wall and gateway of the Preceptory of Knights Hospitallers at Mourneabbey (1220 AD), the impressive ruins of the Franciscan friary in the heart of Buttevant and the remains of the Augustinian Canons house at Ballybeg Abbey with its impressive dovecote on the roadside south of the town. Further east in Youghal, the west gable, with a simple tracery window, and the south pier of the chancel arch of the Dominican friary survives in the North Abbey cemetery.

In summary, Gothic style suited the religious fervour and commitment of the time and continued as a favoured style of ecclesiastical architecture up to the end of the nineteenth century. The use of a cruciform plan and the strong vertical emphasis symbolically thrust heavenward towards God, testifies to the efforts of the builders and worshippers, and is a potent architectural motif.

The momentum of new church building during the 12th to 14th century incorporating both Romanesque and Gothic styles, had largely followed the impetus of the expansion of the Anglo-Norman colony in Ireland. However, this momentum did not continue indefinitely and ground nearly to a standstill in the fourteenth century due to a number of calamitous events. By the mid-13th century the Anglo-Norman colony came under increased pressure from the Gaelic west and this increase in hostilities continued throughout the 14th century. The disruption caused by the Bruce Invasion from Scotland in 1315-18 was coupled with a pan-European famine that hit Ireland in 1317. This caused significant hardship and population decline, but it was merely a forerunner to the devastation caused by the Black Death, which reached Ireland in 1348. The decline in population due to the Black Death is not fully known, but it probably mirrored the death rate of around 30 percent that was experienced in Europe. The majority of the deaths occurred amongst the Anglo-Norman population as it hit the colonial towns and cities hardest; the native population was rurally dispersed and more immune to the effects. It took several generations for the population and the necessary economic and spiritual bases to recover, to allow church building to start again in the 15th century, and when it did, it was approached with a renewed vigour.

13th Augustinian Canons at Bridgetown Priory.

The late medieval period, spanning roughly the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, is an interesting period in Irish history witnessing the revival of Old English and Gaelic power on the one hand and the profound effects of the Reformation on the other. Following the turbulent times witnessed in the fourteenth century, the late medieval period was one of relative peace and prosperity that saw the widespread rebuilding of parish churches. The same flowering in church building was also enjoyed by the monastic orders, with impressive new monasteries being built and older ones renovated.

This renewal in church building took place within the sphere of influence of the powerful Gaelic and Old English (Norman) lordships that now dominated the country. In west Cork the dominant lordships were the various branches of the Mac Carthys, along with the O'Sullivans, O'Mahonys and O'Driscolls. The east of the County was dominated by Old English families, notably the Fitzgeralds, Barrys, Roches and Condons. All of these groups were patrons of church building whilst also building tower house castles to establish themselves in their various territories. For example, a papal decree from Pope Sixtus IV (1471 – 1484) was granted to Cormac MacCarthy, to build a new church at Innishannon dedicated to St Mary (pers. comm. Jim Larkin) and following a Papal Decree in 1493, the new parish of Kilmichael was officially created on October 12th 1494, because the churches at Inchigeelagh and Mac Lionaigh were too far apart (pers. comm. Ted Cook).

Throughout this period the English Crown only directly controlled the area of the Pale, centred on Dublin. In the rest of the country, power was delegated to the various great Old English families, such as the Earls of Kildare in Leinster and the Earls of Desmond in Munster. However, with victory at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485, Henry Tudor became Henry VII, King of England and Lord of Ireland. He set about trying to re-establish Royal power here, thus starting a process which is known as the Tudor Conquest of Ireland, but Ireland did not come fully under the control of the English Crown until the end of the seventeenth century. His successor, Henry VIII, set about trying to establish an administration of English-born administrators, judges and churchmen in Ireland to further his own interests and promote the Reformation.

The Reformation itself started in Germany with Martin Luther, an Augustinian friar, who in 1517 wrote what became known as the *Ninety-Five Theses* on the need for church reform. He was particularly concerned at the selling of indulgences to fund church activities like church building, and had theological issues on the existence of purgatory and the position of the saints in church doctrine. Even though he was excommunicated and declared an outlaw, Luther's ideas and teaching took hold and spread across Europe. To its supporters,

the Reformation was a cleansing movement that would address what they saw as corruption in the Papacy and abuses in the Church in general. It led to the great schism or divide of Western Christianity into Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.

Henry VIII saw his opportunity following his falling out with the Pope over attempts to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, and signed into law the Oath of Supremacy in 1536. In this he declared himself head of the church, and all officials and clerics were to swear allegiance to him. With the passing of the Crown of Ireland Act in 1542 by the Irish Parliament, Henry legally introduced the Reformation into Ireland.

Following on from his break from the Roman Catholic church, Henry set about, from 1536, the seizing of church property and the disbanding of the monasteries, priories, convents and friaries, whose great estates and properties he now regarded as his own to grant as he pleased. Historically, this became known as the Dissolution of the Monasteries and one of the many Cork examples affected was the Knights Hospitallers' Abbey at Mourneabbey, shut down in 1540. Many monasteries were stripped of their decorations, artefacts, furnishings and building stone; however, the effect of the Dissolution in Ireland also varied greatly depending on location and the influence of the local Lord. It had an immediate effect on the fate of monastic church lands and buildings within the Pale. However, some orders, particularly the Franciscans, flourished in the 15th century and continued to found new houses well after the date of Dissolution. For example, the Franciscan friary of Kilcrea Abbey, under the patronage of the Mac Carthys, was not founded until 1465 and flourished into the 16th century.

Mourneabbey was one of the monasteries closed down in Cork as a result of the Dissolution.

When Elizabeth I succeeded to the throne in 1558 she continued the policy of a re-conquest of Ireland that would eventually result in the completion of the Dissolution in Ireland. This involved further transfer of churches and church lands to the formal state religion of Anglicanism. She introduced the Act of Uniformity of 1560, which made all church worship formally Protestant and thereby all churches and lands part of the Anglican Church. This transfer of church authority and property meant that the traditional parish churches were now legally in Anglican hands. In some cases the existing medieval church was refurbished for Protestant use but often it was left to fall into ruin and a new Protestant church built in its place or elsewhere within the churchyard. Numerous examples across the County are identified in the Archaeological Inventory for County Cork as being in ruins by the early 17th century. One example, according to local information, is Rathcooney Church near Glanmire, which was taken over by Crown Forces in 1580 and by 1615 it had fallen into a state of ruin (pers. comm. Mary Crowley). Whether in ruin or not it is interesting to note that in most cases the entire population of the parish, both Catholic and Protestant, continued to bury in the graveyard surrounding the medieval church.

During the period of the Tudor Conquest of Ireland one consolatory tactic used was 'surrender and regrant', whereby Gaelic and Old English chieftains would surrender their Irish titles, adopt English law as opposed to Brehon Law and adopt English ways and customs. In return for this they received new titles to their lands from the English Crown. This tactic did not always work and tension between the Crown and the local Lords often came to the boil and resulted in rebellion. In Munster, the Desmond Rebellion (1569-1583), resulted from the rebellion of the Earl of Desmond against the Crown. Following on from the failure of the rebellion, Elizabeth I set about the Munster Plantation, by rewarding her troops in Ireland, including famous Elizabethans like Sir Walter Raleigh, with the Earl's vast estate. The confiscated lands in Cork were mainly along the Blackwater valley from Mallow down to Youghal and in the Bandon/Kinsale area. These lands were to be 'planted' with loyal English subjects, thereby ensuring Royal control into the future. The plantation had mixed results but Munster settled into a period of relative peace until rebellion broke out once again in 1641. This rebellion and the consequent Cromwellian and Williamite Wars saw profound changes in land ownership and social conditions throughout the province.

In the late medieval period the parish church was arguably the most important public building for the local community. It was the place of communal worship, which was supported through tithes (tax to support church and clergy) and donations by people right across the social spectrum, from the lords to the labourers. Traditionally, the community repaired and maintained the more public nave area of the church whilst it was the responsibility of the Church to upkeep the chancel where the altar was located. The great number of new parish churches built in the late medieval period and the quality of workmanship in their construction is indicative of both the power and influence of the church as well as the relative peace and prosperity enjoyed at this time.
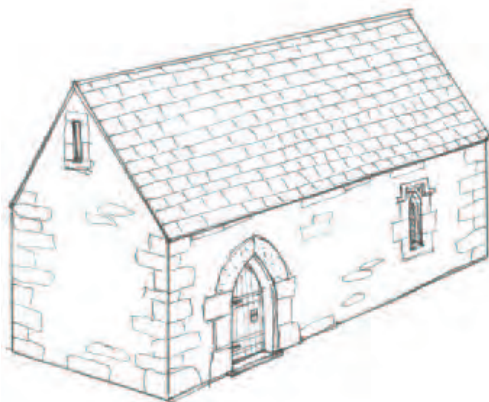
The typical rural parish church of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the county was a single-roomed, rectangular structure (averaging 16m E-W; 8m N-S) with gables at either end. They were generally built on the same site as earlier parish churches and continued to

hold the traditional east – west orientation with the altar at the east end. They were built in a restrained gothic style typified by the use of pointed arched openings. The church was entered through a doorway framed by a cut stone surround with a pointed arch, located towards the western end of the south wall. This was a shift from the traditional position of the door in the west wall and was probably done to provide accommodation for the priest at the west end of the church. A small, narrow window was often located high up in what was otherwise a blank west gable, giving light to the priest's quarters.

Another key characteristic of these churches is the distinctive pointed ogee-headed window. The ogee head was formed by two, relatively flat, s-shaped arcs or curves of carved stone, which were positioned to mirror each other. The ogee-headed window can occur in single or double 'lights', when it is divided by a vertical stone mullion. Many of the windows are covered externally by a hood-moulding. The spandrel or niches formed between the moulding and the top of the window can have elaborate carved decorations. This type of window was also used in other buildings such as tower houses and the new monastic abbeys or extensions to existing abbeys built at this time. Some of the churches had a bellcote or on occasion a double bellcote on the top of the west gable. One bell was for the call to Mass whilst the other was used for community matters, such as the times of the day or for the Angelus.

The walls of the churches were built of local stone, usually rubble limestone. The corners of the church were built with well-cut quoins or cornerstones to give it definition and strength. The walls were plastered with a lime based render both outside and inside. The timber roof was covered in either thatch, slate or wooden shingles, depending on the resources of the community. Some of the churches had dressed stone copings protecting the tops of the gable walls.

Inside, the altar stood at the east end with a small piscina in the south wall. An aumbry or wall cupboard, to hold the communion plate, holy oils and other ceremonial items used in the church, could also have been found in one of the walls to the south of the altar.

Sketch of a typical fifteenth-century rural parish church.
Courtesy of Limerick Education Centre

A well preserved example of a late medieval church can be found in Garryvoe, in East Cork. This rectangular church is just over 16m long inside and 7m wide, with gables to the east and west. It has an impressive limestone door in the south wall, along with ogee-headed windows that light the altar in the south, east and north walls. The corners of the church are defined with square-cut limestone blocks, which continue onto the gables as fine carved limestone coping stones. The remains of a small flat platform on top of the west gable once held a bellcote; while inside there are several wall recesses, including a delightful pointed-arch piscina niche.

Garryvoe Church interior, looking towards the altar area lit by a double ogee headed east window which has lost its central mullion.

There are many examples of late medieval churches in the county; in fact most of the ruined churches that survive in the county's historic graveyards belong to this period. Three exemplars are provided for this type of church at Ballyvourney **(11)** Kilcatherine **(12)** and Churchtown **(14)** but there are numerous others identified and described in the Archaeololgical Inventory for County Cork such as Kilmoe, Kilcoe, Kilcrohane, Clogagh in West Cork; Coolyduff and Macloneigh near Macroom; Carrigdownane, Clenor, Kilgullane and Macroney in North Cork and Ballynacorra and Ballyoughthera near Midleton in East Cork. While the 15th century and 16th century saw the building of many new churches, some of the earlier stone churches of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were also rebuilt and extended at this time, such as Tullylease **(Exemplar 1)**, Aghacross **(Exemplar 4)**, and the large church at Coole Abbey. All three of these churches had limestone-built chancels added to the east end, and have the distinctive and datable ogee-headed windows.
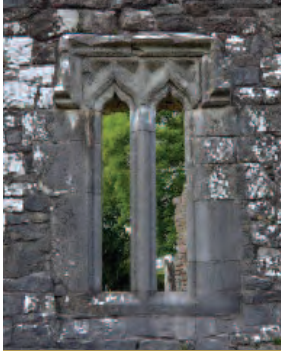
Twin Ogee-headed window in 15th Century Chancel at Aghacross.

15th Century Chancel at Coole Abbey.

The larger urban parish churches in towns like Youghal, Cloyne and Kinsale were also remodelled but in a gothic style that was considerably less restrained than their rural counterparts. Perhaps the biggest project in the County from this time was the elaborate extension made to the chancel of Saint Mary's in Youghal **(Exemplar 5)**, when Thomas, Eighth Earl of Desmond, built the College of Youghal and endowed the medieval parish church as its collegiate church. The use of the term college here is not in the meaning of a place of education, but rather a group of priests who live together as a community, who did not take monastic vows, but were there to offer Masses, prayers and songs for their benefactors. The establishment of colleges was a fashionable thing for the wealthy landowners to do in the fifteenth century, and the Earls of Desmond were no different; particularly when they were involved in the founding of Saint Mary's in the thirteenth century, and regarded Youghal as one of their towns.

15th Century Gothic Chancel of Saint Mary's Collegiate Church, Youghal with buttresses and embattled parapet and fine tracery east window.

Many wealthy landowners at the time also looked favourably towards supporting the monastic orders. The mendicant orders, which are religious orders that depend directly on charity for their livelihood such as the Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians, enjoyed an upsurge in popularity and support in the fifteenth century, when they embraced the Observant monastic reform movement that was spreading across Europe. The Observant monasteries or houses, followed a strict discipline and observation of their rules and values for monastic life, and openly preached, heard confessions and became involved in their communities. In Ireland, between 1400-1508, there were ninety new friaries founded, mostly in the Gaelic area.

The monastic buildings continued to follow the formal arrangement of buildings around the cloister. Cork saw the founding of four new Franciscan friaries; these were at Kilcrea **(Exemplar 10)**, Bantry, Goleen and Sherkin Island , while other houses such as Timoleague and Buttevant were rebuilt with new cloisters. The four new houses were built on rural sites within the sphere of influence of native chieftains and their support by the Gaelic and Old English families was a manifestation of the renewed vigour that Irish society enjoyed during this period. The almost intact layout at Kilcrea, along with the works done at Timoleague and Buttevant, are the most impressive monastic remains from the fifteenth-century revival in church building in Cork.

The fifteenth century was a time of increased social and economic prosperity. Environmentally, the weather improved, leading to better harvests and more food production. Times were relatively peaceful and so there was an overall increase in population. However, the sixteenth century saw the two great social changes of the late medieval period. Firstly, the Reformation caused the great schism or divide of Western Christianity into Roman Catholicism and Protestantism and secondly, the attempt to re-establish Royal power in Ireland. These changes would eventually impact on church building and activity, especially in the following seventeenth century.

The 17th century was a transitional period in Irish history between the old medieval culture and the development of the modern world from the 18th century onwards. This transition involved unsettled times that were not conducive to a thriving building industry and consequently the architectural legacy from this period is scant compared with the previous and succeeding centuries. At the start of the 17th century Cork had New English settlers, as a result of the Munster Plantation. These new settlers were Protestant and occupied the former Earl of Desmond's lands, which in Cork were centred around East Cork, Mallow and Bandon. However, most of the existing Gaelic and Old English lordships were still place.

A period of relative coexistence was observed up until the outbreak of rebellion in 1641, which began in Ulster largely as a reaction to the Ulster Plantation. This led to an outbreak of sectarian tensions between Protestants and Catholics, with atrocities on both sides. This atmosphere of sectarian attrition continued throughout the subsequent Cromwellian conquest (1649–53) and settlement and climaxed with the Williamite War and the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. By the end of this period nearly all of the Old English and Gaelic lordships were in the hands of the New English settlers. Most of these new settlers were officers, soldiers and officials from the victorious Cromwellian and Williamite armies who were rewarded for their service by land grants. These new elite landowners became known as the Protestant Ascendancy, who effectively ran the country through a parliament in Dublin.

Following the turmoil of the 17th century, the 18th century can be seen as a period of relative stability. It was a time of economic growth following the advent of the industrial revolution and rapid population increase. It is known as the Age of Enlightenment or Age of Reason, when new thinking, ideas and concepts in many walks of life became popular. A rational and more tolerant approach began to develop throughout the century in regards to wider social, political, scientific, economic and religious issues. It was also a period of unprecedented building. The Landlords began building large comfortable new houses on their estates designed by architects in the latest style. It was a time when much of the old medieval building stock in the towns and villages and across the rural countryside was replaced with many of the historic buildings that are today prevalent in our urban and rural landscape.

The majority of the growing population was poorer Roman Catholics still suppressed by the Penal Laws - the Laws in Ireland for the Suppression of Popery. They were laws set out to disenfranchise Roman Catholics and Dissenter Protestants from access to power, both political and economic. While these laws did have a profound impact on the entire Roman

Catholic population, the Catholic aristocracy and gentry were both the main targets and victims of the Laws - ensuring they were excluded from local and national politics; unable to extend their estates through marriage and threatened with the progressive fragmentation of their property. The climax of these tensions was the 1798 Rebellion when the United Irishmen, a combination of Roman Catholic and Dissenter Protestant interests, rose up against the Protestant Ascendency. The main consequence of the failure of this rebellion was the Act of Union in 1801 and the abolition of the Irish House of Commons leading to the creation of the United Kingdom and the ruling of Ireland directly from London.

At the turn of the 19th century the protestant ruling class was being challenged by the increasingly assertive Catholic population following the relaxation of the Penal Laws. Roman Catholics were now allowed to own and lease land, educate their children and join the professions. Many of the restrictions on their freedom to worship were also lifted allowing them to build churches in generally discrete yet public places. The campaign for total emancipation culminated in the efforts by Daniel O'Connell and the Catholic Association in achieving the Roman Catholic Relief Act 1829. This development resulted in the construction of new Roman Catholic Churches often in more strategic locations; a process that accelerated greatly and gained considerable momentum throughout the 19th Century. The building even continued at the time of the Great Famine

Daniel O' Connell (1775 to 1847) played a key role in the Catholic Emancipation.

(1845-1852), despite massive starvation and emigration amongst the poorer classes in Ireland, as Emancipation had created a Roman Catholic middle class that could support the building of new churches.

The Anglican brethren also enjoyed a renewed program of large church building in the mid to late 19th century. Other Protestant denominations including Methodists, Presbyterians and Quakers, also built many of their churches and meeting halls during this time. At a secular level, this period witnessed the construction of many new houses both large and small along with new social, military and administrative buildings such as Courthouses, Workhouses, Schools, Convents, Prisons and Military Fortifications. By the end of the 19th century the Land Wars had erupted in a fight for better rights for the tenant farmers and laborers and a more equitable redistribution of land. This led to the Land Acts and the setting up of the Land Commission transforming landholdings from a system of landlordism to owner-occupier, bringing to an end the powerful landlord system that dominated the Country for two hundred years.

Church building and rebuilding throughout the post –medieval period was very much in tandem with the rise and fall of political and religious relations of the time. Regarding the 17th Century, however, there is notably little information or physical evidence of church building surviving. The main body of work seems to have involved the alteration of the existing medieval parish churches or the construction of a small number of new churches.

This work was carried out by the Anglican Church with the needs of their specific religious practices in mind. The Anglican Church or the Church of Ireland is the largest Protestant Church in Ireland, from 1537-1870 it was the established state church governed by the English monarchy. Since its disestablishment in 1870, it was no longer the state religion and became an independent self-governing church and member of the world wide Anglican communion.

Protestant religious observance centred on the bible, preaching, morality and contemplation of the word of God. This was different to the traditional Christianity practiced in previous times, which was focused more on ceremony, sacraments and adoration as a means of accessing God. The change in attitude to worship resulted in alterations to the medieval catholic churches which were now being reused; interiors became less ornate, with most devotional images and statues removed and the elaborate medieval rood screens were dismantled; providing an appropriate space for the new religious observance.

The newly arrived English settlers also required suitable places to worship and a few of their churches do survive. Examples include Christ Church **(Exemplar 15)**, which was built in 1610 in the then new plantation town of Bandon. Indeed, it is reputedly the first church built in Ireland for Protestant worship. Another example is at Kilcredan **(Exemplar 13)** in East Cork, built in 1636 by Sir Robert Tynte, one of the New English settlers. Nevertheless, it appears that the New English were predominately content to refurbish the existing medieval churches, like that of St Mary's Collegiate Church, Youghal and another at Skull.

The uncertainty caused by the Reformation amongst native Old English and Gaelic Catholics, followed by religious unease caused by rebellion, wars and not least by the Cromwellian wars, led to little or no Catholic Church building in the 17th century. It was a time that saw periodic repression of Catholic worship and an increased exclusion of Catholics from political and administrative office. However the practice of celebrating mass continued for the most part and was tolerated provided it was done in private. This led to Catholic worship taking place in secluded or remote places. Catholics used private houses or dedicated inconspicuous buildings known as Mass Houses. Documentary evidence and local tradition and folklore exist for Mass Houses, for example at Kanturk, Banteer, Ballynoe, Glantane, Glanworth, Kilnamartyra, and Mallow (Diocese of Cloyne, 2002). Today there is little or no physical evidence of Mass Houses surviving, however one known example survives in North Cork at Ballyhimock near Castletownroche. This is a farm building known locally as a Mass House but typically this is no difference in appearance from an ordinary farm out-building.

At this time, outdoor services were also not uncommon due to lack of resources as well as persecution. These outdoor locations or Mass-rocks were often in isolated locations and suitable for a quiet secluded mass. At Mass-rocks, an altar was set up on a suitable stone or a portable timber altar was brought to the location. The Mass-rocks and altars were sometimes protected with a timber cover known as a scalán. Approximately 100 'Mass-rocks', or at least their locations, have been recorded in County Cork by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, including sites in Cloghroe and Glanalin. The information is based on the results of archaeological fieldwork and the folk memory collected by antiquarians and local historians in many rural locations.


Mass rock near Inchigeelagh

Mass rock at Glanalin near Kilcrohane

Local traditions tell us that Mass was also celebrated in the isolated ruins of old medieval churches or early monasteries. One example is in Coole **(Exemplar 2)**, near Castlelyons, where it is said that its simple stone altar was built for Mass in penal times. A well known example in North Cork is at Carker Middle on the south side of the Ballyhoura Mountains near Doneraile where Mass is celebrated every July and locally in Glanmire it is held that there was a rural Mass House in the townland of Ballinvriskig in 1723 (pers. comm. Mary Crowley). Mass Houses and open air mass continued to be used by Roman Catholics in the first half of the 18th century.

With the relaxation of the Penal Laws towards the end of the 18th century Roman Catholics began to build churches in their parishes. These small churches are known as 'thatched chapels', which were modest vernacular buildings. They were usually long and narrow rectangular structures built with mud or stone. They tended to be built in discrete locations in urban and rural areas, not necessarily adhering to the traditional east west orientation. The walls were low with simple small window openings. Inside was a single space with a clay floor, a simple altar and little other furnishings, maybe not even seats. The interior was poorly lit with low walls and small windows but many were well maintained and brightened with the use of whitewash. There is much documentary evidence and local tradition of thatched chapels across the County such as at Clonakilty, Darra, and Bantry in West Cork and Kilbrin, Ballyclough, Castletownroche, Killavullen and Shanballymore in North Cork. Placenames can also suggest the presence of thatched chapels, for example a small thatched chapel is thought to have been located in a field known as Ard an tSéipéil, in a place called Droumacopall, northeast of Bantry, while there may have been another in the

Sketch of a Thatched Chapel
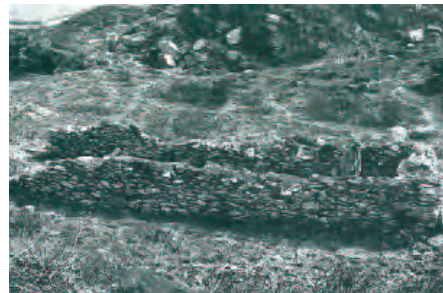
The remains of Carrignaspirroge Thatched Chapel at Caherbirrane, Macroom.

town predating the existing nineteenth-century church (pers. comm. Angela O'Donovan). Today only a handful of ruined remains of Thatched Chapels are in the County such as Carrignaspirroge in Caherbirrane **(Exemplar 16)**, Drimoleague and Kicrohane. Elsewhere in Ireland a roofed example of a thatched chapel does survive at Tomhaggard, Co. Wexford.

The repeal of the Penal Laws and the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Act 1829, combined with the growing confidence in the church members especially the merchant classes, allowed Roman Catholic church building to accelerate greatly and gain momentum in the 19th Century.

This commenced towards the end of the 18th century, when Catholics began to build more substantial churches replacing the vernacular thatched chapel that served them up to then. These churches were built in two basic plans, a rectangular shape known as a 'Barn Church' and 'T-Shaped' Churches. These churches retained a simple design usually having plain rendered exteriors. The application of formal architectural design tended to be reserved externally for windows, where the pointed Neo Gothic or the round-headed Neo-Classical styles were applied.

These churches do not always follow an east to west orientation, as the land on which they were built was often donated by local landowners and not always suited to such a layout. A graveyard may have developed beside these new churches, however they often did not have accompanying graveyards, as the Catholic community continue to use the traditional old graveyard associated with the medieval parish church.

Interior of St. Mary's Church, Innishannon (1800).

Generally, these churches did not have towers or spires, but most had a bellcote for the church bell above the main door. The use of the modest low profile of the bellcote as opposed to tall uplifting bell towers in use by the Anglican Church is an interesting and notably distinguishing feature between the two. Some Roman Catholic churches overcame this by building towers onto their churches or beside them such as Fornaught near Donnaghmore or the intriguing freestanding round towers at Waterloo and Whitechurch built by Fr Hogan as belfries in the early 19th century. While the church space itself was often simply decorated with timber panelling to the walls, tiled or flag stone floors and timber sheeted or plaster ceilings, the altar area was given more attention, often displaying an elaborate classical style reredos.

Barn Shaped Church – St. Colman's in Ballintotis, County Cork.

In terms of location, the local Landlords were approached for sites and were usually accommodating. Both Lord Kenmare and Lord Bantry offered land for a new church in Bantry in 1825 (pers.comm. Angela O Donovan and Donal Fitzgerald) and the site of Dromagh Church was donated by Leader the local Landlord with a contribution of £150 towards its construction in 1833. There are many examples of these barn churches across the county which are still in use such as St Nicholas Church, Killavullen (1839), St Mary's Ballyhea (1831), St Colman's Church, Ballintotis (1839), St Barahane's Church, Castlehaven (1840) and St Mary's Church, Innishannon (1800).

An elaboration of the Barn church is the T-shaped church. Fundamentally, the Barn and T-Shaped churches are entirely similar, with the exception of side extensions known as transepts, which result in a T-Shaped plan. This progression arises out of the need to cater for larger congregations and very often the transepts included internal galleries. The transepts are also located around the altar to provide more space for the congregation and to allow for a better view of the liturgy and sacraments. Again there are numerous examples of this type still in use across the County including St Michael's Church, Rathbarry (1828), St Peter's Church, Rockchapel (c.1830), St Bartholomew's Church,

Kildorrery (1838), and Church of the Mother of God, Saleen (1810). Post-Emancipation church building was bigger and more noticeable in urban centers where the confidence and wealth of an emerging Roman Catholic middle class was reflected in the style and size of new churches. In these larger urban areas in the early 19th Century, Roman Catholic churches were built to a Neo-Classical style. They were often relocated close to but not necessarily in a central or overtly prominent position within the town. Saint John the Baptist Church in Kinsale, **(Exemplar 22)**, along with Saint Patrick's Church in Dunmanway **(Exemplar 20)**, and Saint Patrick's Cathedral in Skibbereen are fine examples.

These churches continue the use of both the rectangular and T-shaped plan. However it is the entrance façade that is the most distinctive external feature of Neo-Classical churches. These are usually constructed of cut ashlar blocks; this application was reserved only for the front façade with the remainder and less visible elements of the church either of a rendered or coursed stone finish. The front facades are constructed to classical principles of symmetry and proportion, defined by engaged pilasters at either side supporting a substantial triangular pediment which in turn is topped by a bellcote or enclosed belfry as is evident in the church of St John the Baptist in Kinsale. The use of a central projecting section of the front façade, known as a central breakfront is also a common but not a universally applied feature. There is a vertical emphasis and systematic application to the openings within the front façade, which gives Neo-Classical architecture its distinctive 'structured' appearance. The round headed openings (windows, doors, and niches) are the preferred medium of the Neo-Classical style, however square openings are also used, in particular for the main entrance doors.

Saint John the Baptist Church in Kinsale.

Interior of St. John the Baptist's Church Kinsale with the classical style reredos clearly evident.

Internally, the application of classical decoration and motifs is continued. Decorative plasterwork mouldings are applied to window and door surrounds, coffered ceilings and plaster centrepieces and cornicing are also common features in these churches, with St Patrick's in Dunmanway having a particularly beautiful example of a coffered ceiling. Galleries are supported on Doric and Corinthian columns. However, the classical style reredos is often the crowning piece of the interior of the church. The reredos dominates the area behind the altar. This normally consists of a plinth, with a tripartite division created by classical columns commonly in the Corinthian Order. This in turn supports an entablature, which contains common decorative motifs such as modillions and dentils, topped by a semi circular pediment

St. Colman's Cathedral Cobh.

to the central area of the reredos. The side sections or openings tend to have square or circular headed niches, sometimes with triangular or semi- circular pediments. Both Saint John the Baptist's Church in Kinsale and Saint Patrick's Church in Dunmanway, have examples of a classical style reredos. As with the 18th century Anglican churches, the interiors were open to allow the congregation a better view of the ceremonies.

Despite the dignified elegance of the Neo-Classical style, the use of gothic style architecture never entirely ceased and its revival in the mid 19th century by all denominations was arguably, the greatest flowering of church building in Ireland since the arrival of Christianity. The Neo-Gothic was championed by a number of ecclesiastical architects such as Augustus Pugin (1812-1852). Soon after its introduction, the staid and sober hall-like Neo-Classical churches were effectively forgotten, replaced by the elaborate, congregation and liturgically focused spaces, of the nave, aisles, transepts and chancel. This form of church architecture harked back to what Pugin certainly saw as a truer form of Christian worship, based on traditional medieval liturgy and church arrangements. These easily identifiable new parish churches of all scales were built in the bigger towns, smaller villages and some though less common in rural areas. Many of the convents and monasteries of the nuns and brothers of the various orders built in this style. For Roman Catholics, energized by Emancipation and a growing middle class that could support the new building projects, the Neo-Gothic style gave a medium to celebrate.

Neo-Gothic is essentially a revival of medieval Gothic architecture, however with some differences. Firstly, there are notable influences from the continent, particularly from France, as opposed to a simple parallel with the Gothic Architecture of England. Secondly there is an obvious although not exclusive preference toward the Decorative Style Gothic architecture, evident in the decorative widows with curvilinear and geometric style tracery. Advances in technologies and materials in the 18th and 19th centuries, allowed not only for the profusion in the application of Gothic features, but for the finesses in its execution. The founding principles of form, structure and decoration are in the 19th century, being presented on a larger scale with exact precision creating substantial and in some cases monumental buildings. Roman Catholic parishes, especially those in the prosperous regional towns, built new massive Neo-Gothic style churches in proud positions, strengthened by the profuse and diverse application of Neo-Gothic features.

The culmination of a century of Neo-Gothic Church building in Cork is St Colman's Cathedral in Cobh, which takes the gothic revival to its highest point. Saint Colmans was built between 1868 and 1919, to the designs of E. W. Pugin and G. C. Ashlin. Its design was greatly influenced by the taste of the reigning bishop, Bishop William Keane (1857-1875), who had a great love of early French Gothic architecture, acquired from years spent studying in Paris. The building was constructed using a variety of rich material, including principally blue Dalkey granite and limestone, with Bath and Portland stone on the inner walls. Inside the Cathedral is one of the most magnificent Victorian interiors in the Country. The grandeur of Saint Colmans, and therefore its desired effect to glorify God, is achieved through the sheer scale and height of its tower, the pinnacles, great west façade, rose windows and its commanding site above Cobh and Cork Harbour.

This favored architectural style was applied to churches of all sizes throughout the 19th century, be it the small rural parish church or the larger urban churches. In many cases earlier Barn and T-shaped churches were replaced with new churches in the Neo-Gothic style. The level and extent to which this architectural style was applied varied depending on a variety of factors; however, all churches in the mid 19th century have a number of commonly reoccurring features which include: side aisles with clerestory, internal arcading supported on stone and/or marble columns, external buttresses, side porches and a bellcote or spire. Windows, which are an important feature of Neo-Gothic architecture, are always pointed and include variations of geometric, intersecting and curvilinear tracery; rose windows are also a commonly used in Neo-Gothic churches, often found on the gables or in the clerestory. Stain glass was commonly used for windows and many churches retain the original stain glass. Walls were generally a mixture of cut stone with a tooled cut stone being used for decorative surrounds to openings, string courses and quoins. Roofs were slated, with decorative cast iron rainwater goods. Other external features can include timber-sheeted doors with cast-iron straps and ironmongery, boundary walls, formal entrances with stone piers and cast-iron gates.

Larger parish churches in urban centres such as the Holy Cross Church in Charleville **(Exemplar 25)**, the Church of our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, Midleton, and the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Clonalkity, were built on large footprints, with either a rectangular or cruciform layout. They occupy prominent locations but do not necessarily follow the

Church of the Immaculate Conception Clonakilty.
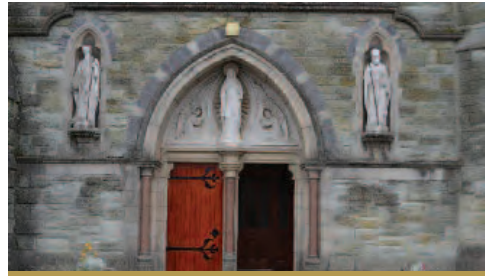
Rusticated Ashlar stone work and elaborate West Doorway at the Immaculate Conception Clonakilty.

traditional west to east orientation. These churches have a strong Neo-Gothic style achieved in part by the use of rusticated stonework to the entire exterior of the building. The front facades are very elaborate, with gable fronts, geometric tracery, and rose windows. The church of the Holy Cross in Charleville (1898) has elements of French Gothic, in the west (front) façade, with a rose window above a statue, which is flanked on either side by a twin lancet window, all above the door. Equally the west façade of the cathedral-sized Church of the Immaculate Conception, Clonakilty (1898), which was designed by C. S. Ashlin, is dominated by a French Gothic style rose window. Substantial bell towers with spires surrounded by pinnacles are located on the side of the front façade; these are normally pierced by pointed lancet openings. The side aisles are lit by a series of lancet windows, with the clerestory lit by circular trefoil, quartrefoil or rose windows. In the case of the Church of our Lady of the most Holy Rosary in Midleton, the side aisles are lit by a series of triple lancet windows with the clerestory lit by rose windows.

The inside of these churches tend to be strikingly similar. Entering through the west door, and passing via the small timber framed porch into the body of the church, the first impression is of its scale. The content of these churches matches the greatness of their exterior. They are aisled to the north and south, formed by arcades of steeply pointed arches, which are carried on rounded Cork marble and limestone pillars. The walls of the nave rise with a line of circular windows above the arches, to form the lofty clerestory that floods light into the church. The robust timber framing of the roof is left exposed, to be viewed as an artwork in itself. The floor is elaborately tiled, with the central aisle leading to the stepped chancel at the east end, with its altar and elaborate marble reredos backdrop that houses the tabernacle. Pulpits, fonts, a baptismal font, detailed marble railings and timber benches, all furnish the interior. Elaborate stained glass fills the medieval-style tracery of the east window. Skilled masons, craft workers and artists were employed to create great sculpted stone decoration, plasterwork, timberwork and joinery, statuary, stained-glass windows and internal furnishings.
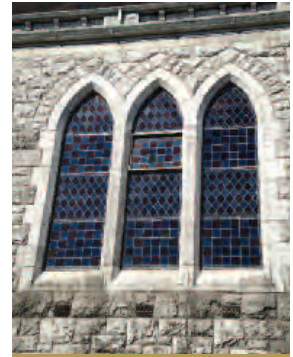

Church of the Holy Rosary Midleton.

Neo-Gothic Style Oculus Window surrounded by rusticated stone work Holy Rosary Midelton.

Geometric tracery window RC Church of Holy Rosary Midelton.

Triple lancet side aisle windows RC Church of Holy Rosary Midelton.

Roman Catholic churches, in the smaller towns and villages, were built on more restricted budgets than those of the larger urban models. These churches were also constructed in the Neo-Gothic style, with similar features both internally and externally as their urban counterparts, simply on a smaller scale. The primary differences are in the use of materials; many of these churches used contrasting colours of lighter stone for dressings and darker stone for the masonry walls (for example red sandstone and limestone), to achieve what is known as a 'polychrome' effect, essentially creating a very distinctive church type. Examples of this type can be found in the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Ballyhooley **(Exemplar 26)**, Saint Mary's Church in Carrigtwohill, the Sacred Heart Church in Glounthaune, the Church of the Assumption in Milford and the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Watergrasshill. The architectural firm of G. C. Ashlin and E.W. Pugin (son of Augustus Pugin) is associated with the designs of Ballyhooley (1870) and Carrigtwohill and the design was modified for Glounthaune by S. F. Francis. Other parishes simply adopted this style and executed it with the assistance of lesser know architects and/or local builders.

St. Mary's Church, Carrigtwohill.

Interior of St Mary's Church, Carrigtwohill with pointed arcading opening to the side aisles and nave lit by the clerestorey windows.

The Sacred Hearth Church in Glounthaune.

The vast number and array of Catholic Churches built in the 19th century represents one of the greatest church building programs of any denomination in Ireland, and while church building continues in the 20th century, it does so at a somewhat slower pace.

For the Anglican Church, their history of church building is equally affected by changes to the political and social landscape of the post medieval period, albeit in a different manner to that of the Roman Catholic Church. In the 18th century the Anglican Church, despite its strict religious observance, did construct some of their churches in a restrained Neo-Classical style which was very fashionable during this period. There is only a handful of these 18th century churches surviving in Cork probably as a result of the great rebuilding

Side Aisles and clerestorey windows at Sacred Heart Church in Glounthaune.

Detail of porch entrance at Sacred Heart Church in Glounthaune.

in the following century, on the same site. The examples are Saint Colman's at Farahy, Saint Anne's **(Exemplar 19)** in Castlemartyr, Templemichael Church in Ballinamona and the ruined remains of St Mary's Mallow, and St Mary's Innishannon.

These churches share a number of common features. Externally, they are elegantly proportioned rectangular buildings built on an east-west orientation, with a tower on the west end and a rounded projection apse at the east end. The windows are tall, with rounded heads. The walls were generally rendered over rubble stone topped with a stone cornice at eaves level. The interior of the church is an open space, this is to allow the congregation to get a clear view of the key features of the new church rites – the preacher's pulpit, the reader's desk and the holy table or communion table. The body of the church would have been furnished with timber seating.

The roof is a plain plastered curved ceiling. The altar was in the 18th century, replaced by the communion or holy table in the apse, which is lit by a modest east window. The towers at the west end house the bell and are a distinctive feature of the Anglican Churches from the 18th century onwards. The towers reduce in size as they rise though their stages, marked by stringcourses, and finish with a battlemented parapet wall. The use of towers and spires on churches were also visually important beacons to show the location of one's church; they also served as a strong symbolic presence of the Anglican Church.

As is often the case, architectural styles can overlap and while some churches of the Neo-Classical style were being constructed in the 18th century, the Neo-Gothic style is fully embraced in the 19th century, when an unprecedented number (almost 700) of small churches were built by the Church of Ireland in the Country. These churches are known as 'Board of First Fruit' Churches, after the Board of First Fruits that provided much of the funding and design
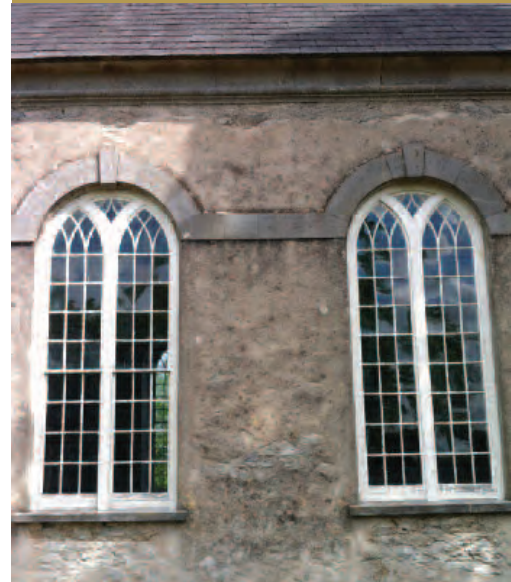
through its commissioned architects (Hutchison 2003). The Board was in existence since 1711, to support the building of Anglican churches in Ireland. However, the loss of political independence to Westminster in 1801 meant that much of the previous sources of funding to the Board had dried up. To address this, the Westminster government made substantial grants to the Board, to support church building and ease the fall of the Church of Ireland from a place of official standing in government and to appease members who felt the loss of status.

County Cork has many of these churches. They were usually sited in the old medieval church site but in some cases they moved to more prominent locations, especially in towns and villages. They were designed initially by the Board's architect John Bowden and later by the regional architect James Pain with assistance from his brother George. These churches are easily recognizable throughout the County. In their simplest form, they are a rectangular plan on an east-west orientation. They are stone built with a typical tall rectangular tower on the west end and sometimes with the addition of a chancel. The windows and doors have pointed arched heads and the timber window frames have simple Y-shaped tracery, mimicking medieval Gothic windows. The bell tower becomes a strong feature of Anglican churches, which can have pointed arches to the belfry openings and pinnacles on the four corners of the battlemented parapet. The average grant of £500 from the Board would build a basic First Fruits Gothic church. However, depending on the level of extra funding available from the parishioners and local wealthy landowners, more decoration and elaboration could be applied, such as a spire for the tower, limestone frames and hood-mouldings to the windows and doors, and decorative buttresses on the corners.

Good examples can be seen at Watergrasshill (1820), the Church of the Ascension **(Exemplar 24)** in Timoleague (1811) and Ballyvourney. Churches were altered and upgraded frequently. Saint Barrahane's Church in Castletownsend (1826) is a good example of a building to undergo improvement, this is evident from the impressive mosaic floors and stain glass windows from the studio of the renowned stained glass artist Harry Clarke (1889-1931) who's influence is also seen in Timoleague (pers. comm. Patricia Curtin-Kelly). One of the later First Fruit Gothic churches in Cork, Saint John the Baptist (1823) in Midleton, is an

elaborate development of this church type. It has a tall, hexagonal tower that is very well embellished with corner buttresses, has pinnacles on the parapet level and is topped with an elegant spire. The windows all have prominent limestone hood-mouldings and the timber windows are done in different types of Gothic tracery. The building is constructed of regularly cut stone blocks known as ashlar and the roof of the church is decorated with pinnacles that rise from the four corners. Many of these churches remain in use, however, with the falling numbers in the congregation over the last century many have fallen into ruin such as Clenor, Castlehyde; Lisheens and Rathbarry. Some have successfully found reuse, such as the West Cork Heritage Centre at Christ Church in Bandon and the Charleville Library which is now located in the former Church of Ireland.

The Church of Ireland despite its significantly smaller congregations was not slow to embrace Neo-Gothic architecture, as was demonstrated early in the 19th century by the First Fruits Gothic churches, which continued in use, sometimes being added to or embellished. The Anglican Church did construct some new churches in the late 19th century; however, not comparable in numbers to that of the Roman Catholic Church. It was to architects like Joseph Welland that commissions went, for example, the design of the accomplished church of Saint Peter's in Bandon (1849). This grand, cruciform plan church, sited to the southeast of the town, has a magnificent bell tower on the north side of the west end of the nave, which stands to nearly 35m. It is topped by four highly decorative pinnacles, one in each corner of the parapet wall. The tracery in the windows takes its influence from the Decorated-style of English Gothic architecture. Inside, the nave and its arcade are robust, with pointed arch clerestory windows beneath the timber roof. The splendid pulpit is made of Caen stone, alabaster and marble. Like that of their Catholic counterparts, the Anglican Church also employed the use of polychrome churches, like that of Holy Trinity Church (1870) in East Ferry. This beautiful church in Cork Harbour is built in a fashion similar to the polychrome churches, using red sandstone for the wall fabric, and white limestone panels that run through to give the contrast. Another good example is at Christ Church in Innishannon replacing the 18th century church at St Mary's. The pinnacle of Anglican Neo-Gothic church building was the construction of Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral in Cork City in 1879.

Saint Peter's Church, Bandon.

Christ Church, Innishannon.

While the 19th century Roman Catholic and Anglican churches are the most common form of heritage churches in the County there is a number of interesting examples of non-Conformist Protestant churches and places of worship. In general denominations such as the Presbyterians, Methodists and particularly the Quakers, they tended to have simpler buildings than those built by the Roman Catholics and Anglicans. In the 18th century the Presbyterians were the first to develop the plain long-hall type of rectangular churches, which suited their less ornate approach to faith and liturgy. However, in the middle of the 19th century, and in keeping with the fashion of the time, they began to embrace greater architectural embellishment in their churches. The current Post Office **(Exemplar 28)** in Clonakilty can be confusing to the visitor – is one there to post a letter or say a prayer?! Formerly a Presbyterian church (1861), it has Neo-Gothic architectural details that would not be out of place on any other Neo-Gothic church in Cork. It is still a rectangular, hall-like building, but has pointed windows with Gothic tracery and hood-mouldings and projecting corner buttresses. The Scots Presbyterian church in Cobh (now the Cobh Museum) has a strong Neo-Gothic pedigree, which interestingly like the polychrome Roman Catholic churches around Cork, used limestone dressings and sandstone fabric to provide a visual contrast, as does the Presbyterian Church in Fermoy.

The Methodist congregations tended to worship in small, simple hall-like churches, which did not have a bell. Historically, meeting houses, preaching houses, chapels or Wesleyan Chapels would have been terms used to describe Methodist places of

worship as their liturgy concentrated on the spoken word of the bible. A recent photographic essay (2007) of the Methodist Churches in West Cork, by Norman and Geraldine Bateman, depicts the significant architectural variety in their churches. They vary from simple hall-like buildings, such as in Allihies, Durrus and Drimoleague; more chapel-like buildings with Neo-Gothic detailing in Clonakilty, Ballydehob and Bantry; and two substantial Neo-Classical churches in Dunmanway and Bandon **(Exemplar 27)**. Many schools were also built by Methodists and often the one building was used as a school during the week and as a place of worship on Sundays and for weeknight meetings (pers. comm. N and G. Bateman).

Of all of the non-Conformist churches, the Quakers or the Society of Friends had the least expressive forms of architecture. Since the late 17th century, there are no intact meeting-houses left in the county area of Cork, but it is understood that they were previously present in many of the major towns. Plans survive for the original layout of the meeting-house in Youghal (c. 1690), which showed it to be a small square space, not very different from a domestic house of the time.
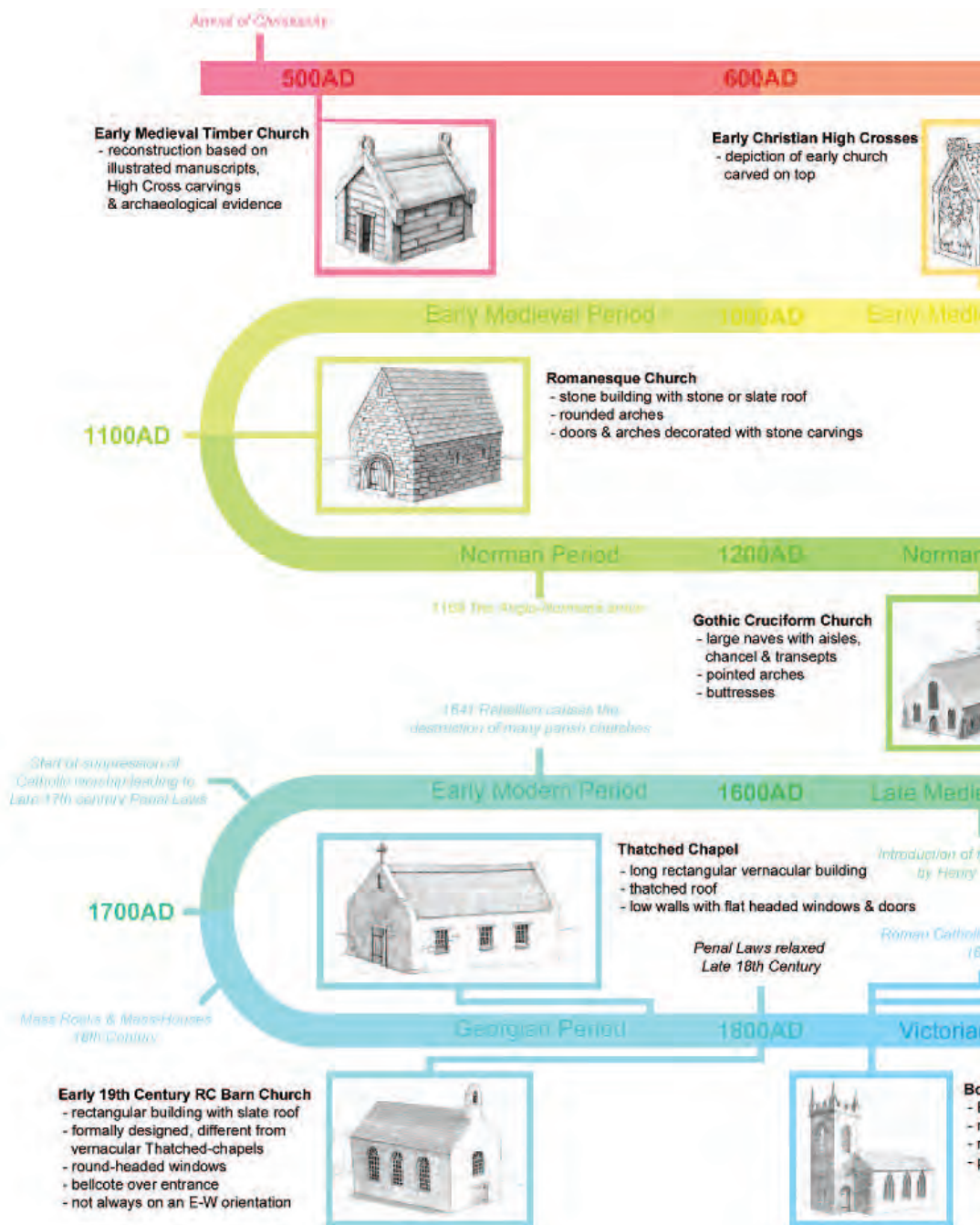
From the most humble of spaces to the most majestic of structures, it is not possible to do justice to three hundred years of Christian church building in one short chapter let alone the nearly two thousand years of church building in one book. Church building continued into the 20th century, and some very fine heritage churches were built such as Church of the Holy Cross Glanworth but these were rather the exception than the rule. There were many varied styles used but the high quality materials and craftsmanship used in the previous century generally proved too costly to reproduce. This, along with the introduction of new versatile building materials and techniques, led church building to take on many new shapes and forms.

In attempting to impart on the reader a small insight into the origin, history and development of our churches; we have presented a snapshot of the buildings, which best represent their respective architectural styles and periods, and highlighted broadly the most discernable features of these structures. It is however recognized that not all church buildings will conform to a standard and will not always fit neatly into a particular architectural style. It must also be remembered that church buildings, particularly those of the 18th and 19th centuries, are still in active use as places of public worship - they are therefore 'living buildings' and many will have changed with the passage of time; some altered historically to cater for growing or declining congregations or to reflect a preference in architectural styles, other changes may have been necessitated for liturgical reasons. Nevertheless, these all form part of the history of our church buildings.

The history, archaeology and architecture of church buildings is the broad focus of this book. The following 30 exemplars have been selected to represent the typical examples of each period of church building in the County and to assist the reader in understanding the overall story. It must, however, be acknowledged that there are many elements and aspects of this building type, as well as the social, cultural and religious dynamics that are not discussed in this book. The omission is deliberate, a testimony to the complex subject matter of churches, all of which could not be encompassed in a short introductory guide book such as this.

Timeline of Church Development

Arrival of Christianity

500AD **600AD**

Early Medieval Timber Church
- reconstruction based on illustrated manuscripts, High Cross carvings & archaeological evidence

Early Christian High Crosses
- depiction of early church carved on top

Early Medieval Period **1000AD** Early Medi

1100AD

Romanesque Church
- stone building with stone or slate roof
- rounded arches
- doors & arches decorated with stone carvings

Norman Period **1200AD** Norman

1169 The Anglo-Normans arrive

Gothic Cruciform Church
- large naves with aisles, chancel & transepts
- pointed arches
- buttresses

1641 Rebellion causes the destruction of many parish churches

Start of suppression of Catholic worship leading to Late 17th century Penal Laws

Early Modern Period **1600AD** Late Medi

Thatched Chapel
- long rectangular vernacular building
- thatched roof
- low walls with flat headed windows & doors

Introduction of t by Henry

Romano Catholi

1700AD

Penal Laws relaxed Late 18th Century

Mass Rocks & Mass-Houses 18th Century

Georgian Period **1800AD** Victoria

Early 19th Century RC Barn Church
- rectangular building with slate roof
- formally designed, different from vernacular Thatched-chapels
- round-headed windows
- bellcote over entrance
- not always on an E-W orientation

Bo
-
-
-
-

700AD   Early Medieval Period

800AD

Early Medieval Church at Labbamolaga
- possibly Cork's earliest surviving stone church

900AD   Early Medieval Period

Viking Raids

Early Medieval Stone Church
- similar size & shape to timber churches
- replicates features like corner posts, as antae & rectangular door and finials in stone

Black Death 1348

Start of Gaelic Revival Late 14th Century

1300AD   Late Medieval Period

1400AD

Late Medieval Parish Church
- door moved to south wall
- use of ogee-headed windows

Start of Tudor Conquest of Ireland 1495

1500AD   Late Medieval Period

the Reformation (VII – 1541)

le Emancipation 829

Early 19th Century RC T-shaped Church
- transepts added top allow more room & better view of altar for congregation
- pointed windows, like medieval Gothic style
- bellcote over the entrance

1900AD

Board of First Fruits Churches
- Early 19th Century Church of Ireland
- neo-Gothic style
- rectangular nave, chancel, with tower at west
- pointed arches, buttresses, pinnacles and spires

Late 19th Century RC Church
- neo-Gothic style with pointed arches
- rectangular with side aisles
- monumental in large towns with spires
- smaller in other areas with bellcote over e

1 - St Berrihert's Church - Tullylease
2 - St Abban 's Church - Coole
3 - St Molaga's Shrine - Labbamologa
4 - St Molaga's Church - Agahacross
5 - St Mary's Collegiate Church Col - Youghal
6 - St Colman's Cathedral Col - Cloyne
7 - Church of the Oaks - Kildorrey
8 - Ballynacarriga Castle Chapel
9 - Augustinian Priory of St Mary - Bridgetown
10 - Franciscan Friary of St Cyra - Kilcrea
11 - St Gobnait's Church - Ballyvourney
12 - St Caithighearn's Church - Kilcatherine
13 - Robert Tynte's Church - Kilcredan
14 - Medeival Parish Church of Ballintemple - Churchtown
15 - Former Christ Church Col - Bandon
16 - Ruined Church - Caherbirrane
17 - Church of the Immaculate Conception RC - Shanagarry
18 - St Fachtna's Col Cathedral - Rosscarbery
19 - St Anne's Col - Castlemartyr
20 - St Patrick's RC - Dunmanway
21 - St Luke's Col - Douglas
22 - St John the Baptist RC - Kinsale
23 - Christ Church Col - Fermoy
24 - Church of the Ascension Col - Timoleague
25 - Church of the Holy Cross RC - Charleville
26 - Church of the Nativity of the BVM RC - Ballyhooly
27 - Methodist Meeting Hall - Bandon
28 - Former Presbyterian Church - Clonakilty
29 - Convent of Mercy - Bantry
30 - St Colman's Cathedral (RC) - Cobh

Urban Area

Exemplar Number

20km
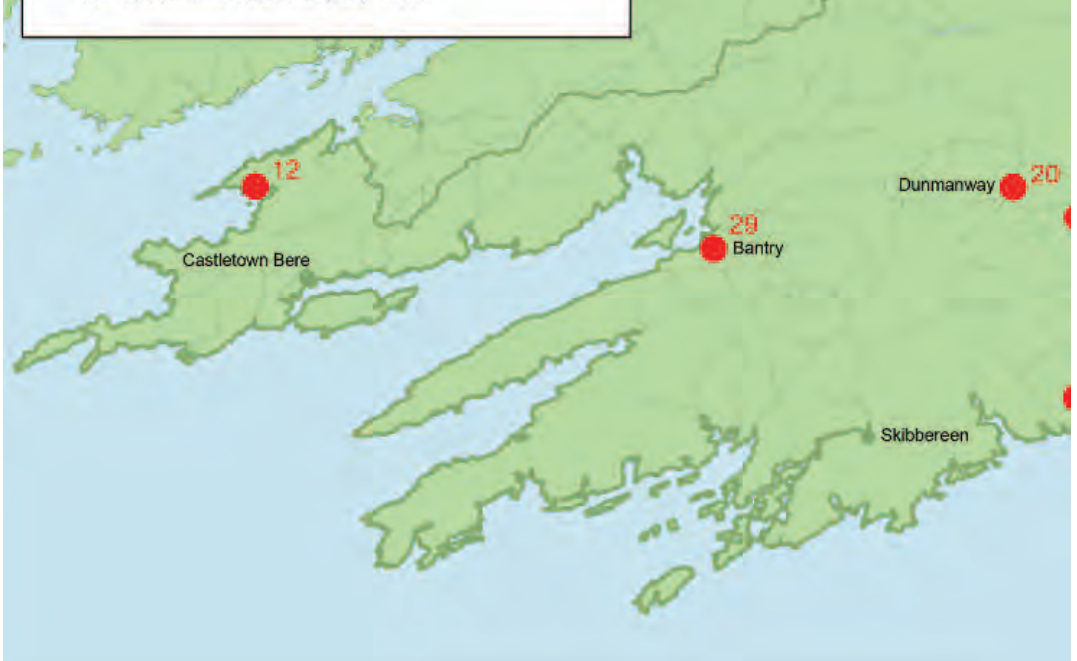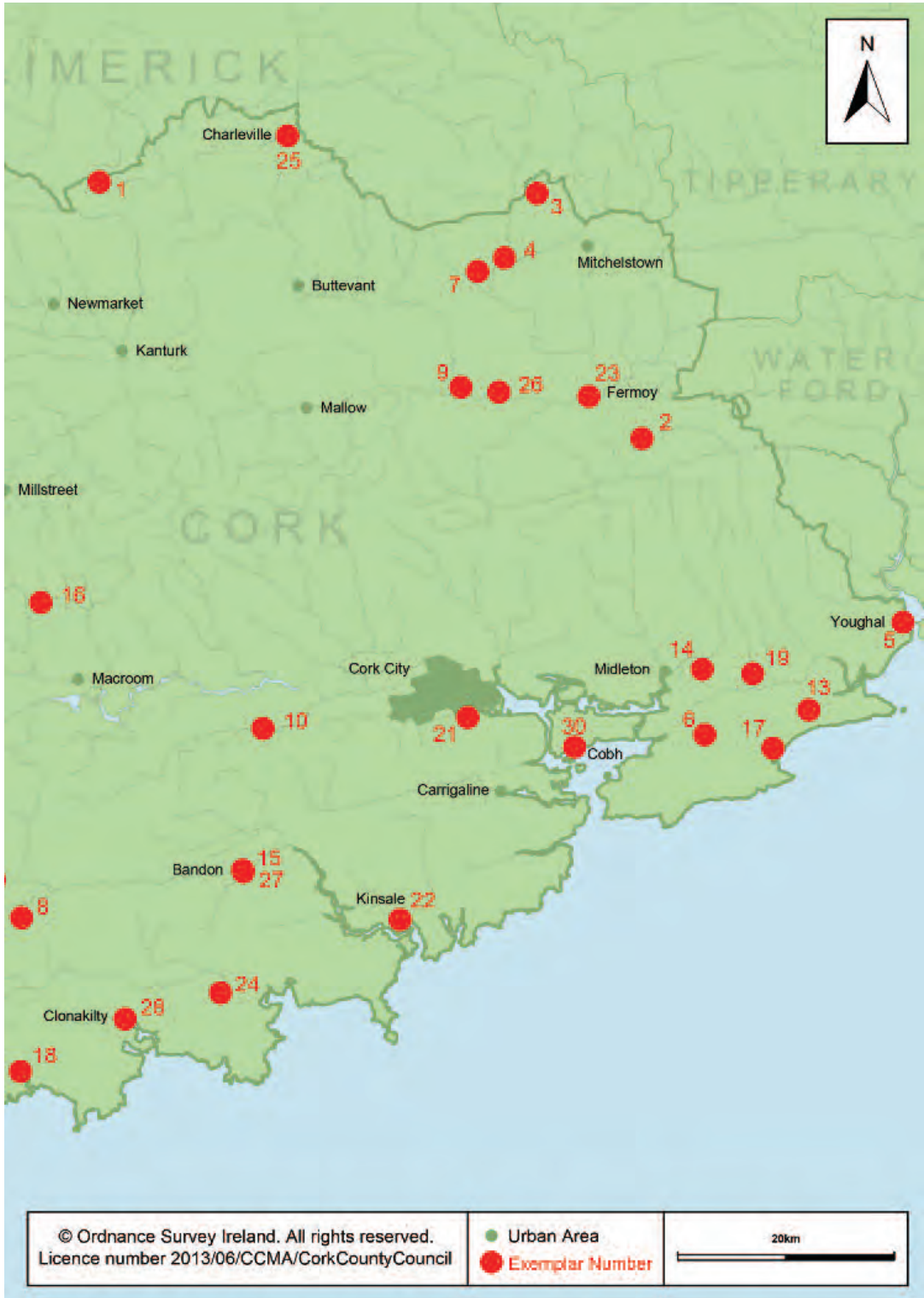
1. An Early Christian Monastery

TULLYLEASE, CHARLEVILLE

Tradition holds that an Anglo-Saxon missionary named Berrihert founded an early Christian monastery on the site where the ruined medieval parish church of Tullylease and graveyard now stand. This impressive church contains wall fabric and features that cover all periods of medieval stone church building in Ireland. It also houses a nationally important collection of medieval graveslabs and other inscribed stones including Berrihert's grave marker, described as one of the finest Early Christian decorated cross slabs in Ireland. Tullylease is in the care of the Office of Public Works and the graveyard is maintained by Cork County Council.

Berrihert was sent to Ireland after the Synod of Whitby of 664 AD, to introduce reforms to the Gaelic Church, following decisions made to follow the rules and religious observations of the Church in Britain and the Continent. Tullylease or Tulach Leis (Hill of the Huts) was known at the time to be one of the last druidic strongholds in Ireland. In folklore, it is said that the Saint entered a hut with a druid, which was then set alight; he emerged unscathed while the druid perished. This powerful demonstration led to the conversion of the populace of Tullylease (pers. comm. James Buckley).

Early monasteries in Cork, such as Tullylease, appear in Ireland from the 6th century onwards. The early monasteries were enclosed by large circular or oval shaped earthen embankments, for protection and to define the religious space, called a *vallum*. These ecclesiastical enclosures contained the monastery with a church at its centre surrounded by an informal pattern of other monastic buildings. These buildings ranged from dwelling houses to farm buildings, mills to workshops. In the workshop the holy manuscripts were copied and objects were made for the daily liturgical requirements.

The buildings, which were probably of timber, have long since disappeared but the church site continued to be used over generations and the graveyard is still in use to this day. The Vallum can sometimes be found fossilised in surrounding field boundaries or as visible earthworks in the ground. Dr. Daphne Pochin Mould's aerial photograph has confirmed the presence of the ecclesiastical enclosure at Tullylease, with the church and graveyard just south of the centre of an oval-shaped pair of concentric banks and ditches, spanning roughly 310m east to west and 210m north to south. There are also references in the annals to associated settlements outside ecclesiastical enclosures.

The stone church at Tullylease is a replacement of Berrihert's original 7th century timber church. While we have no evidence for the timber church at this site, various historical sources and features in later stone churches provide a good guide as to what it may have looked like. Based on this evidence the church would have been a small timber rectangular structure built on an east-west orientation, with timber posts at the corners and walls of

Did you know...

Saint Berrihert arrived in Ireland in 664 AD, with his brother Saint Gerald of Mayo, to bring about reform and change in the Irish monastic system of the late seventh century. The Synod of Whitby decided that the Roman, as opposed to the Celtic/Irish monastic custom, would now be followed. On the ceremonial and liturgical front it meant that the calculation of the date of Easter was changed. And on the bodily front, it meant the adoption of the Roman way of wearing the tonsure, the practice of monk's shaving the hair on the scalp as a sign of devotion. The traditional Celtic way was for shaving the head and forehead from ear to ear. The Roman tradition was to shave the top of the head, something that was only abandoned by Papal Order in 1972!

either turf, clay based wattle and daub or timber planks. It would have had pointed gables with either a thatched or timber shingled roof. The roof timbers would have projected beyond the walls to throw rainwater and the tops of the gables were probably tied together with a carved finial, often decorated. The door, which was rectangular, with straight sides and a flat timber lintel, was placed in the west gable. These churches were small, as they generally only needed to accommodate the priest and a few attendants, with the congregation standing outside. It is likely that the timber church, or a succession of them, stood here until the stone church was first built in the 12th century.

The surviving rectangular church has two building phases. The nave, is late Romanesque in style and dates to the early 13th century. The smaller chancel to the east is 15th /16th century in date,

as indicated by the ogee-headed limestone window in the east gable. However, the chancel also contains a round headed Romanesque doorway and window that were relocated from the nave.

Inside the church is a number of inscribed cross-slabs and gravestones including St Berrihert's carved grave marker, which is one of Cork's finest hidden treasurers. The slab measurers 0.95m x 0.63m and on it is carved by a large Greek cross decorated with bold diagonal fret works with central boss surrounded by wreath of interlace, the outer corners and shaft, and decorated spirals. The slab is inscribed with a prayer 'X/P Quicumquae hunc titulu legerit orat pro Berechtuine' ... Christ Whoever will have read this inscription let him pray for Berechtuine.

Around the graveyard other features, which are often found on early monastic sites, are evident including two holy wells, one attributed to Saint Benjamin (a corruption of Berrihert), the other to Saint Mary, and two of the curious bullauns - hollowed-out stones of unknown purpose.

One of the many fragments of an Early Medieval grave slab at Tullylease, showing a crucifixion figure and a floral motif.

Aerial photograph showing the Vallum or outer ecclesiastical enclosure at Tullylease.

2. Coole Smaller Church

COOLE UPPER

The remains of the smaller stone church at Coole, near Castlelyons, is one of only eight known pre-Romanesque monastic buildings in County Cork (Ó Carragáin 2010). A National Monument in the care of the Office of Public Works, it is located in low pasture that was part of the demesne lands surrounding Coole House. It is within 200m of another, larger medieval stone church of the same name, to the northeast, with a Holy well in between. Both churches are located on the site of an early monastery, dating from the early 7th century. The foundation saint associated with Coole is Saint Abán, who came from Wexford and is linked with a number of other monasteries, including Ballyvourney and Kilcrumper in County Cork (Ó Rian 2011).

Early monasteries of the 7th century, such as Coole, would have had a well-developed layout to service a monastic way of life. A monastery is where a community of men or women lived together, devoting their lives to God though the practice of self discipline and prayer. Monastic churches up to the 10th century were constructed of wood, as were the others buildings inside the ecclesiastical enclosure. The monks' huts and communal buildings were located close to the church, to allow easy access to it during the times of the day and night when Mass and prayers were said. Beyond this, farm buildings for tending the monastery's livestock and food storage were

Upstanding gable wall at Coole Church; note the antae on either side.

located within the enclosure, along with small plots for growing crops. Bulk crops such as barley would have been grown outside the enclosure, along with the grazing of animals. A low earth bank to the north of the church may be the remains of Coole's enclosing ditch.

In the larger monasteries other buildings may have contained a scriptorium where religious books were made; schools for education, smithies and workshops for metalworking, infirmaries for the sick and a guest house for visitors. Successful monasteries were political centres, supported by local landowning Gaelic families and much of the power of the Early Church in Ireland was held by them.

It is thought that both stone churches at Coole date from the 11th century. The larger one was altered and added to over time, when it served as the medieval parish church for Coole. Both have an east to west orientation, characteristic of all Christian churches.

Coole church, in common with many of our surviving early monastic churches, is a small rectangular, sandstone structure. The conserved east gable stands to almost its full height.

Did you know...

A reliquary containing a tooth of Saint Patrick was reputedly kept at Coole in the Middle Ages!

Originally it may have had a pronounced point to the gable, like the early timber churches, which the stone ones appear to copy. The surviving side walls stand to an average height of 1m. The north and south walls project for 0.3m beyond the east gable, forming the distinctive features known as antae, which are associated with pre-Romanesque stone churches and also occur in the other Coole church and the nearby parish church at Britway. The west end of the church appears to have been largely rebuilt and there is no evidence of the shape of the original doorway. In common with churches of this type, a lintelled rectangular or trabeate type door would be expected here. The use of antae and the trabeate doors are thought to be imitating the earlier timber churches.

The small, narrow window in the east gable was possibly the only source of natural light for the church. Below the window is a stone altar that local folklore maintains was used as a Mass rock in Penal times.

3. Labbamolaga Church
LABBAMOLAGA MIDDLE

The remains of the *Leaba Molaige* Church can be found immediately adjacent to the ruins of the medieval parish church of Templemolaga, both within the confines of Labbamolaga graveyard, to the northwest of Mitchelstown. This small structure dating from the 9th century is the rarest type of all of the early Christian Churches in Cork; a purposely built shrine chapel to a foundation saint. Freely accessible to the public, the site has been in the care of the Office of Public Works for many years.

Volute of bishop's crozier on Molaga's Grave slab.

The placename of Labbamolaga, from the Irish *Leaba Molaige*, translates to Molaga's bed or resting place and gives a clue as to the function and associations with the small early monastic site on which the two churches and graveyard are situated. Saint Molaga founded an early monastery here, and another at nearby Aghacross, in the 7th century (Ó Rian 2011). Molaga was a member of the local *Uí Chúscraidh* tuath, whose tribal lands centred on the parishes of Templemolaga, Aghacross and Kildorrery. Following the destruction of his church at Labbamolaga, Molaga travelled north to Ulster, then Scotland, and to Wales where he became a disciple of Saint David and then returned to North Cork to fulfill his ministry. The circular layout of the early monastic enclosure or vallum at Labbamolaga is fossilised in the field boundaries beyond the walls of the graveyard.

Interior of Labbamolaga Church, with Saint Molaga's rectangular grave slab against the south wall.

The small rectangular chapel, measuring 4m east to west by 3m north to south, is built of mortared, rubble sandstone. It has two key features of an early, 'Irish Style', pre-Romanesque stone church. The side walls project for 0.7m beyond the east and west gable ends, forming the distinctive antae, associated with stone churches built up to the 11th century (Ó Carragáin 2010). It also has a rectangular, or trabeate style door in its west gable. It is believed that both of these features were used in later stone churches to copy similar characteristics of timber churches from earlier times, a practice known as skeuomorphism. The door to this chapel is unique in Ireland, as it is the only one made of three large, straight slabs of sandstone.

The shrine chapel was built over Molaga's reputed burial spot, several centuries after his death, as part of a very active movement amongst the clerics of the early Church in Ireland to commemorate and promote their foundation saints, known as the 'cult of the relics'. The church contains the badly weathered grave slab of Molaga. The inscribed *volute* on the slab takes the form of a faded spiral with parallel lines running out from it like the staff of a crosier. The *volute* - the bishop's crozier style carving on his graveslab - is clearly visible and would suggest that he was a bishop rather than an abbot, although this is not certain. The grave slab was once propped up on small stones, which, the 19th century antiquarian Windele recorded, allowed pilgrims to crawl underneath seeking relief from their rheumatism and other ailments. Labbamolaga recently featured in a 2015 BBC4 Documentary 'Saints and Sinners".

Did you know...

Approximately 100m southeast of the graveyard are four tall stones in a rectangular formation. The function of these stones is unclear; they may be a Bronze Age (2500 BC – 500 BC) four-poster ritual stone arrangement. If this is the case, they illustrate the continuity that the missionaries of the early Church exploited in establishing Christianity in Ireland, by setting-up at existing places of pagan worship. Alternatively, the stones may be some form of entrance feature associated with the early ecclesiastical enclosure. Folklore attached to them holds that they were four robbers approaching the monastery that were turned to stone!

The four-poster stones.

Bullaun stone in Labbamologa Graveyard.

Cross slab at Labbamolaga.

4. Aghacross

AGHACROSS

The medieval parish church at the centre of Aghacross graveyard, near Mitchelstown, is in the care of Cork County Council. It is a rare Romanesque church, located on the tranquil site of a 7th century monastery, founded by Saint Molaga. As with all of the buildings in an early monastery, the first church at Aghacross was built in timber. The present stone church came later and was built in two phases, as shown by the change of building style and architectural features between the nave and the chancel.

The sandstone nave, the western half of the church, was probably built sometime in the middle of the 12th century, when the Romanesque style of building was in fashion. A relatively short-lived architectural style in Ireland, of approximately 100 years, Romanesque churches were influenced by the rectangular basilica churches of Rome, which had short east apses for the altar and the characteristic rounded arches to the windows and doors. In Ireland the style is typified by small round arch windows and by decorative carved doorways and chancel arches. Its introduction coincided with the 12th Church Reforms, which brought about increased lay involvement in the ceremonies and created a need for longer, bigger churches than those used previously, such as the church at Coole.

The feature to note in the nave, and which helps date Aghacross, is the rebuilt doorway in the west gable. The door is rectangular, with a flat lintelled head. However, the south side is made up of Romanesque style carved stones from an earlier door. These stones, along with other similar fragments uncovered around the graveyard, confirm the 12th century Romanesque date for the nave. It is thought that when the chancel was added to the church, the nave was substantially rebuilt, resulting in alterations to the door.

The limestone built chancel was added in the 15th century/16th centuries; a time when many of the rural parish churches like Aghacross were rebuilt. Further changes in the forms of worship required a separate space for the celebrants and so chancels were added. Ogee-headed windows, here two twin-light examples with square hood-mouldings in the east gable and south wall, are a late Gothic – 15th/16th century development of the lancet window in Irish medieval architecture and good indicators of the date of the chancel. Both

Did you know...

Aghacross Church was described as being in repair in 1615, but may have been damaged during the troubles brought on by the 1641 Rebellion, when many churches were destroyed, and it was recorded as abandoned in 1694!

West door with Romanesque carved stone in south side reveal.

windows served to provide light to the altar at the east end of the chancel. A carved stone head, a little weathered, but believed to represent Saint Molaga, was inserted into the outer face of the gable. Carved heads are a relatively common feature that occur at medieval churches and three carved heads occur at the nearby medieval church at Kildorrery.

The graveyard is probably as old as the earliest church at the site. Grave markers were reserved for only the important people, and it was only come the early 18th century when headstones became commonly used. Christians required sacred ground such as a church yard for burial and the preference was as close to the south side of the church as possible, if not within. There are several burials within Aghacross church, including the Massey Family vault, inserted in front of the east window in 1771. Graveyards were enclosed in the 19th century and here at Aghacross there is an interesting carved stone stile which also served as a resting place for coffins. The church has recently been consolidated and repaired by Cork County Council.

Aghacross has two other notable features of early monasteries – a bullaun stone and a holy well. Located in the chancel, the bullaun is a roughly oval shaped stone with a round hollow in the middle, the purpose of which is not fully understood. The holy well is located on the south side of the graveyard and was visited for the curative properties it had for headache and earache.

The West Gable Wall

5. St. Mary's Collegiate Church

TOWN CENTRE, WEST OF MAIN STREET, YOUGHAL

In use for nearly 800 years, the impressive Collegiate Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, locally known as the Collegiate Church (Church of Ireland), is arguably the finest example of a medieval Gothic church in County Cork. It is possibly the third church on this site, with a local historical tradition that an early monastic church was built here in the mid-5th century by St Declan of Ardmore.

Saint Mary's is the medieval parish church of the historic walled town of Youghal, and the second largest of its type in Ireland. It sits imposingly at the top of Church Street, just west of the town's medieval market place, in a pocket formed by the enclosing Town Wall to the northwest. From its 13th century foundation, Youghal became one of the most prosperous towns in Medieval Ireland, and the building of Saint Mary's in the fashionable Gothic style, through the support of its citizens, reflected the status of this new Anglo-Norman seaport town that had wide-ranging trade contacts across Europe.

The church is multiphase; it is cruciform in plan with a detached bell tower to north and surrounded by a hillside graveyard. Walking around it, the Gothic style layout can easily be seen with a nave and side aisles to west and chancel with transepts to east. The broad west gable has a distinctive mid-13th century, tall triple-lancet window with pointed arches. The window has two robust, simple, vertical mullions forming the lancets and a simple protective hood mounding above, with weathered, carved human heads as stops. The low pointed west door is decorated with two orders to the sides that reduce inwards and the distinctly Irish Gothic style of a roll-and-fillet carved stone hood-moulding above.

View of nave from gallery.

15th century Chancel looking east to the altar and the large curvilinear east window.

[69]

The later, 15th century Gothic chancel is very ornate; the great east window being an excellent example of the style known as curvilinear tracery. It is also a good example of the Gothic builder's use of the buttress, in this case fancy ones that are stepped and set back from the corners of the east gable, giving support to the east wall. The top of the gable is decorated with a row of stones that are carved to imitate foliage. The chancel is also lit by windows in the side walls, arranged in double-lancets and triple-lancets that copy the earlier ones of the north and south transepts. These decorative elements contrast with the semi-military appearance of the battlement parapet wall that occurs above, a contradiction typical of some Irish Late Medieval churches.

This chancel was added by Thomas Fitzgerald, eighth Earl of Desmond, when he founded the nearby College of Youghal in 1464, with Saint Mary's as its collegiate church. This college of singing priests was religious rather than educational, and

West gable of the nave of Saint Mary's Collegiate Church, Youghal.

needed a larger chancel for singing and so a new chancel was built, in place of a smaller, earlier one. Damaged during the Second Desmond Rebellion (1579-83), it remained roofless until repaired in the mid-19th century. An interesting discovery made during the renovations are the small circular holes, to be seen high in the walls above the choir stalls. These housed ceramic vases that amplified the singing, something unique in Ireland.

The nave is aisled and divided into five bays by the pillars supporting the nave arcading, maximising the space available for worship by the townspeople. The robust square, chamfered pillars, with medieval mason's marks, rise to pointed Gothic arches supporting the roof. Personal marks were carved on the dressed stone by the mason's as a quality control mark for their work. The exposed oak timbers of the scissors braced truss roof are original, making this one of the oldest in-situ roofs in Ireland.

A rare 17th century sword rest, of the Mayor and Corporation of Youghal, hangs on a pillar of the south arcade, reinforcing the church's link with the secular urban community who underwrote its upkeep. There are many tombs, grave ledger-stones and wall plaques that commemorate the tradition, popular since medieval times, of burial inside the nave of members of the community, particularly those who could afford to pay for the privilege. Archaeological excavations carried out for Cork County Council in the aisle in 2014 uncovered four hidden burial vaults beneath the floor, including a burial place of the Fitzgeralds of nearby Dromana - a branch family of the Earls of Desmond.

The South transept is dominated by the rare and magnificent burial monument of the successful Elizabethan adventurer Richard Boyle, first Earl of Cork (1560 -1643). Originally endowed as the 13th century chantry chapel of Richard Barrett and Ellis Barry, Boyle built his monument, and a simpler memorial to Barrett and Barry, to associate himself with the founders. With this he was able to add an air of authenticity to his 'new money' pedigree.

6. Saint Colman's Cathedral

CHURCH STREET, CLOYNE

Saint Colman's, Cloyne, is the long-standing cathedral for the the Church of Ireland Diocese of Cloyne. As a cathedral, housing the bishop's throne or *cathedra*, it is the primary or 'mother' church of the diocese. An important, largely 13th century building, it is one of only a few large Gothic churches in Cork. Along with its surrounding graveyard, it is located on the site of the late 6th century monastery of Cloyne's patron, Saint Colman (obit. 604 AD); founded circa 560 AD (pers. comm. Marie Guillot).

A secular settlement grew up around Colman's monastery, leading to the development of the historic town of Cloyne and the start of 1,400 years of community and Christian worship on this site, which remains unbroken to this day.

A diocese is an administrative district, consisting of parishes supervised by a bishop. Cloyne long regarded itself as the seat of the diocese prior to the twelfth century Church Reforms in Ireland. The reforms saw the re-establishment of a formal diocesan structure, aligned directly to the Papacy in Rome, and restricted the power of the early monasteries, which in Early Christian Ireland had developed into powerful quasi-independent centres of church administration. Paul MacCotter (2013) notes that the diocese was certainly in existence – with its present boundaries – "by 1148 at the latest" (MacCotter, 2013, p. 41).

Cloyne was united with the Diocese of Cork for most of the 15th to 17th centuries. Following the introduction of the Reformation to Ireland by Henry VIII, it became part of the Protestant Church. It became a Church of Ireland bishopric in 1678 and remained so until 1835 when it was again united with Cork.

View of Nave from southeast corner of side aisle.

Exterior view of South Transept, showing blocked 13th century windows.

A church in use for over 700 years, Cloyne has undergone extensive alterations and repairs over time, reflecting changes in architectural styles and continuing investment by the clergy and congregation. The 13th century, cruciform church with nave, choir and transepts to north and south is built in a Gothic style and remains at the core of the cathedral today. It probably stands on, or close to, the earlier timber or stone church(es) on this site, as the entrance to the 9th/10th century round tower of the early monastery faces the west door, the traditional way that these towers were orientated.

The south transept contains the best identifiable fabric of the original cathedral. The south window consists of five graduated lancets, with a hood moulding and decorated stop labels, which is cut from imported Dundry stone with delicate carved foliage to the capitals and filleted shafts on the inside. The window was blocked up sometime in the past. This level of fine early Irish Gothic architectural

North transept of Cloyne Cathedral with Berkeley Memorial. Image courtesy of Marie Guillot .

detail suggests that the cathedral in its original form was, along with the similar sized urban medieval churches in nearby Youghal and Kinsale, a very impressive building that was up to date with the architectural trends of the day. Substantial works were made to the choir in the 17th century, and to the remainder of the building throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, ironically in an attempt to make the building more Gothic, obscuring many of the decorative and architectural features of the early cathedral. However, the later alterations are interesting in their own right with some notable examples of nineteenth century Gothic Revival windows.

The Cathedral interior at the turn of the 20th century. Image courtesy of the National Library of Ireland L_ROY_08831.

The aisled nave, with its plain arcade and plaster walls is an impressive space, built large to maximise the space available for worship by the congregation, but worship is now confied to the choir. The chancel arch that once divided the nave from the choir was removed, when the 'Great Arch' was taken down in 1774-76 (Caulfield 1882). Some interesting memorials occur inside including some medieval grave slabs and the Tomb of Fitzgeralds, in addition to the seneschals of Imokilly, dated 1610 with two fragments of kneeling figures.

The main west door to Cloyne Catherdral - a classical 19th century timber door and surround. Image courtesy of Marie Guillot.

7. Kildorrery

NORTH CORK

Standing at the centre of an oval graveyard in the village of Kildorrery is the ruin of a once beautifully decorated medieval parish church. Hidden by ivy for many years, recent conservation works by Cork County Council have stabilised the ruin which has a fascinating story to tell. Reused fragments of finely carved stones in the church and graveyard are a testimony to the rich and extensive architectural heritage for this unassuming church.

Kildorrery takes its name from the anglicisation of *Cill Dairbhre* – 'church of the oaks'; the place name suggests a possible Early Christian timber church on the site. A stone church was first recorded here in the 1291 Papal taxation lists, and the building was reported as 'deserted' in 1591; 'in repair' in 1617 and 'out of repair' after the 1641 Rebellion (Brady 1863).

The church is medieval in date with evidence of at least two phases of building. The church has a nave, with an added chancel to the east. The west gable end is missing, but most of the north and south walls remain. It is built of rubble red

Carved stone head inserted over the door in the south wall.

sandstone bonded with lime mortar. There is a number of interesting decorative cut stones reused in the internal walls, with some reused as grave markers in the surrounding grave yard.

These carved stones are instrumental in dating the church and its building sequence. The carved roll-mouldings reused around a wall niche in the north wall of the chancel and the foliage-decorated corbel that is in situ, which would have supported the chancel arch, are both of 13th century style and suggest that the nave and chancel are of that date. These features are found in churches of Hiberno-Romanesque architecture.

The Romanesque style began to appear in Ireland in the early 12th century. Apart from the use of round arches, one of the most distinguishing features of the style is the application of decoration to the various openings, creating a sacred entrance and space within. Here, at Kildorrery we see the fragmentary remains of these decorative features and given the decorative nature, their retention is not surprising. A distinctive Irish interpretation of the Romanesque style also emerged, known as the 'School of the West', which was a transitional

The 15th/16th century door inserted in the south wall of the nave with stone carved head above. The low pointed door with its finely dressed limestone surround stands out against the red sandstone of the earlier wall of the nave.

style between Romanesque and Gothic. This stlye flourished west of the Shannon between 1200 and 1235 AD. A recent study by Eamon Cotter (2012) suggests that some of the elaborately carved stones are comparable to the School of the West style, therefore extending the territory into the North Cork.

There are two interesting carved heads in the church, one inserted over the door and the other inside (a third fragment was found in rubble during the conservation works). Carved heads were used in Hiberno-Romanesque architecture and these may well belong to this period, however, their style and shape suggest they are more contemporary with the later 15th /16th century church.
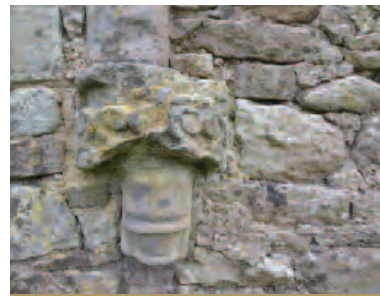
This carved stone capital in the interior of the church may have supported the chancel arch.

In the 15th/16th century the church was rearranged, as evident with the presence of an inserted door and holy water stoup in the south wall of the nave. It is typical of the entrance door to late medieval parish churches, with a pointed arch and cut limestone surround and can clearly be dated to the 15th/16th century. Such changes became commonplace when the west ends of the parish churches were adapted as residences for the priest in the later middle ages.

The decorative stones at Kildorrery tell the story of this church in terms of its beauty, dating and importance. The use of such elaborately carved features is usually associated with larger cathedrals and monastic or urban churches, rather than a small rural parish church. It must have had a wealthy patron.

8. A Private Chapel at Ballynacarriga Castle

BALLYNACARRIGA, DUNMANWAY

Perhaps one of the most intriguing places of Christian worship in County Cork is Ballynacarriga Castle near Dunmanway. A unique and notable series of carvings occur in the window embrasures on the first and third floor level of the Tower house. The third floor window in the north wall has elaborate panels of limestone carvings depicting biblical scenes. These carvings strongly suggest that this area once formed part of a chapel within the castle.

Perched on a rocky outcrop, Ballynacarriga is an imposing tower house castle, associated with the Muirhily or Hurley family, but may have been built by the MacCarthys in the 15th century (Hurley 1906). Tower houses were the defensive residences of the landed families in the late medieval period. Over 3,000 were built by Gaelic Lords and Old English alike, in rural and urban locations throughout the Country.

Detail of the images and symbols of the Crucifixion and Instruments of the Passion on third floor.

The carvings in the west window bear images and symbols of the Crucifixion and Instruments of the Passion. In the east are three figures – that of Christ on the Cross, flanked by Saint John and the Blessed Virgin Mary. Plant motifs, including oak leaves that are a symbol of strength, faith and endurance, and palm leaves to represent the victory of Jesus over death through resurrection, are also used as decoration.

The carvings at Ballynacarriga were created for Randal Ó Murthuily and his wife Catherine O Cullane, to commemorate their marriage (Hurley 1906). Their initials R.M.C.C. are carved below a date stone of 1585, commemorating the construction of the castle by the couple.

The survival of these elaborate carvings is important as it demonstrates the type of decoration that must have been typical of tower house interiors, though long gone, as usually carved in wood or painted onto plastered walls.

Private chapels were important symbolic spaces in the homes of nobility and landed families since the 12th century (Moss 2014) and the carvings demonstrate the desire of Randal and Catherine to show the strength of their faith and its importance in a social context.

Local folklore tells that, even though the castle was a ruin, its secluded chapel was used for the celebration of Mass during the Penal Laws and was replaced when the the nearby Saint Joseph's Church was built in 1815.

Third floor level.

Sketch of carvings over third floor window.

9. Augustinian Priory
BRIDGETOWN

Beautifully situated beside the River Blackwater near Castletownroche is the medieval monastery of the Augustinian Canons Regular (the Black Canons) at Bridgetown. It is a different type of monastery from the Early Christian examples when the buildings were of timber (except for the church) and spread-out inside a large enclosure. Bridgetown is Cork's finest example of a 13th century monastery built on a claustral plan where all the buildings are of stone and grouped around a central open space or garth.

An important religious monument, it is one of around ten later monastic houses in Cork that have surviving upstanding remains. It has been in the care of Cork County Council since 1992 who has erected a number of informative interpretative signs. It is now one of the most attractive historic sites to visit in the North Cork area.

The two substantial Augustinian monasteries in Cork, at Bridgetown and Ballybeg, just south of Buttevant, were sponsored by Anglo-Normans lords. Prior to the Anglo-Norman arrival, two small religious houses following the Augustinian rule had developed locally, at Gilabbey in Cork City and Tullylease, west of Charleville. Augustinian Canon Regular were a community of priests who, following the Rule of St Augustine, and distinct from the other contemplative monks, engaged in public ministry of liturgy and sacrements.

Bridgetown Priory was endowed between 1202 and 1216 by Alexander fitz Hugh, an Anglo-Norman who arrived in Ireland in the 1170s. He was granted the tenure of the eastern part of the cantred (an Anglo-Norman subdivision of a county) of *Fir Maighe* (Fermoy) by his

Nave and chancel arch.

Roche niche tomb with upside down shield with carved fish, the emblem of the Roche family.

feudal overlord Raymond le Gros and in 1180 Alexander and his brother gave the site at Bridgetown to the Augustinian priory of Saint Thomas the Martyr of Dublin. Devoted to Saint Mary of the Bridge, the building of Bridgetown took another few years and was established with the help of Augustinian canons from the monasteries at Saint Thomas's and Saint's Peter & Paul in Newtown-Trim (O'Keeffe 1999). The medieval history of Bridgetown is synonymous with the Anglo-Norman Roche family, who lived in nearby Castletownroche.

The claustral plan of the later monasteries developed in Europe in the 9th century and first appeared in Ireland in the mid-12th century Cistercian monastery of Mellifont. This arrangement, pioneered by the Cistercians, generally places the monastic church on the north side of a square cloister or courtyard, with other buildings arranged on the three sides. Usually to the east was a two storey building, with the chapter house on the

Cloister, from northeast corner looking to the refectory and kitchen range to south.

ground floor and the dormitory overhead. The chapter house was the second most important building in the monastery as it was used for daily assembly to listen to a Chapter of the Rule's of the Order, in this case the Rule of St Augustine. Given the dedication to prayer in the monastery at various times during the day and night, placing the dormitory closest to the chancel was important. Meals were taken in the refectory or dining hall on the south side of the cloister. The west side or range contained storage space and additional accommodation. Beyond the cloister were ancillary buildings, separate lodgings for the head of the monastery, gardens and orchards, all enclosed by a precinct wall.

Claustral Plan of Bridgetown Abbey.

Built of locally quarried stone, Bridgetown follows this general claustral arrangement. The large church, consisting of a nave and separate choir or chancel, is on the north side. The nave is accessed from outside through a Gothic style segmental-arched door in the north wall. Of the two doors in the south wall; the eastern one, now blocked-up, was the original 'processional' doorway; the formal entrance for the monks from the cloister. The three tall windows in the east gable of the choir, behind the high altar, are typically 13th century in date and a late medieval window is inserted in the central one. A door in the south leads to the east range, above which was the canons dormitory, and would have been the shortest route to the church for 'matins', the night-time prayers of the monastery.

The monastery is described in the 15th century as having a 'church with belfry, dormitory, hall, buttery, kitchen, cloister and cellar with ... other chambers' as well as a water mill and cemetery' (White 1943). The monastery was surrendered to Sir Henry Sidney in 1576-7 (Gwynn & Hadcock 1988) and abandoned shortly afterwards.

A rare example of a 13th century grave slab with a delicately carved cross.

10. Franciscan Friary

ABBEY ROAD, KILCREA

A short distance from Ovens is the magnificent remains of the 15th century Franciscan friary of Kilcrea. Part of the later blossoming of Gothic church building in the 15th and 16th centuries, Kilcrea, is a striking monument in the Cork landscape. Along with impressive ruins at Timoleague and Sherkin Island, and less substantial remains at Buttevant, Kilcrea presents a picturesque view of the upstanding built heritage of one of the powerhouses of medieval Christian worship in Cork: the Franciscans (or Grey Friars) who first arrived in Ireland, at Youghal, in 1224 AD.

Following the teachings of Saint Francis of Assisi, the friars had a simple monastic Rule or way of life, which embraced preaching of repentance and poverty as a way to salvation. St. Francis's Order was approved by Pope Innocent III in 1210 and in 1224 AD St. Francis was the first documented person to have received the stigmata (Cross, 2005). Like most of our historic abbeys, Kilcrea is in the care of the OPW who manage and maintain these beautiful historic buildings for the public to visit.

Kilcrea was founded in 1465 by the Gaelic chieftain *Cormac Láidir MacCarthaigh*, Lord of Muskerry, as a new monastery for the Franciscan Observant friars (Maher 1999). The Observant's were part of a reform movement, who embraced with renewed vigor the principles of Saint Francis. The movement appealed to a new sense of Gaelic reform in Ireland, and Cormac's patronage of Kilcrea was an expression of the renewed Gaelic confidence that developed from the late 14th century onwards.

The monastic remains at Kilcrea were built on an unoccupied site, around the central cloister. In an arrangement different to the thirteenth century Augustinian priory at Bridgetown, the

Nave of church, pointed arcading opening to the southern aisle.

Chancel of church looking east.

church is located on the south side, with the array of monastic buildings on the other sides. Almost all of the walls survive to their original height. Beyond the friary, monastic farmlands, known as granges, were worked to produce food for the monastery. The Grange as a place name still survives in many places near the monasteries. Here, Grange farm at Ovens some distance to east, indicates the extent of the Franciscan farmland.

Kilcrea is typical of the Franciscan Observant architectural style of the 15th century, with a long and narrow church, divided into a chancel and nave at the point where the four-storey tall, slender bell tower rises. A large aisled transept is located to the south of the nave; the aisle continues along the nave to form an enlarged L-shape. The addition of the south transept is a feature of these friaries (O'Keeffe 2000), as the reformed Observant friars were heavily involved in ministering and preaching to growing lay congregations.

Cloister from northwest with church forming southern range.

The arcade of Gothic style pointed arches allowed physical movement around the nave and transept, but also ensured that the congregation could hear and see the preacher. The preacher at Kilcrea may have spoken in Irish from a pulpit incorporated into a timber screen that divided the nave from the chancel. In the chancel, mass was conducted in Latin, and purposely hidden from the gaze of the laity by the screen. Above the screen was the rood beam or loft, which supported the rood or principal crucifix of the monastery. Kilcrea's crucifix was very impressive, with gold and silver decorated images of the four evangelists – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, on its arms (Ó Clabaigh 2012).

The regulated daily worship of the friars at Kilcrea took place in the chancel. Formal entry was from the cloister through a door between the piers of the tower, hidden behind the rood screen. The altar was located at the east end of the chancel, lit by the impressive east window, unfortunately the tracery has since been removed. To the west of this, in the body of the chancel, the tiered stalls in which the friars prayed and sang were arranged along the walls, facing each other in rows, in a manner known as antiphonal.

Holy water stoup inside processional door from cloister to church.

Distinctive 15th century double ogee-headed window, in south transept.

View of Kilcrea Friary from beneath the adjacent bridge circa 1900 AD. Image courtesy of National Library of Ireland L_CAB_07499.

11. St Gobnait's Church

BALLYVOURNEY

Saint Gobnait's, the medieval parish church for Ballyvourney known as Teampall Ghobnatán, stands at the centre of an incredibly rich religious complex. The entire site is a shrine to Gobnait and the focus of a devout folk pilgrimage tradition that continues today across North and Mid Cork. The pilgrimage involves an established set of Rounds or prayer points around the church, the surrounding graveyard and other features associated with the Early Christian monastery that existed here. Devotion to the 6th century patron saint of beekeepers and metal workers culminates in patterns held on the saint's holy day - February 11th.

Saint Gobnait's Grave.

According to tradition, Gobnait's brother Saint Abán, named her Abbess of a nunnery of regular canonesses in Ballyvourney (Smith, 1815, p. 185). Another tradition holds that Gobnait was originally from County Clare, and that an angel appeared to her, stating that the place of her resurrection, would be the very place where she would find nine white deer grazing – that place, as local folklore has it – was St. Gobnet's Wood, Ballyvourney. Saint Gobnait became an extremely important figure in Early Christian Ireland and is still revered today. A small medieval timber statute of her is held in the Roman Catholic Church in Ballyvourney and comes out every year on her pattern day where she is measured with the pilgrims ribbon as part of the religious festival.

Saint Gobnait's complex in Ballyvourney is one of great interest and possesses a notable built history, not least the church. The church is a later medieval building, although two carved decorations of 12th century style hint at an earlier stone church on the site. It stands on the eastern side of the graveyard and consists of a rectangular nave with a chancel to the east. The pointed arch door is in the south wall of the nave and dates this part of the church to the 15th/16th century. Inside, the space is lit by simple narrow lancet windows. Towards the eastern end of the north wall a shallow recess, covered by a segmental arch, may once have contained a small altar tomb. A wall cupboard in the opposite wall may have been an aumbry, for storing communion chalices. A blunted, pointed chancel arch, formed with simply shaped rubble stones to act as voussoirs or arch stones, divides the nave from the chancel. The chancel is lit by narrow windows in the south and eastern walls. A low wall outside the west gable of the church suggests that there may have been a tower here.

Above the chancel arch is a small, weathered, carved stone human head, known locally as *'an gadaidhe dubh'*. A quoin or corner stone in the northwest corner of the nave has a carved cross set in a square frame. Both features may have come from a 12th century Romanesque church on this site, as they are typical of a church of that time. Another, later and perhaps rude decoration is the sheela-na-gig in the ogee-headed window in the south wall of the nave. Sheela-na-gig is an Anglicised version of *'Síle na gcíoch'* or 'Sile of the breasts'.

Archaeological excavations in the 1950s beneath the circular low walled structure west of the graveyard, known as Gobnait's House, found evidence of foundations for earlier timber buildings here (O'Kelly, 1952). Outside the house a small well, also found during the excavation, has become part of the pilgrimage Rounds.

Within the graveyard, to the west of the church, is a location known as Gobnait's Grave. This is part of the Rounds and has two of the curious bullaun stones. These are stones with a hollow carved in the surface and are associated with early monastic sites. There are many stones with inscribed crosses left by pilgrims, to be found throughout the site, while devotion continues outside the graveyard at Saint Gobnait's Well to the south. Adjacent to the well is a 'Wish Tree' where votive offerings to Gobnait are also made.

A fine example of an early 19th century Church of Ireland church stands near the entrance to the graveyard, thankfully respecting the earlier church.

Did you know...

There is a rich folkloric history surrounding the saint, with stories of battles, saving cattle, political intrigue and miraculous cures all recorded in the early 20th century. The saint's symbol is the beehive because Gobnait is said to have set bees to protect cattle from being rustled during a raid. Look out for a small square niche in the west wall of the church that holds a round stone believed to be the remains of Gobnait's magical stone bowl. When a neighbouring chief tried to build a castle too close to the monastic enclosure, the saint went out every night and threw her bowl at the portion of the wall that had been built, making it fall down instantly. The chief eventually gave up. Touching the bowl three times now forms part of the pattern.

The interior church.

Holy Well outside Gobnait's House.

12. Kilcatherine Church

EYERIES ON THE BEARA PENINSULA

Set in a beautiful location on the far west coast of Cork, near the end of the Beara Peninsula, stand the remains of the former medieval parish church of Kilcatherine. It overlooks Coulagh Bay, sitting in the middle of an ancient graveyard that marks the location of an early monastery site. Named 'Cill-Chaitighearn' or 'Caitighearn's church', after its founder Saint Caithighearn, it gave its name to the parish of Kilcatherine. It is in a spectacular setting, located on a sun-catching south facing slope overlooking the wild Atlantic sea.

It was originally founded as a nunnery rather than a monastery and by the end of the 12th century 'Cill-Chaitighearn' was described as one of the parish churches west of Bantry in the correspondence of Pope Innocent III (Pontificate 1198 – 1216 AD). The parish was united with that of Killaconenagh in 1672 and the church went out of use.

With its dramatic setting, this small rectangular, single-roomed building, built with now weathered limestone, is an intriguing example of the type of rural parish churches built in

Stone head, Kilcatherine Church.

Inner face of the east window at Kilcatherine.

Early Christian Stone Cross in graveyard.

Cork during the late medieval period. Built along the traditional east to west orientation, its rubblestone walls survive all round, apart from the north side. There are four windows in the church. One small lancet sits high in the west gable. There are two larger, flat headed lancets flanking the altar at the east end of the north and south wall. There is a narrow central east window. It is round-headed, carved from sandstone, and sits in an arched embrasure with deep splayed side walls. Given the rounded shape of the window carved from sandstone, it may very well date to an earlier church. There are two internal wall recesses at the eastern end of the south wall. One, a piscina for washing the communion plate, set in a pointed-arched opening, the other, an aumbry or cupboard, for keeping the communion service. The blunt pointed arch door in the centre of the south wall is typical of the period.

One of the most intriguing features at Kilcatherine is the carved human head, positioned above the inserted door. Human heads were often a feature of medieval churches, when it is thought they were used to ward off evil. The Kilcatherine head is carved with a wide round face and simplistic features, with a long fluted neck. The head is probably older than the present church and may well have been part of an earlier church at the site, retained when the present structure was built.

The surrounding graveyard is as ancient as the church itself, with the ground level noticeably higher than the surrounding land due to successive burials over time. The west boundary wall has a noticeable curve, perhaps fossilising some of the original monastery enclosure. Southeast of the church stands an early stone cross, probably circa 9th century in date.

13. Kilcredan Anglican Parish Church

KILCREDAN, CASTLEMARTYR

Standing in the corner of a roughly rectangular graveyard, the ruin of Kilcredan church casts a lonely shadow on the hillside. Located on the site of the ancient rural parish church of Kilcredan, not far from Castlemartyr, it was purpose-built by Sir Robert Tynte as an Anglican parish church in 1636.

Kilcredan church was one of the few churches that we know of built in the 17th century in Cork, all of which were Anglican, such as Christ Church in Bandon **(Exemplar 15)** and Saint Fachtna's Cathedral **(Exemplar 18)** in Rosscarbery. Tynte was an Adventurer who arrived in Ireland in the late 16th century as part of the group of Elizabethan soldiers and administrators sent to Ireland after the fall of the Earls of Desmond, to inforce English Royal control in Munster. He represented the New English and was a contemporary of Sir Walter Raleigh and Richard Boyle, First Earl of Cork, and went on to become a significant landowner based in nearby Ballycrenane Castle, and served as the Sheriff of Cork.

Towards the end of his life Tynte felt the need for a suitable burial place for himself and his family. To achieve this, he built the new church at Kilcredan, replacing the old medieval parish church that was in ruins. His church was simple, almost bare in style, without any evidence of statues; niches, rood screens or elaborate altars, of the earlier medieval churches. The church is a hall-like rectangular building, with gables to the east and west and built with thick limestone rubble walls with a dressed limestone cornice and a tall bellcote built of red brick over the west end. The use of brick for building comes into use from the 17th century onwards, as shown here in the bellcote and the window reveals.

The round-arched doorway is unusually set in the centre of the north wall protected by a small porch; the door was reduced in size with the insertion of a lintelled door. There are tall pointed-arch windows throughout: three in the southern wall, one in the west end of the north wall and a blocked window in the west gable. The slightly larger east window gave light to the communion table that replaced the traditional altar at the east

Remains of Tynte memorial.

Remains of Harris memorial.

end of the church. The windows were more common in the south side, taking advantage of increased heat and light and consequently windows on the northern walls were less common. This was an important consideration, as the Anglican congregation spent time sitting listening to the preacher. The southern elevation is also the side that the church is most visible from, being set in the north of the graveyard. A small vestry on the north side gives access to the east end of the church.

The church contains Sir Robert's memorial and that of his first wife's father Sir Edward Harris. Both are typical of tombs erected in the 1600s, and share some similarities with the more famous Boyle monument in St. Mary's of Youghal. Robert intended this marble memorial to be highly visible, and put it next to the communion table. There is a considerable amount of finely carved incised work in carved effigies, showing him lying in full armour on a sarcophagus, and, at either end, his first and second wives in a praying posture. Sir Edward Harris's smaller tomb set in the opposite wall also incorporates two kneeling figures.

With a dwindling congregation, this church was closed for worship circa 1926, and shortly thereafter, the Church authorities sold the timbers of the floor, the windows and the roof to a local builder (Lee, 1926). This unfortunate action has impacted on Sir Robert's memorial and that of his first wife's father Sir Edward Harris.

14. Churchtown Church
OFF N25, 2 MILES EAST OF MIDLETON

Standing at the centre of an elevated graveyard in Churchtown, Imokilly, are the ivy-clad ruins of the late medieval parish church of Inchinabracky, in the Barony of Barrymore. An interesting building, in the care of Cork County Council and easily accessible off the N25, it is an excellent example of a late medieval parish church in East Cork.

15th century limestone door surround with chamfered edge, typically located at the west end of the south wall.

Church building in Ireland generally ground to a halt from the mid-fourteenth century to the start of the 15th century, due to several factors including war, famine and not least the arrival of the Black Death in 1358. It resumed in the 15th century and many rural parish churches, which had fallen into disuse, were rebuilt. This rebuilding was influenced by the Gothic style, used in Ireland since the thirteenth century with its notable use of the pointed arch. This second phase of Gothic church building introduced two notable changes for the churches, however, - repositioning of the door to the south wall, away from the west gable as was previously the case, and the use of ogee-headed windows.

The church is a single cell, rectangular structure orientated east–west. The eastern gable

The church interior looking east towards the altar.

stands to full height, however, the upper part of the western gable and the tops of the side walls are missing. The medieval masonry walls are typically thick and are built with coursed limestone rubble bonded with lime mortar. The church door has a distinctive pointed-arch head at the west end of the south wall, whereby the surround is made of carefully shaped limestone blocks. It is thought that the door moved away from the traditional west end during this period to accommodate living space for the priest at the west end of the church. The priest chamber was usually lit by a small attic widow in the west wall which is evident here. Further east along the south wall, a cut-limestone lancet window lights the internal altar area. There is a corresponding window in the north wall and a more elaborate twin-light window piercing the east gable. Although all are slightly damaged, you can clearly see the well carved pointed-arch shaped tops of these windows. The building shows evidence of rebuilding as a parts of a late-medieval double-light ogee-headed window are re-used as quoin stones in the south eastern corner.

Internally a pointed-arch headed recess shows the location of a piscina in the south wall near the eastern gable and altar. This delicately carved quatrefoil shaped stone basin was used to hold water for ceremonial washing of the hands and communion plate during the Mass. The rectangular recess next to this may have held the altar plates.

The church is set in the centre of a roughly rectangular graveyard with some beautifully carved headstones. The older burials tended to be located on the 'holy side of the church' to the south and east. The nature of this graveyard, with the raised ground level above the adjacent road and surrounding a medieval parish church, suggests that there is a significant number of unmarked earlier burials, testifying to continual burial practice on the site over a long period of time. An unusual and interesting headstone in the graveyard, dated 1779, is decorated with a hatchet and saw, suggesting that the person buried there was a carpenter.

There are several Irish yew trees in the graveyard, these were often planted because they are poisonous and so represent death, while at the same time they are evergreen and so represent eternal life, the perfect symbol for a Christian graveyard.

Did you know...

The practice of reserving a particular burial plot and marking it with a grave marker or headstone only became established in the 18th century. Christian burials are traditionally aligned east west in line with the church and when grave markers were introduced they were placed on the west side, facing east towards the direction of the risen Christ on the Day of Redemption. Headstones are endlessly fascinating, many displaying exceptional stone carvings of religious symbols and inscriptions documenting a social history of people long passed.

Narrow lancet window with side walls splayed to allow as much light in to the altar, piscina and wall press adjacent.

15. Christ Church, Bandon (now West Cork Heritage Centre)

NORTH MAIN STREET, KILBROGAN PARISH, BANDON

Christ Church, a former Church of Ireland church now in use as a Heritage Centre, occupies a commanding position on North Main Street. This church is reputed to be the first purpose-built Anglican church built in Cork, with a foundation of 1610. Indeed, it was the first of a small group of early 17th century protestant churches that were built by the settlers in the County. It sits in a large graveyard which is enclosed by a limestone wall and approached by steps from the south. The north side of the graveyard follows the line of, and may incorporate, a section of 17th century town wall.

Bandon was established as a new commercial town on a key fording point of the River Bandon, with designs to open up West Cork to trade. Two New English settlers, Newce and Shipward, set about this enterprise in the early 1600s, as part of the English reconquest of Munster that started with the Plantations of the late 16th century. Shipward controlled the lands south of the river, while Newce held those on the north, and it is thought he chose this elevated site for the first Anglican church, one of the many Protestant churches that were subsequently built in the town. The enterprising Richard Boyle, First Earl of Cork, acquired Newce's interest and took over the town and had Christ Church reappointed by 1625. He included a date stone to mark his patronage and cemented his foothold in Bandon; one of several West Cork towns he was associated with. The building was enlarged in 1829 and again in 1855 to accommodate a growing congregation. The nave was extended; the building was reroofed, a new eastern window was inserted, and the tower and spire were added, all to the design and supervision of Joseph Welland, architect for the Anglican Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

Early sketch of the West Elevation of Chirst Church.
Courtesy of John Hurley

Early photo of Christ Church before its current use as the West Cork Heritage Centre.
Image courtesy of the National Library of Ireland – L_CAB_02540

The date plaque on the south wall of the nave.

The impressive church is cruciform in plan with a long nave and chancel. There are transepts at the east end and the tower is on the south west corner. The multi-phase nature of the building is very apparent in the different finishes of stone externally. For example, the difference between the stone tooling on the 17th century section of the nave to the right of the door and the 19th century stonework on the tower and porch is quite striking.

The building uses Gothic features with tall pointed-arch windows with stone surrounds, stone tracery mullions, and leaded clear glass windows. The main door, set in a small porch at the southwest, is likewise a pointed arch headed opening and has a well tooled stone door case.

One of the most visible features of this historic building is the tower with an iconic limestone spire drawing one's eye up to the heavens and making it a landmark building of some importance. The Neo-Gothic style is repeated here in the use of carved limestone gargoyle-like projections at the base of the stone roof. The badly weathered stone plaque set to the right of the door, is almost illegible but reads '1625 Memento Mori' and is Boyle's stamp on the building.

Christ Church continued as a place of worship up until 1973 when it was deconsecrated. It now houses the West Cork Heritage Centre, Bandon (pers. comm. John Hurley). Many of the memorials remain on the walls inside, while other furnishings were moved to the larger Saint Peter's Church on the other side of town, including the original 17th century communion table (pers comm. Maria McLaughlin),

16. Carrignaspirroge Chapel

CAHERBIRRANE, NEAR MACROOM

In the remote hillside of Lackaduv Mountain, Caherbirrane townland, stand the ruined remains of a small church or chapel sheltered on the south and west sides by ridges of rock. This church is a rare surviving example of a thatched-chapel in Cork. Folklore and local history around the County records the tradition and locations of many of them but few physical remains have survived or been identified.

Did you know...

Though lacking in architectural merit so often displayed in many of our heritage churches, Caherbirrane is an important reminder of commitment of faith and the difficult times that the ordinary people of Ireland endured during the 18th century. It is a unique part of our architectural heritage and rightly deserves its place in the Heritage Churches of the county which deserves to be cherished.

The Penal laws were put in place to exclude Roman Catholics and Dissenter Protestants from political and administrative office and to repress them from practising public worship. This led to Catholic worship taking place in secluded or remote places. Catholics used private houses or dedicated inconspicuous buildings known as Mass Houses. With the relaxation of the Penal Laws towards the end of the 18th century Roman Catholics began to build small chapels in their parishes to replace the earlier Mass houses. These small churches are known as 'thatched chapels' which were modest vernacular buildings constructed with the same materials and general style used in the ordinary buildings in the dwellings and farm buildings in the locality. They were long and narrow rectangular structures built with mud or stone. They tended to be built in discrete locations such as this example and not necessarily adhering to the traditional east-west orientation. The walls were low with simple, small window openings. Inside was a single space with a clay floor and a simple altar. Caherbirrane is a typical example, it is a long rectangular building with a long axis running north west-south east. The walls are low, built of dry-stone random rubble stones. The interior was lit by three simple lintelled windows that survive in the long side walls. At the south west of the church, the stone remains of a simple low table or altar formed by thin flat sandstone slabs, is evident.

The less well preserved remains of a thatched chapel can be found on the Sheep's Head near Kealties in West Cork, hidden in the undergrowth; another example lies beneath undergrowth in old Drimoleague.

Reconstruction of thatched chapel.

17. Church of the Immaculate Conception
SHANAGARRY SOUTH

The Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception at Shanagarry in East Cork was built in 1814 with the fundraising efforts of the local parish priest, and patriotic United Irishman, Father Peadar O'Neill. Situated in the middle of the village, near the historic Shanagarry Castle, it is a fine example of the Barn Churches that were built in Cork in the early part of the 19th century. Although simple in its form with restrained Gothic styling, it is formal in design and more spacious and comfortable than the vernacular thatched-chapels that they began to replace.

The mosaic work around the altar, here showing the pelican, is beautifully executed.

With the relaxation of the Penal laws towards the end of the 18th century and first half of the 19th century, combined with the growing confidence in the church members especially the merchant classes, a new phase of Catholic church building began throughout the Country. These churches were built in two distinct plans; a rectangular shape known as a 'Barn Church' like Shanagarry and a 'T-Shaped' type. These churches retained a simple yet formal design usually with plain rendered exteriors. The application of formal architectural design tended to be reserved externally for windows and doors, where the pointed Neo-Gothic or the round-headed Neo-Classical styles were applied.

These churches do not always follow an east to west orientation, as the land on which they were built was often donated by local landowners and not always suited to such a layout.

The church interior, while relatively simple, is decorated with well-painted Stations of the Cross. The colorful tiles to the aisle add still more interest to the nave.

Generally, these churches did not have towers or spires, but most had a bell cote for the church bell above the main door.

Inside are tiled floors and a gallery is evident just inside the entrance. Most of the decorative embellishment in this church was reserved for the east end containing the altar. Extra room was often provided by wooden galleries. These churches are easily recognizable and today, many are still in use across the County.

The Church of the Immaculate Conception, is a typical example of the Barn Church. It is rectangular in plan with a small openwork bell cote on the western gable, above the main door. Outside, the walls are plainly finished with rough-harled plaster, like most of these churches, and the only piece of decoration is the concrete band along the bottom of the walls, forming a plinth course. The Gothic-style pointed arch windows have leaded clear glass on either side of a central mullion. The eastern window is more ornate, made up of stained glass panels that are decoratively set in lead, in four lancets, with a circular window above. This is known as multifoil tracery, with the intention being to mimic the Gothic windows and tracery found in earlier medieval churches. It has a lower gabled chancel section at the east end, with a small sacristy at the south and a small porch at the north, both of which were probably added later.

Did you know...

Father Peadar O'Neill, the Catholic priest who built this church and is commemorated in the west window, was suspected of involvement in the 1798 rebellion. He was arrested and flogged in Youghal shortly after the rebellion, and when he did not give up names, was transported to New South Wales, Australia. He eventually returned to Ireland in 1814, and founded this church.

Father Peadar O Neill, who built the church in 1814, is commemorated in the stained glass window.

Inside, the western end of the open nave of the church is dominated by the gallery, supported by Doric-style columns, which is accessed by a stairs on the north. The floor is tiled with a simple geometric pattern of coloured quarry tiles along the aisle. The rows of timber pews continue the restrained appearance of this church. The stained glass window above the west door was commissioned as a memorial to Father O'Neill.

The chancel is wonderfully decorative with a mosaic of muted colours that cover the walls using classical Christian symbols like the Lamb of God, to represent the risen Jesus Christ. The mosaic is a more recent addition that enhances the interior, by highlighting the importance of the altar.

Standing amongst well maintained grounds, native trees, and simple religious statuary, this church gives an impression of modest but dignified devotion of the Roman Catholic community both past and present in Shanagarry.

18. St. Fachtna's Cathedral

TOWN CENTRE, OFF CARBERY LANE, ROSSCARBERY

Saint Fachtna's, Rosscarbery, the smallest cathedral in Ireland, is still in use as the cathedral church of the Church of Ireland Diocese of Ross. It housed the bishop's throne or *cathedra*, which marked it as the primary or 'mother' church of the diocese. Its development started in the late 16th century, when Bishop William Lyons (1582-1617) set about constructing a purpose built Protestant cathedral to replace an earlier 13th century, church (Moss 2003).

The cathedral is located near the centre of historic Rosscarbery, which traces its origins to the sixth century monastery founded by Saint Fachtna. When Fachtna arrived, he developed the monastic School of Ross, which became famous for its scholarship throughout medieval Europe (French 2003). However, the actual cathedral site is associated with a second adjacent monastic settlement founded by Saint *Colmán Oilithir*, Colman the Pilgrim.

The church is laid out in the Gothic cruciform style, with a nave and choir (or chancel) and transepts were added in the early 19th century. The western end is occupied by a lofty double-height space known as a narthex - essentially an enlarged entrance lobby, an arrangement put in place after it was damaged during the 1641 Rebellion.

The cathedral has seen several building phases of change and repair, and is very much 19th century in character. The modern plaster hides the wall fabric, which archaeologists and architectural historians could use to chart its development; fortunately, there are good historical sources to tell its story. The Book of Ballymote suggests a stone church here in the

Cathedral from west.
Image courtesy of Audrey Forde.

Nave and chancel.

19th century Neo Romanesque door on west wall. Image courtesy of Audrey Forde.

10th century (Moss 2003), was replaced by the 13th century by a cruciform church and the first documented church is in a clerical record of 1517. Bishop Lyons wrote in 1589 that he built 'a proper church and a fair house in the wildest part of Munster'. However it is considered more likely that Lyons heavily remodeled the existing building to suit the less ornamental tastes of the new Protestant religion.

Damaged during the 1641 Rebellion against the New English Planters, the nave and a round tower were levelled and the Protestant congregation was run out, with the late Bishop Lyons' daughter killed in the melee. Afterwards, the abandoned cathedral was temporarily used as a slaughterhouse.

Perhaps the most striking feature of this cathedral is the massive bell tower over the western end. It was added in the 1660s when the nave was rebuilt and by 1696 the cathedral structure was fully repaired. The wall dividing the narthex from the present-day nave and choir, initially a temporary measure to secure the remainder of the cathedral after 1641, was retained during reconstruction, as the cathedral now served a smaller congregation. The 19th century details are visible throughout including the windows of the nave, which have ornate bipartite timber windows with reticulated tracery. The west door has a finely carved 19th century reproduction of a Romanseque door surround.

The Narthex in Rosscarbery Cathedral.
Image courtesy of Audrey Forde.

19. St. Anne's Church

CASTLEMARTYR

Saint Anne's Church of Ireland stands serenely in a level open graveyard, tucked behind a tree-lined entrance avenue to the north of the main street of Castlemartyr. A new parish church was proposed here as early as 1710 following unification of 'Ballyoughtra, Mogely and Cahirultan' parishes: after the town had been badly damaged in the Parliamentary wars (1688/9) by the 1700s it had begun to prosper and was *'a protestant colony of the better class'*, which was, of course, deserving of a proper church (Bence-Jones 1988).
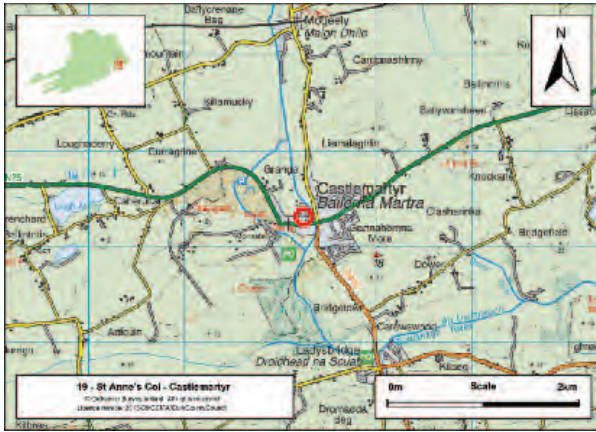
The 18th century church in Castlemartyr is a quiet oasis hidden in a graveyard behind the main street.

St Anne's, consecrated in 1731, is typical of early Georgian Anglican churches in Ireland, with a squat and robust tower at the west forming the entrance to a rectangular nave with an apse at the east end. This is one of only a handful of 18th century Anglican churches in the County, probably as a result of the great rebuilding program of Church of Ireland churches in the early 19th century. Other examples are Saint Colman's church at Farahy near Kildorrery, Temple Michael church in Ballinamon and St Marys Church in Mallow.

Castlemartyr church from north west showing the robust square tower at west end and later vestry.

The church from south east showing the apse and the interesting band course uniting the five window in the south wall.

It is Neo-Classical in style, with typical features such as rounded arches to the windows of the nave and the tower. The robust tower is built in three stepped tiers and crowned with stepped battlements. The entrance door in the west wall of the tower is simple yet elegant. The timber panelled door is framed by a block and start limestone surround and topped by a classic semi-circular fanlight. This style is complemented by the typical curved side walls of the apse and the decorative cut stone cornice detail that runs along, just below the eaves of the roof. The nave is lit by five large round headed windows with Y tracery, united by a cut limestone band course that curves over the top of each window. A solitary rounded window occurs in the plainer unseen north wall. Henry Boyle, Esq. gave the ground upon which the church was to be built (Smith, 1815, p. 125).

St Anne's was improved in the 1870's and is still in use. Internally it is open plan and retains an array of original features. It has a curved plaster ceiling and side walls, similar to the other examples, which along with the open plan gives a clean uncluttered look to the interior. One of the most attractive elements is the twin curved staircase with simple railings, which greets you as you enter and rises to a timber gallery. The walls of the nave have timber panelling. The apse houses the communion table, on a raised dais, with the reader's pulpit and a throne-like canopied seat to either side. This open arrangement provides the congregation with a clear view of the activities in the apse, so very reflective of the overall Neo-Classical design, which is sensitive to the church's function as a place of Anglican worship.

Did you know...

Castlemartyr was the setting for a romance novel, Castlemartyr or A tale of Old Ireland, written in 1839, in which Saint Anne's Church and its curate, play key roles.

Detail of timber Y - tracery windows with delicate switch line tracery and original glass with curved cut stone cornice under eaves.

20. St. Patrick's Church

MAIN STREET, DUNMANWAY

St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in Dunmanway was built in 1834, five years after Daniel O'Connell had won Catholic Emancipation in Ireland. Its imposing Neo-Classical style proclaims the new confidence of the Roman Catholic Church in this important West Cork town. It is similar to other impressive early 19th century urban parish churches around the County, including Saint John the Baptist in Kinsale (Exemplar 22) and Saint Patrick's Cathedral in Skibbereen.
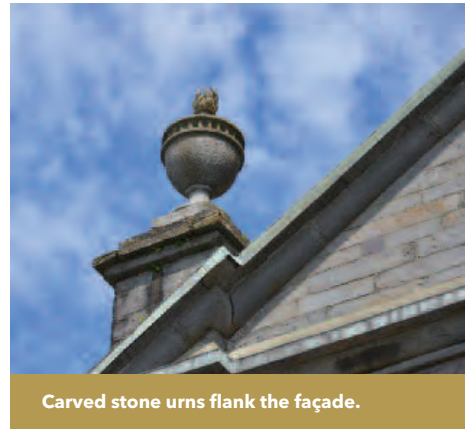
Carved stone urns flank the façade.

Substantially set back from what is now the Main Street, when first built it was very much on the periphery of the town. This was the case with many early 19th century Catholic churches, built on what lands were given or made available for it. Given its position on the north side of the street, its orientation is from south to north, as opposed to the traditional west to east positioning of previous Christian churches, to allow for the entrance to be seen from the street.

The building was designed by Rev. Michael Augustine Riordan, a Presentation Brother for Reverend James Doheny, the local parish priest. Fortunately, a ledger kept by Fr. Doheny survies, which gives a very detailed account of all the monies collected for the building of the church, and all the expenditure, as well as a record of all who worked and supplied services to the building. This book was restored by the Dunmanway Historical Society and is available to view locally (pers. comm. Tommy Collins).

Saint Patrick's Church cost an estimated £2,500 to construct (Lewis 1837). The original building was a massive open space with impressive high ceilings, but as the congregation grew, more space was needed, and a loan of £200 from the Board of Works allowed the erection of the galleries in 1847. The expense of this work at the peak of the famine indicates the important position that Saint Patrick's Church had, and continues to have, in the community around Dunmanway.

The building stands to the north of, and overlooking, Dunmanway Lake. A long avenue, almost the full width of the church, approaches from the street on the south, giving emphasis to the front façade. The building is wholeheartedly Neo-Classical in style. Nearly all of the exterior embellishment is used on its grand ashlar-cut limestone entrance façade. From the roadside it is striking, and when approached it becomes even more impressive, with its high pediment above the central breakfront, topped with an open bellcote. The understated doors; the tall yet not overly big, round-headed window, and the statue niches are simple, yet elegant. The tall stone urns on the ends are big, adding a robustness and balance to the façade.

The interior of the church continues the Neo-Classical style, the decorative embellishment is dominated by the apse decorations and the panelled ceiling.

The remaining walls of this T-shaped church, its nave and transepts, are simply rendered in smooth plaster and painted, as is the slightly recessed chancel, and a sacristy to the rear. Like the similar churches, tall round-headed windows pierce the walls and flood light into the interior, while also making the building appear taller helping to maximise its visual effect. Some of the windows have stained glass that embellish the ornate interior, while the others are of the classical tripartite format - the central window is flanked by two rectangular recesses intended to enhance the symmetry.

Inside the building is a beautiful example of classical elegance, with the T-shaped plan allowing the congregation to see the altar from the nave and transepts and galleries. The Neo-Classical style is crowned with a stunning panelled ceiling and a fantastically ornate reredos of Corinthian columns behind the altar dais.

View of church from the east.

21. St Luke's Church

CHURCHYARD LANE, DOUGLAS

The elegant spire of St. Luke's Church of Ireland parish church in Douglas is an ever-present landmark, and with the quality of its Neo-Gothic style masonry, it is an architectural gem in suburban Cork. It is not the first church on this site, as a previous church built in 1785 was demolished to make way for this more impressive building. Construction was made possible by enthusiastic local fundraising, led by Canon Samuel Hayman (the 'Antiquarian of Youghal'), with significant contributions from the wealthy Reeves sisters, and other members of the parish who collectively provided £3000 for the project.

Consecrated in August 1875, the church was originally designed by the architect Osborne Cadwallader Edwards (Williams 1994) who 'even waived the fee for his services' (pers. comm. Dr. Aoife Bhreatnach). The tower and spire came later, designed by the well-known Cork architect W. H. Hill in 1885.

The church is built in limestone to a cruciform plan on a west to east orientation, with transepts to the north and south and a slightly lower, gabled chancel to the east. The main entrance is via a small porch on the south side of the chancel. Dominantly, the robust four-

The Neo-Gothic style church with its impressive tower overlooks a large graveyard.

The stages of the tower are defined by string courses which help to break up the elevations and add a sense of decoration to the walls befitting the Neo-Gothic style.

Did you know...

The architect Osborne Cadwallader Edwards gave his services for free when designing this church, an indication of the local support for the project.

storey tower topped by a hexagonal spire, stands on the southwest corner, with characteristic Gothic buttresses set back from the corners. The tower is similar to a number of other Anglican churches of the period but now looks relatively small in contrast to the tall majestic towers of the Roman Catholic Churches of the same period such as Clonakilty, Midleton and Bandon. A single clock face in the tower looks north, towards the historic core of Douglas and the site of some of the homes of the local gentry, including Tramore – home of the Reeves sisters.

The building abounds with the English style of Neo-Gothic, with simple austere lines and a stress on vertical proportions that draw the eye up past the tower towards the heavens. This simplicity is greatly embellished by gothic features and devices and the high quality of its carved stone decoration. Even the high gabled roof is decorated with ridge cresting and cross finials. The walls are of limestone ashlar, with setback corner buttresses. The pointed windows are of a typically gothic style and those in the tower have hood mouldings. There are elegant quatrefoil windows near the tops of the many gables and in the tower there is the added addition of ogee-headed windows. Most of the windows in the church are stained glass while those higher on the tower have simple louvered vents to allow the sound of the bells to reach the Douglas community. The doors are equally Gothic with pointed arches. On the sides of the door there are boot scrapers, an interesting feature of bygone times, when cleaning the shoes of dirt when entering a house, not just the house of God, was an essential piece of social etiquette.

A large rectangular graveyard has developed around St. Luke's and contains an extensive collection of 19th century upright and recumbent grave markers, including Canon Hayman and his antiquarian colleague Dr. Richard Caulfield. This church remains the cornerstone of Anglican worship in Douglas.

22. St. John the Baptist Church

FRIARS STREET, KINSALE

The impressive Saint John the Baptist Church in Kinsale is set on the hillside overlooking the town and was completed just three years after the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829. It represents a significant phase of expansion and construction for the Roman Catholic Church, replacing an earlier, less ostentatious building, which stood on the same site. Interestingly, the same site was chosen and it was not relocated to a more central location in the town.

Dated 1832 and designed in a Neo-Classical style by Rev Michael Augustine Riordan for Rev Justin Foley McNamara, this church like most of the Catholic churches was funded by subscriptions from the local community. Fortunately Kinsale, in the 19th century, had a booming economy and could support such a venture. It was both a thriving port and a popular tourist town, serviced by two libraries, assembly rooms and hotels (Lewis 1837). The design of Saint John the Baptist Church reflects this success; its highly visible Neo-Classical façade was a public statement of civic pride and sophistication of the Roman Catholic population of the town.

The topographer Samuel Lewis described Saint John's as a spacious edifice in 1837. Indeed, with its tall façade, stretched windows and overall monumental appearance, this church is an excellent example of several Roman Catholic churches that were built in this style across

Interior.
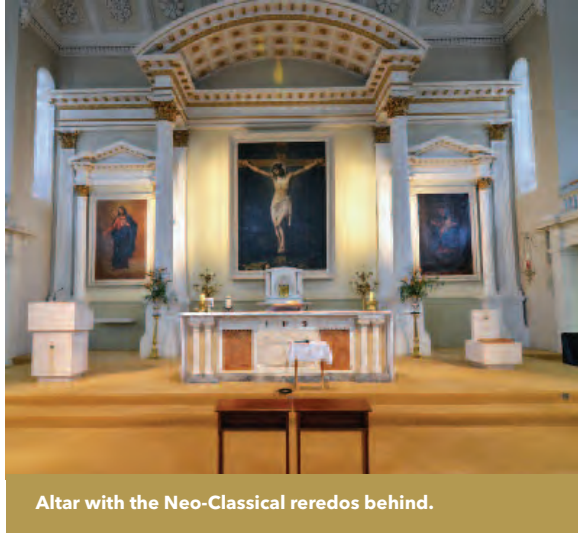
Altar with the Neo-Classical reredos behind.

the County, especially in the towns and villages. Saint John's, along with similar structures like Saint Patrick's Church in Dunmanway, Saint Patrick's Cathedral in Skibbereen and the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Doneraile, follow the distinctive T-shaped plan behind the Neo-Classical façade and have a striking and spacious interior.

The building's long axis is north south, presenting the formal entrance to the street with the altar in a projecting apse at the north end flanked by two short transepts. The entrance façade is impressive and was built with cleanly finished limestone ashlar. It has typical Neo-Classical features including string courses making a pediment to the top, engaged panels called 'pilasters' with urn shaped finials flanking the elevation; a central projecting section making a 'breakfront', and round-headed window openings. The top is capped by a solid panelled belfry. This embellishment of the gable front was an important element in Neo-Classical architecture and works well in this building. The side walls are treated more sparingly, built with rubble sandstone with lofty, round-headed windows that give rhythm and harmony to the building.

The classical style continues inside, with a beautifully Neo-Classical reredos behind the altar with Corinthian columns supporting pediments. The church retains the timber galleries in the nave and transepts supported by cast-iron columns. Among the most unusual features of the interior are the many monuments. One example, designed by John Hogan in 1846, is to Reverend Justin Foley McNamara (1789-1845). It cost £550, which was a considerable sum in the 19th century. Investment like this, in the middle of the famine, was only possible because of the success of Kinsale town.

23. Christ Church, Fermoy

NORTHERN END OF ABERCROMBY PLACE, OVERLOOKING FERMOY BRIDGE

Christ Church in Fermoy, a Church of Ireland Church, holds a commanding elevated position over Fermoy town, on the north side of the Blackwater River. Historically, Fermoy traces its origins to a 7th century monastery, founded on the south of the river by Saint Finnchua. A later 12th century Cistercian monastery followed, but the last remains of it were cleared away in 1802 when the present planned town was developed by the Scottish merchant John Anderson. He offered free sites for military barracks on the north side of the river and soon Fermoy became a garrison town. As part of this town development a new Church of Ireland parish church was needed.

Still in use, Christ Church was built to the Neo-Classical designs of the distinguished Cork architect Abraham Hargrave the Elder, at a cost of £3282 (Brunicardi 1984). It was consecrated by 1809 and celebrated its bicentenary in 2009 (pers. comm. Donal O' Lochlainn). It is similar, but larger than the 18th century churches of Saint Anne's Church in Castlemartyr and Saint Colman's Church in Farahy and demonstrates the building confidence and positional power of the Established Church in the early 19th century, particularly in garrison towns where the Anglican congregation was bigger than other provincial towns.

Christ Church from south with the three statues of Cistercian monks reminding us of the earlier Cistercian monastery in the town.

Shallow apse to east end of Christ Church.

Cruciform in plan, with a rectangular nave terminating in a tower at the west end, the church has a shallow bow-shaped apse at the east end. With the rise and decline of its congregation, the church has undergone many alterations over the years, starting in 1820 with the removal of the north transept and the addition of the current limestone spire to the tower. The gabled southern transept designed by Joseph Welland was added in the mid 19th century, and the small vestry by Arthur Hill in 1890.

The Neo-Classical style is mainly achieved through the use of round-headed windows. The eastern window is set in a shallow apse and has a limestone surround with ionic-style columns and triple light tracery with stained glass. The nave is lit by a series of large round-headed windows also with stained glass and united by a delicate string course. A distinctive feature is the use of oval shaped niches with cut stone surrounds which adds to the elegance of the building. Entry to the building is via a tall, round-headed doorway in the south wall of the tower. As Christ Church doubled as the garrison church, this door was made tall, to allow the troops carrying military flags and banners to walk through, which must have been quite a sight. The walls are built of roughly coursed sandstone; the dark reddish brown colour contrasts well with the beautifully carved Portland stone detailing to the windows and doors. Portland stone, a type of very fine grained grey limestone from Portland in Dorset, was a highly prized building material. Its use as part of the dressing here suggests a considerable amount of investment in the building's construction. The tower of cut sandstone is very ornate and contrasts with the later limestone spire.

Inside, the open-truss wooden ceiling sits on a plaster cornice and the gallery, supported on Ionic-style columns, continues the Neo-Classical theme. One of the most interesting features is the water stoup, discovered in a garden in the early 20th century and relocated to the church. The stone stoup has four carved faces set between vertical rolls and is thought to be 13th or 14th century in date. According to local tradition it came from the Cistercian abbey.

24. Church of the Ascension
TIMOLEAGUE

Sitting within an older graveyard, at the north end of Timoleague village, is the early 19th century Church of the Ascension, the Church of Ireland parish church of Timoleague. While externally modest, its decorated interior makes this unassuming church one to remember. Its construction was funded by the Board of First Fruits; a government funded body to support Anglican church. The early 19th century witnessed an unprecedented surge of Anglican church building. These First Fruit Churches are easily recognizable and there are numerous examples across the county.

The Church of the Ascension was Consecrated in 1811, and like most of the Anglican churches it was on the site of the medieval parish church. The construction cost of £461, 10s. 91/4 d. was funded by a Board of First Fruits loan (Travers 1985). Designed to accommodate 110 people, it was built in part from the recycled rubble stone of the old parish church. Later in the 19th century the chancel, vestry and south transept were added under the direction of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners architects, Welland and Gillespie.

The church, like all Board of First Fruits Churches, has a simple rectangular body. It was built on an east to west orientation, with a tower on the west and was built in a Gothic revival style (although this example is unusually more restrained). The windows of the church are typical pointed openings, with simple Y-tracery. One of the windows has an important 19th century stained glass window by Warrington (pers. comm. Robert Travers).

Interior of nave with the hammer beam roof and amazing mosaic-decorated walls.

West end tower.

The tower, with its stone louvered belfry vents with pointed arches, string course and pinnacles on the parapet wall, is the most decorative part of an otherwise undecorated exterior. A rare feature on the tower is the clock facing the village. At a time when domestic clocks and pocket-watches were less widespread, a church clock was a valued aid to the community.

It is difficult to do justice to the rich and almost unique decoration of the interior of this church, without a visit. Beneath the magnificent hammer-beam roof, the walls are elaborately decorated in a rich mosaic, commemorating, in a tapestry of both European and Islamic styles, members of the local landowning Travers family. First commissioned in 1894 by Robert Augustus Travers, the brilliantly coloured small tiles and gold leaf are florally arranged and contain the symbolic Star of David, the pelican and the lamb on the chancel arch. Robert's son, Lt. Spencer Robert Valentine, died in 1915, aged 21 at Gallipoli, fighting with the Royal Munster Fusiliers and the mosaic along the side walls tell this story. A final set of mosaics were installed by Italian craftsmen on the south wall of the nave in 1925. Commissioned by the Maharajah of Gwailor as a memorial to Lt. Col. Crofts, a surgeon, who saved the life of his son. He hailed from nearby Concamore, his family seat.

However, not all of the decoration met with approval. The Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, Dr. John Cregg, refused to consecrate the new chancel and vestry in 1861, unless what he deemed to be a 'graven' or idolatrous image of the crucifixion in the east window, was covered up.

Described as a hidden masterpiece of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Ireland, this church was an expression of the reforming Oxford Movement in the late 19th century Anglican Church (Travers 1985), which saw theological changes tending back towards pre-Reformation ideas and a desire for greater decorative church architecture.

25. Church of the Holy Cross

MAIN STREET, CHARLEVILLE

The soaring tower and front façade of the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Cross dominates the skyline of the northern end of Charleville town. Limerick-based architect M. A. Hennessy (1848-1909) won a competition in 1898 to design this beautifully ornate French influenced Gothic creation. It is an excellent example of a group of large, very ornate and heavily stylised Gothic Revival churches built in the major towns of Cork in the latter 19th century. Similar to churches in Midleton and Clonakilty, it is built of limestone, using recognizable Gothic style features, such as pointed arches to the openings, buttresses, naves with aisles and massive towers.

Contemporary with Saint Colman's Cathedral in Cobh, these churches were built towards the end of the 19th century as striking architectural edifices of a Roman Catholic Church that had emerged post Catholic Emancipation as the dominant religious force in Ireland. These churches replaced the smaller and more modest early 19th century churches often moving to more strategic locations. The levels of detail and decoration extended beyond the ornate external appearance, with interiors created using the best of timber, stone and glazing craftsmanship.

The elevated setting for the church on a new site and the lack of buildings in the immediate vicinity meant that Holy Cross had the scope to be a monumental structure. The church

The interior of the church is divided into three by the arched aisle arcades with beautiful red marble and limestone columns.

Did you know...

The architect of this church, Maurice Alphonsus Hennessy, went on to design a number of other buildings in Charleville including Clancy's terrace in 1903 and M. F. Lynch & Co.'s offices on Main Street in 1908.

foundation stone was laid by Bishop Robert Browne (1894-1935) in 1898, and roofed by the spring of 1902, when it was officially blessed. The builder, Denis Creedon of Fermoy, continued to work on the site after this dedication, adding the tower and a mortuary chapel in the years that followed.

The impressive façade is on the east and faces the town, perhaps dictated by the site's location on the west side of the public road. This changed the church's orientation, with the altar located at the west end. The dominant feature is, undeniably, the tower attached to the south east corner. All around, the rusticated rock-faced limestone walls give the church a sense of permanence, strength and the air of an ancient building. This is strengthened by the visually intricate design using Gothic features, with pinnacles, cross-shaped spire finials, arcaded bell opening, buttresses and pointed-arched window openings. The ornate rose window in the façade imitates the style of medieval French Gothic buildings, from which many of the monumental Roman Catholic Churches of the 19th century took their influence.

Internally, Charleville's Holy Cross Church is a vast space filled with light and colour. The stained glass windows throw tinted light across the interior. Many of them are from the prolific studio of the renowned Harry Clarke, who created the magnificent windows in the Honan Chapel in University College Cork. The altar is surrounded by a wall mosaic designed by Eric Newton in 1918-1921 and installed by Ludwig Oppenheimer of Manchester. Oppenheimer was among the foremost mosaic artists working in early 20th century Ireland, having created mosaics for Cobh Cathedral, the pro cathedral in Ennis and the National Museum and the National Library among many others.

Holy Cross Church is the culmination of artistry and design from some of the foremost figures in late 19th and early 20th century Irish architecture, whose efforts have created a church that is more than impressive, it is beautiful and intriguing.

26. Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
BALLYHOOLY

Surrounded by a stone wall with simple yet decorative iron railings, the Roman Catholic Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a focal point for the village of Ballyhooly. This elegant building, is in the Neo-Gothic or Gothic Revival style so favoured by the then Bishop of Cloyne, William Keane (1857-1875), who helped fund it and who ceremoniously laid the foundation stone in 1867.

The church displays a restrained version of the Neo-Gothic architectural style, popular in the mid-19th century and which significantly shaped the way architects designed smaller and medium sized public buildings throughout Ireland. In designing Ballyhooly, the architects, Ashlin and Pugin, contended with difficulties imposed by very limited funds - just £1,500 was allowed for the expenditure excluding internal fittings (Irish Builder 1867). Their response was to create this small but extremely well thought-out structure, displaying many Gothic elements, but in a much more restrained ornamental way. This was achieved without having to resort to the very heavily Gothicised and much more expensive, larger urban churches to be found elsewhere in Cork, in towns such as Clonakilty, Midleton or Charleville.

The interior of the church is divided by aisle arcades, and is large enough to accommodate a substantial congregation.

The Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary illustrated in the Irish Builder (Vol. IX) in 1867 when the building was first planned.

The church's design draws on Ashlin and Pugin's earlier plans for buildings such as Saint Peter and Paul's Church, Kilanerin, County Wexford (1863), which included the same rows of quatrefoil shaped clerestory windows above the roofline of the aisles to good effect (O'Dwyer 1989). Other similarities include the decorative horizontal banding, or string coursing, as the main decorative element and the same is particularly notable at Ballyhooly.

The main building has 'snecked' squared red sandstone while the quoins, string courses and window surrounds are of a starkly contrasting grey limestone. The combination of colours and type of stone used, known as 'polychrome stonework', and specifically red sandstone and white limestone, is an important element in the built heritage of County Cork. It allowed Pugin and Ashlin to create the impression of a highly decorative and busy Gothic-

Church viewed from north.

Church viewed from south.

style church without the need to invest in costly carved ornamentation. Three simple stained glass lancet windows dominate the front (west) gable, while the side aisles and apse have beautifully carved, Gothic style tracery windows. The pointed arch doors and windows, a staple of the Gothic style, emphasize the vertical thrust of this building, culminating with the bellcote and cross above.

The innovative design of the building, with a gabled front capped by an openwork bellcote; walls of polychrome stonework; lean-to roofed side aisles; visible scissor truss roof and restrained but effective interior styling, was part of a Gothic style template used in a number of other churches in Cork, including the Sacred Heart Church in Glounthaune (c. 1880), St Mary's Church in Carrigtwohill (c. 1880), and the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Watergrasshill (1895). All were designed by Pugin and Ashlin following a semi-fixed pattern, on a limited budget, to accommodate a small but devout congregation. The method was also by other architects, such as Maurice Hennessy, who used it for the Church of the Assumption in Milford. All would become cornerstones of religious life in their communities.

27. Methodist Church

BRIDGE STREET, BANDON

The landmark Methodist Church in Bandon stands at the eastern end of the town centre, next to the Bandon bridge. Bandon, because of its historical background, as a newly settled plantation town, has a large number of churches of various denominations. The Methodist Church was founded by the Wesley brothers during the mid-18th century, and Charles Wesley visited Bandon in 1748 (Dowse 2001).
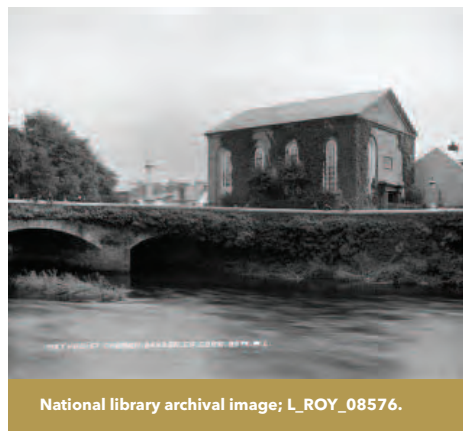
National library archival image; L_ROY_08576.

Methodism developed as a separate, nonconformist denomination in the Church of England, with a greater emphasis on a simpler spiritual message of faith and perfection in Christian life, which did not require elaborate ceremony and counted on preaching as the means of instruction. The places of worship required are primarily those of assembly, ranging from private houses to purpose built meeting halls. These were called *Meeting Houses, Preaching Houses, Chapels or Wesleyan Chapels* and could not be called churches until after the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland. Bandon seems to have been an exception, built in 1821 it was called a church from the start. It is the largest and oldest Methodist Church still in use in all of West Cork (pers. comm. Geraldine and Norman Bateman).

The foundation stone of this church in Bandon was laid on the 12th of April 1821 (O'Donoghue 1970). It was opened by the Rev. Robert Newton in June 1822 (Smith 1830).

North side of church.

Bandon Methodist Church in 1881. The great-grandfather of Geraldine Bateman is pictured, whose ancestors were involved in the building of the church. Image courtesy of Geraldine and Norman Bateman.

This fine Neo-Classical building is solidly built, with simplicity and restraint being the dominant feature. The building contains all the key elements of the classical style – round-headed arches, pediments, cornice mouldings and columns. The building is a substantial rectangular structure with gables to the east and west, and basement beneath. The gables are framed with a distinctive pediment with the date plaque 1821 in the centre. The tall rounded head windows are set in a slightly arched recess which gives rhythm and grace to the elevations. The masonry walls of coursed sandstone are unrendered. The church is surrounded by a decorative iron railing on top of a low masonry wall, with the entrance framed by an iron arch.

A Doric timber portico frames the front door which is accessed by a short flight of stone steps. Cast-iron boot scrapers flank the doorway, a necessity at the time when transport was horse powered and footpaths were not always paved.

The inside is spacious, filled with old timber pews facing east towards a stepped platform or dais. Additional room is provided for the congregation by an unusual timber gallery that curves along the west end and sides of the building supported on fluted Doric timber columns. There is an impressive organ with a moulded plaster pediment on the ground floor. The building was furnished by gas lighting in the early 1900s and the lantern over the entrance gates may date from this time. On the walls are many stone memorial plaques, with well-known Bandon family names such as Tyndale, Cleart, Scott and Bateman all represented. The building remains in active service, and can seat 400 people.

28. Former Presbyterian Church
(NOW A POST OFFICE), CLONAKILTY

This former Presbyterian Church, stands on a small plot off Bridge Street, in the centre of Clonakilty town and is a lively interpretation of the Neo-Gothic style.

Carved weathered eagle at cardinal point of tower.

Bell tower with corner buttresses and projecting gargoyle like eagles.

The arrival of Presbyterianism to Ireland was largely the result of a movement of population from Scotland in the 17th century. However, they were also suppressed in the late 17th century as they too were subjected to the Penal Laws. With the relaxation of these laws, they began to build modest, unadorned churches. Similar to the other denominations, by the mid 19th century, they embraced the dominant architectural style of Neo-Gothic architecture. It was a style favoured by Young and Mackenzie of Belfast – the most prolific architects in the Presbyterian sphere (Lober et al. 2014) - and other, less-well-known architects, adopted their style when taking Presbyterian commissions. Small Neo-Gothic buildings, like that built here in Clonakilty in 1861, often to designs by an unknown architect (Williams 1994), were the norm for small congregations. As the congregation fell off in the 1920s the church closed its doors. It was purchased by the Department of Post and Telegraphs in 1924 and continues to operate as a post office today. The Clonakilty people take much pride in their unique Post Office and once talk of closure, following much protestation, has now been forgotten.

The building has remained largely unchanged externally, and retains a very strong sense of its

Interior showing west tracery window and fine open timber roof supported on corbels

original character, mirroring on a more modest scale the adjacent monumental Neo-Gothic Roman Catholic Church. It is rectangular in plan, gable ended with the entrance on the west side, flanked by ornately carved date stones of 1861.

On the south side and adding to the Gothic effect is the bell tower and spire with gothic windows and eye catching carved gargoyle-like eagles and angels. The walls are of coursed, squared yellow-brown sandstone rubble, with stepped buttresses to the corners breaking up the simplicity of the plan. The slated roof, supported by projecting stone corbels, has decorative fleur-de-lis finials; a motif, which is a symbol of purity and one that has had a very long history of use (Nozedar, 2010, p. 73).

The roofline is further adorned by pointed dormer windows with trefoil openings. This was the time of industrialization and the mass production of materials such as ridge tiles meaning that one could add adornment to Neo-Gothic structures in a more affordable manner.

The windows are the largest contributor to the Neo-Gothic impression of a medieval church that this building strives to achieve. The front elevation to the street is lit by a carved stone tracery window, with small panes of leaded glass set in quatrefoil and trefoil openings over ogee-headed lancets. Leaded glass was favoured over stained glass in Presbyterian Churches, as an acknowledgement towards restraint, so much a part of the faith. The west window is over a pointed arch door opening with carved label moulding. The five-bay nave has bipartite lancet windows with quatrefoil overlights, which match those of the tower. Internally the original scissor truss ceiling remains intact. The open space of the nave has been divided up for post office use.

Detail of ornate plastered label stop.

29. Sisters of Mercy Convent
KNOCKNAMUCK, BANTRY

The convent and school at Bantry was one of a number of educational religious institutions built throughout Cork in the 19th century. The purpose of the convent at Bantry was to provide education to girls of the prosperous town and its locality, across the spectrum of lower and middle class Catholic families. This charming Roman Catholic chapel forms the devotional centrepiece of an extensive convent set on a hill overlooking the town of Bantry. It was built in 1878, nearly twenty years after the construction of the convent, to the designs of Samuel F. Hynes, a Cork based architect. Hynes received most of his commissions from the Catholic Church and religious orders (Convent of Mercy, Cappoquin and Presentation Convent, Tralee), and specialized in just the sort of small scale chapel design for the Sisters of Mercy in Bantry.

Did you know...

The construction of the convent and chapel in the 1860s and 1870s was only possible as a result of donations by the Murphy family, of Murphy's Brewery fame. Fanny Murphy was one of the founding sisters of the convent.
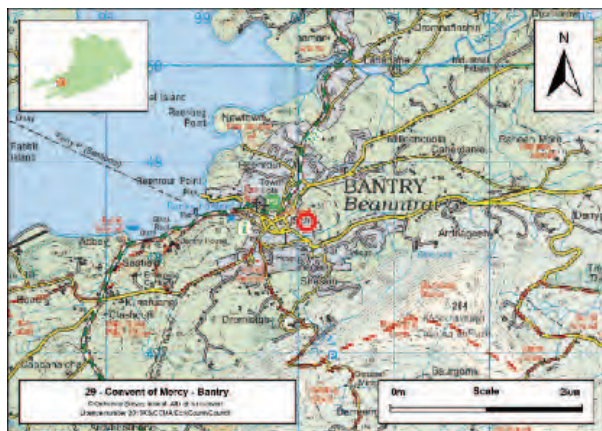
Convent church Lawrence Collection – Robert French photographer. Source: National Library –L_ROY_11045.

This chapel was carefully designed, with decorative round-headed window and door openings of Romanesque style, to fit-in with the pre-existing convent structures on site. This was enhanced by the use of complementary building materials – the multi-coloured red sandstone cladding and limestone dressings that are frequently seen in Cork – which again reflected the overall architectural impression of the complex. The Sisters of Mercy had established a convent and school in Bantry, at Marino House, in 1861, and moved to the present site in 1862. Nearly twenty years later, the first quoin for the chapel was laid, on the 18th of February 1878, by the builder Denis Murphy of Bantry, and the chapel building was completed within a year.

The chapel, while small, is an architectural tour-de-force. It is rectangular in plan with an east-west aligned nave and chancel, attached to the west side of the convent. It is entered from the southwest, with an elegant circular tower for its stairs tucked between it and the main building. The roof is subtly embellished with bands of fish scale slates, decorative clay ridge tiles, and cast-iron cross finials similar, although smaller, to those seen on the contemporary St Colman's Cathedral in Cobh. The rubble stone walls are unusually built in a style called snecked squared, with limestone ashlar string courses, quoins, and surrounds to the windows and doors. Combinations of 'oculi' style circular windows and round-headed lancet windows give light to the interior, while the west gable has a fine tracery rose window above two broad twin-lancets.

Inside, the ceiling is a gloriously robust open hammer-beam truss roof design. The nave is divided from a nun's choir area by a round-headed arch arcade supported on columns of Cork red marble (Irish Builder 1877). The impressive stained glass windows were designed by Eugene Daly who trained with Mayer's of London. A narrow passage from the choir to the organ gallery allowed the nuns to access the turret stairs without passing into the nave, thus ensuring that the religious order's private devotions could be kept separate from lay visitors to the chapel, an important consideration for a teaching order.

30. Saint Colman's Cathedral

COBH (FORMERLY KNOWN AS QUEENSTOWN)

Saint Colman's Cathedral is both physically and metaphorically the pinnacle of Neo-Gothic architecture. Sitting on an eminence overlooking Cobh town and Cork Harbour the Cathedral dominates the skyline. This Cathedral was constructed between 1868 and 1919, to the designs of E. W. Pugin and G. C. Ashlin, and replaced an earlier church which was constructed in 1808.

Archival image of St Colman's Cathedral from the north, before the towers were added. Image courtesy of the National Library of Ireland (L_ROY_04805).

The design of Saint Colman's Cathedral was greatly influenced by the taste of the reigning bishop, Bishop William Keane (1857-1875), who had an affinity for early French Gothic architecture, acquired from years spent studying in Paris. Bishop Keane laid the foundation stone in 1868, and his two successors - Bishop John McCarthy (1874-1893) and Bishop Robert Browne (1894-1935) - would oversee the project before it was completed (Wilson 2004). The building is named after early missionary Saint Colman (560-610), patron saint of the Diocese of Cloyne.

This cruciform-plan is very suitable for a cathedral. Saint Colman's Cathedral has an east-west aligned nave and chancel, and transepts to the north and south, all standing to double-height, to a design that surpasses many 19th-century Neo-Gothic churches, both in Cork and beyond. The entrance façade is embellished with the addition of a square-plan bell and clock tower and a lower gable-fronted square-plan tower. The gabled roof has scalloped fish-scale slates, decorative vents and wrought-iron ridge-crests, openwork limestone

Ornate entrance to Cobh Cathedral.

'Exterior view of St. Colman's Cathedral, prior to the addition of the Cathedral spire.' 1900-1920. Photo by Fergus O' Connor, courtesy of the National Library of Ireland OCO 303.

The Nave and Chancel of St. Colmans.

pediments, and the walls have flat and flying buttresses with openwork corner pinnacles adding still more complexity to the roofline. The rusticated granite walls sit on locally quarried limestone and sandstone footings, and are decorated with moulded string courses, blind roundels, multi-foil recesses and gabled doors. After the eye-catching roofline, the windows are perhaps the building's most striking feature. Pointed arch and lancet windows light the tower, nave and transepts, and the window openings to the aisles have alternating coloured stone voussoirs. The west elevation of the nave is pierced by a limestone mullioned tracery stained glass window with a circular 'oculus' opening surrounded by smaller cinquefoil openings, creating a beautiful rose window pattern overall. The rose is set in a decorative surround over a series of eight pointed arch windows. Smaller, yet still complex, tracery stained glass windows adorn the north-west gable and the side elevations of the building.

Learn about the Carillion

Present Carillonneur Adrian Gebruers points out that: *"the original plans for the Cathedral did not envisage a carillon in the tower and when, in 1914, Bishop Browne made initial contact with the famous Taylor Bellfoundry in Loughborough (England) it was to order a 16-bell chime. However, thanks to the advice of the bell consultant engaged by the Bishop for the project, Cobh ended up by having one of the early modern accurately-tuned carillons which is still among the finest in the world. The consultant involved was William Wooding Starmer (1866-1927), Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music and Lecturer in Campanology at Birmingham University. By early 1916, the 42 bronze bells were on the dockside in Liverpool awaiting shipment to Queenstown, as Cobh was then called. However, the fact that this was in the middle of World War I presented a problem, given that German submarines were quite active in the waters approaching Queenstown. It was therefore fortuitous that Bishop Browne was a very good friend of Admiral Sir Lewis Bayly, commander of the Irish Station and based in Queenstown. And so, the bell cargo arrived safely at its destination, courtesy of the Royal Navy! The bells were landed on the quayside and hauled up the hills on horse-drawn drays. The Bishop had to wait until after the war was over before the Carillon was actually played. On August 24 1919, Antoine Nauwelaerts, City Carillonneur of Bruges, came from Belgium to inaugurate the instrument. During the next five years, the Carillon was only played twice by visiting carillonneurs. Then in 1924, the Bishop finally managed to engage Staf Gebruers from Antwerp, who remained as carillonneur until his death in 1970, when he was succeeded by his son Adrian".*

St. Colman's Cathedral sits majestically, dominating the skyline of Cobh town. For how many of our emmigrant ancestors has this image been one of their last on Irish shores?

Inside, no expense was spared on the interior; an awe-inspiring open space with exquiste mosaic floors by Ludwig Oppenheimer and magnificent stained glass windows produced by John Hardman & Co. and Mayer & Co, well known international glass companies, however, Early's of Dublin and Watson's of Youghal also made significant contributions. The groin vault stone ceiling and walls are faced with Bath and Portland limestone. The carpentry and furniture near the apse are of Austrian oak, while the timbers to the ceiling and the pews are imported Californian pitch pine. The pointed arcades to the side aisles are supported on columns of Connemara, Kilkenny, Fermoy and Midleton marbles and white marble, from Italy, used in the wall detailing and fittings elsewhere. The numerous depictions of the Virgin Mary along with saints such as Brendan, Brigid and Patrick is typical of Roman Catholic decor, while the recurring use of the shamrock in the decorative detail proclaims the importance of Irish national identity within the Roman Catholic Church. The carved scenes on the nave capitals and spandrels present the history of the Catholic Church in Cork, beginning with the arrival of the early saints and coming full circle, with the presentation of Cobh Cathedral to God. The cathedral contains the largest church carillion in the Republic of Ireland. It is played on special occasions and generally on Sundays by its current carillonneur Adrian Gebruers.

Saint Colmans is perhaps the ultimate manifestation of Catholic Emancipation, which was achieved with the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829. It is often described as one of the most ambitious and expensive building projects undertaken by the church in 19th century Ireland. The cathedral as a whole is an intricate, finely balanced relationship between art and architecture, where design, materials and liturgy combine to create the iconic building that is Saint Colman's Cathedral.

Cobh Cathedral is known for its wonderful sight and sound

Chapter 7
Protecting Heritage Churches for the Future

Many of the churches featured in this publication are subject to statutory protection. The early to late ruined medieval churches are generally considered to be of archaeological importance and are afforded statutory protection under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004. Churches post-dating 1700, most of which are still in active use, are generally included in the Record of Protected Structures and afforded statutory protection under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010. Some churches by virtue of their combined archaeological and architectural importance may be protected under both the National Monuments Act 1920-2004 and the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010.

The National Monuments Acts (1930-2004) defines and protects Ireland's archaeological heritage. Archaeological sites and monuments are entered into the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) established under Section 12 of the National Monuments Acts (1930-1994). Under this legislation, two months written notice must be given to the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for any works on or near a site listed on the RMP. In addition, the Cork County Development Plan has an objective to protect all known archaeological sites and consultation should be carried out with the Local Authority Archaeologist, prior to proceeding with proposals. Further information in relation to archaeological sites in the County is available on www.archaeology.ie and in the published series of Archaeological Inventories for County Cork.

The primary means by which we protect our architectural heritage is through the addition of structures to the Record of Protected Structures. Under the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010, a Local Authority must maintain a Record of Protected Structures (RPS). Structures that are considered to be of architectural, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest can be considered for inclusion in the RPS. The protection applied to a building on the RPS extends, for the very most part, to all parts of the structure -inside and outside -and to any features in the curtilage of the building (such as surrounding graveyards, mausolea, tombs and headstones, gates and railings, boundary walls, entrance avenues, tree planting schemes, etc.).

Under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010, planning permission is required if the proposed works would materially alter the character of the structure, in other words, interfere with the very reason(s) – both exterior and interior, for which the church was first deemed to be worthy of protection. Works that involve routine maintenance and repair and which are carried out in accordance with best conservation practice and employing appropriate materials and technologies would not necessarily require planning permission. Nevertheless, clarification should always be sought from the Local Authority Conservation Officer.

Many of our towns and villages as well as our designed landscapes and streetscapes are

Council Conservation team repointing masonry wall of medieval church.

Blacksmith repairing for some wrought iron graveyard gates in West Cork.

designated as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's), also under the Provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010. These ACA's can contain a whole range of different structures including our Heritage Churches, civic buildings, and notable commercial premises and houses. With respect to ACA's, any works which are deemed to materially alter the exterior character of the area, even where such works are normally considered to be exempted development, will require planning permission. Cork County Council has produced a most useful publication entitled 'Guidelines on the Management and Development of Architectural Conservation Areas' which is available online at www.corkcoco.ie/heritage. The publication is also available, free of charge, from the Planning Department, Floor 3, County Hall, Cork.

Inevitably some Heritage Churches have no formal protection and while Cork County is very well served by extensive archaeological and architectural surveys, there are those buildings that may not fall neatly into either category being post -1700 and therefore generally outside the archaeological timeframe but in such a ruinous condition that they may not be considered suitable for addition to the Record of Protected Structures. Equally, the significance of buildings may not be obvious on a visual inspection and may only come to light as part of a building project or through new research; this could have particular relevance in relation to thatched chapels or Mass-houses. Notwithstanding this the protection of our heritage is an ongoing process and does allow the opportunity to protect new sites and buildings that are deemed to be of significance. Cork County Council also includes policies and objectives for the general protection of the heritage within the County Development Plan.

Cork County Council is itself the owner and guardian of many Heritage Churches, both the ruins in medieval rural graveyards and bigger churches in towns. The Council has a dedicated Conservation Works Team, which specializes in the careful repair and conservation of our ruined medieval churches and have been instrumental in ensuring the survival of these structures for the benefit of future generations. The Council also works in partnership with a diverse range of stakeholders, to ensure that the integrity of this vital part of our heritage is managed in a balanced, sensitive and appropriate manner.

The Heritage Unit of Cork County Council is at hand to provide advice and information in respect of any proposed works to our Heritage Churches, designated as archaeological monuments, protected structures, or both. To contact the Heritage Unit, send an email to cork.heritage@corkcoco.ie or phone 021 4276891.

Chapter 8
Conclusion

Heritage Churches mean many things to many people. To the devout believer they are places of worship, worthy of respect and upkeep. To the clerics and celebrants they are places of belief where their vocational calling is physically expressed through the ceremonies they perform. To those interested in our collective archaeological and architectural heritage, they are of similar value, needing respectful admiration, understanding and safeguarding for the future.

Christian belief has been a constant in our society since the 5th century however the buildings used to express it have always been in a state of change, influenced by great historical events and changes in Christian approaches to worship, beliefs and values. As a building type, churches have been altered, redesigned, demolished and rebuilt; a reflection of the importance of the church building as a physical representation of spiritual devotion. From the ivy clad ruins, to the medieval monuments big and small, some still active, but mostly in ruin, from the initial tentative building of formal Roman Catholic churches in the early 19th Century through to the more recent powerful manifestation of the Gothic revival churches and monumental cathedrals of the late 19th century and beyond, church buildings provide an inspiring, rich and varied ecclesiastical heritage building stock.

Paradoxically, churches symbolically and physically are both constant and ever changing, something that is very evident even when considering their historical, cultural, archaeological and architectural development and while they are undoubtedly one of the most significant buildings types in terms of our archaeological and architectural heritage, the vast majority, particularly those of the 18th and 19th centuries, are still in use as public places of worship, making them very much a 'living heritage'. Therefore, in order to protect our ecclesiastical heritage for future generations, it is imperative that we understand their past to manage their future.

Learn More about Heritage Churches

There is a wide range of sources of information on County Cork Churches. As archaeologically and architecturally important buildings, many of the churches discussed in this book are described in some detail in the Archaeological Survey Database (**www.archaeology.ie**), and published in the five volumes of the Archeological Inventory of County Cork.

Another most useful source is the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). The NIAH is a National programme of survey and recording designed to help inform Local Authorities as to which buildings should be considered for inclusion on the RPS. Further information is available at **www.buildingsofireland.ie**.

Another great resource, which incorporates the RPS and the RMP as well as a range of other heritage aspects, is the Heritage Council's map viewer (available through **www.heritagecouncil.ie**).

As part of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, the Cork Archaeological Survey Team (1982-2009) carried out a comprehensive survey of numerous churches. Files from these visits can be viewed in the County Library.

Guidelines for a whole range of proposed works to historic structures are available on the website of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht including: Energy Efficieny in Traditional Buildings; A Guide to the Conservation of Places of Worship, A Guide to the Conservation and Repair of Masonary Ruins, A Guide to the Repair of Historic Windows, and many others – **www.ahg.gov.ie**.

For those with an interest in the archaeological development of the church there is a wonderful resource called "Archaeology in the Classroom". This is an excellent educational resource for everyone, not just for school-goers! See **www.itsabouttime.ie** for more information.

Another valuable source of information is Cork County Council's very own heritage website – **www.corkcoco.ie/heritage**. The Heritage Unit also periodically sends out a heritage update email, should you seek to subscribe, send an email to **cork.heritage@corkcoco.ie**.

Heritage Churches Poem By Conor Nelligan

A Church is its people, yet also a place,
A Structure that's built with four pillars of faith.
Facing the East towards the Rising Sun,
We pray to God for what we've become

For all that we've been and all that we've lost
We cannot lose faith, at any cost;
Our dearly departed, please talk to us now,
If we only could listen, if we only knew how

Life always needs a sense of direction,
A moral compass, the Lord's protection.
Here in the land of Saints and Scholars,
A few led the way for the people, the followers

Finbarr and Fachtna and Gobnait and more
To the house of God, they opened the door
These ecclesial sites are still with us today
Let us not lose this heritage, for that we might pray

For all those gone before who have shown us the way
Tomorrow's new future can start here today…

St Columba's RC Church in Douglas is a rectangular Barn church, built in 1814. It has a bellcote on its west gable.

St Marys and St Johns RC Church Ballincollig celebrated its 150th year in 2015. This formal building is a strong statement of confidence using the ornate Neo Gothic.

Temple Michael Church of Ireland at Mourneabbey was built in 1717 on the site of the earlier ruined medieval parish church.

Although we have no early Christian timber churches surviving in Cork, many can be seen on top of the Celtic Revival crosses of the late 19th /early 20th century, which are copying the Early Christian crosses (one of the sources of information for these churches).

St James church built in 1818, with a grant from the Board of First Fruits of £3500, replaced St Mary's Church to the east, which had fallen into disrepair.

Tullig Church of Ireland, just outside Baltimore; built in 1721 on the site of an earlier church.

Ruins of the Marshalstown Church of Ireland parish church built in 1830 immediately to the north of the ruins of a medieval parish church.

In a prominent location in Bandon, Church of the Immaculate Conception & St Patrick, built in 1861, replaced an earlier church on Chapel street.

Interior of St Marys RC Church Castlemagner, built in the mid 19th century, with a very fine open timber roof supported on stone corbels.

RC Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, dated 1907. Cullen uses the polychrome stone work to great effect.

Carrigaline Church of Ireland is a handsome edifice of hewn limestone, in Neo Gothic style having a square tower crowned with pinnacles and surmounted by an elegant and lofty octagonal spire. The Church was erected in 1823, near the site of the former church, and enlarged in 1835.

Early 19th century RC church at Ballygarvan. It is a typical church of the period reflecting the growing confidence of the Catholics who were now able to build formal solid churches for worship following the Penal laws of 18th century.

Unusually ornate RC Church of the Annunciation, Coolclough, was built in 1833, displaying all the fine gothic features especially on the front facade.

A modest Church of Ireland church at Bean Hill South near Clonakilty, built in 1821, on the site of an earlier church.

Church of Ireland, Corkbeg, built in 1881, close to the site of the Church of Ireland church, built in 1843. It replaced an earlier medieval parish church, which still stands in the graveyard.

A cast iron rainwater good and a cut stone drain cover at the Church of Ireland church in Corkbeg.
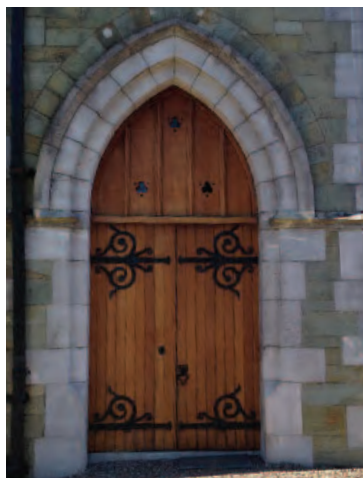
Church of Ireland Corkbeg - detail of door.

Dunmanway Methodist church was built in 1836 and is now used as a hall and the Dunmanway Visitor and Cultural Centre.

St Mary's Church of Ireland Dunmanway was built in 1821 on the site of an earlier 18th century church, with a loan from the Board of First Fruits.

One of the best preserved Early Ecclesiastical Enclosures or Vallums in Cork at Kilmacoo near Kanturk, with church and graveyard in the centre.

Gallery in Carrigaline Church of Ireland.

RC Church of the Most Holy Rosary, Kilcoe, dated 1905, with typical side aisles. Image courtesy of Paul Power.

The Church of Ireland church in Castletownroche was built in 1825 and is a handsome structure built on a prominent location on the site of an earlier church. The west tower is surmounted by a finely proportioned octagonal spire. Its construction was aided with a loan of £1250 from the Board of First Fruits.

Buttevant Franciscan Friary founded in 1251 by David Óg Barry. By the 16th century many of the buildings were in ruins.
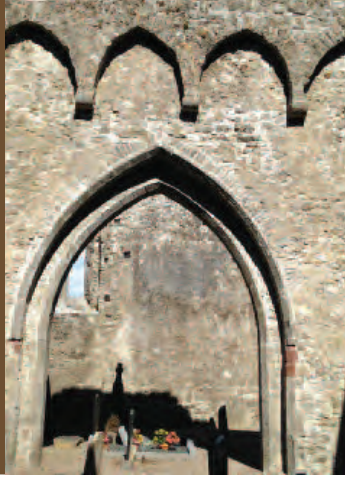
Early 19th century Roman Catholic church in Inchigeelagh, built to face the road to the north with a formal well-designed entrance and with a classical pediment on the gable, topped with a bellcote.

Innishannon Church of Ireland was built in 1761 with a bell tower added to west end. The tower fell during a recent storm and has recently been consolidated by Cork county Council. The church was abandoned when a new church was built at the west end of the village in 1856.

Church of Ireland Church at Dromagh, built in 1822.

St Marys RC Church Castlemagner is an elegant example of an RC church built in 1859-60 to replace an earlier, more humble, vernacular thatched chapel. It has a very fine open timber roof supported on stone corbels.

The Church of Ireland church in Mitchesltown is an elegant structure with a slim embattled tower and finely proportioned spire, which makes a wonderful closing vista at the end of George-street.

Macroom Church of Ireland built in 1823 with a loan of £1000 by the Board of First Fruits. This building is no longer in use as a church and is now owned by Cork County Council.

The modest pretty Neo-Gothic façade of the Methodist Church in Clonakilty.

Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Milford, dated 1903, is a fine example of the Neo-Gothic style of architecture. The Parochial house is located in background.

Medieval Augustinian Abbey at Ballybeg, Buttevant, founded in 1229 by Philip de Barry. Dovecote in foreground with remains of church behind.

St Michaels RC Church Rathbarry, built 1828. Image courtesy of Rose O Leary.

Church of the Immaculate Conception , Farran, built in 1860. Image courtesy of Eoghan Nelligan.

St. John the Baptist Church in Ovens is a beautiful classically designed church, built in 1831.
Image courtesy of Eoghan Nelligan.

St. Barrahane's Church of Ireland Church, Castletownshend, was built in the early 19th century.

Church of Ireland Church of St. Catherine's Kinsale was built in 1742 on the site of the earlier parish church of Rincurran. It was extensively renovated and reroofed in 1890 and there are proposals to turn it into a Cultural centre.
Sketch courtesy of Robert Maxwell.

St Nicholas' Church, Castlelyons, was built in the 1840's, replacing an earlier chapel. The above photo was taken on the day of the Thomas Kent State Funeral, 18th September, 2015.

Fine classical reredos at Ballintotis RC Church.

St. Coleman's RC Church, Macroom, built in 1841 and remodelled and enlarged in 1893 to the design of Dominic Coakley.

The bell tower is all that remains of St Anna's Church of Ireland church, Millstreet.
Image courtesy of Catherine Culloty.

Early 19th century St. Joseph's RC Church, Fornaught, Donoughmore, with an interesting bell tower.

St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church in Glantane, built in 1876.

St Lachtains Church, Kilnamartyra, built in 1839 and called after the patron saint who established a church in the 6th century. His hand is preserved in a relic known as Lachtain's Arm, which was greatly revered and many cures were attributed to it. It is now in the National Museum of Irleand.

Killeenemer parish church dating to the 11th/12 century. Image courtesy of Paul Cotter.

Killeenemer Church, with a Masons Mark. This was a practical way in medieval times to show how much work the mason had done. Image courtesy of Paul Cotter.

Church of Ireland parish church in Inchigeelagh, built in 1814 on the site of an earlier church.

View of Church in the Dominican Priory of the Holy Cross, Glanworth, founded by the Roche family in 1475.
Image courtesy of Paul Cotter.

Ornate mid 19th century Church of Ireland church at Glandore.
Image courtesy of Bob and Avril Cooke.

Mid 19th century Church of Ireland Church at East Ferry. Image courtesy of Joan Rockley.

Donoughmore Medieval Church possibly late 17th/early 18th century in date. Image courtesy of Gerard O Rourke.

Coolkelure Church of Ireland Dunmanway, celebrated its 150th year with a wonderful floral display during Heritage Week 2015.

Cobh Museum internal Roof beams. Image courtesy of Margaret Shine.

Church of Ireland at Clonmeen incorporated into south east corner of larger late medieval church. Image courtesy of Catherine Culloty.

The Church of Ireland Church in Castlemagner, as viewed from the south east, was built in 1816 to accommodate 120 people on the site of the medieval parish church. The Vestry and the heating system were added in 1887 and the chancel was added in the 1900's. Image courtesy of Catherine Culloty.

Ruins of late medieval church in Schull, which was extensively rebuilt in 1721, incorporating part of the earlier church in the north wall with its ogee headed window.

St Peters Church Carrigrohane. There has been a church on this site since the 17th century, but it was rebuilt in the 18th century and much improved in the mid 19th century, with the additon of a chancel, tower and spire added later.

Early 19th century RC Church on Cape Clear.

St. Gobnait's RC Church in Baile Mhúirne was built circa 1827.

Abbeystrewry Church of Ireland Church, Skibbereen.
Image courtesy of Adrian Healy and Perry O' Donovan.

Interior of St. Fachtna's Roman Catholic Church, Rosscarberry.
Image courtesy of Audrey Forde.

St Fachtna's RC Church Rosscarberry was built in 1820. Image courtesy of Audrey Forde.

Temple Kieran Church, Cape Clear Island. Pictured are the ruins of the late medieval church with arched door at west end of south wall, single light east window with unusual foil in centre and small aumberys in the north and south walls.

Image courtesy of Enda O' Flaherty.

Medieval parish church at Courtaparteen.

The ruins of the Church of Ireland Church in Glebe, near Cross, Skibbereen ,built in 1814, close to the site of Aghadown medieval church. It is set on the north shore of the Illen estuary overlooking Roaringwater bay.

Nave of church and tower in the medieval Franciscan Friary on Sherkin Island, founded by local chieftain Fineen O Driscoll in1449.

St Mary's Church in Waterloo, Blarney, was the parish church until the RC Church in Blarney was built in 1894. The unusual free standing bell tower was built in 1843. The landscaped path up to the church won the Muintir na Tíre County Cork Pride of Place Competition in 2015 and is well worth the visit.

Early 19th century St. Fachtna's Church in Adrigole.

St Mary's Church, Mallow. It was built in 1818 with a T shaped plan and extended in 1900 with the addition of a dramatic Romanesque style entrance facade with loft tower, to the design of George Ashlin.

Timoleague Friary was founded by the Franciscan Order in 1240. The abbey was built on the site of a monastic settlement founded by Saint Molaga in the 6th century.

St. Nicholas Church in Killavullen was built in 1839.

Church of Ireland church Newmarket. Image courtesy of Catherine Culloty.

Taur Church, Newmarket. Image courtesy of Catherine Culloty.

Taur Church is an early 19th century RC Church, Dernagree.

St Finbarr's RC Church in Bantry was built in 1825 in a stong Neo-Classical style.
Image courtesy of Paul Power.

St. Matthews Church of Ireland Church, Kilcoe.
Image courtesy of Paul Power.

Church of the Immaculate Conception in Clonakilty was built in 1880.

St Bartholomews RC Church in Kildorrery was built in 1838.

Remains of the late medieval parish church of Kilmurry, with double ogee headed east window, missing central mullion, and covered with an external hood moulding.

St. Matthew's Church of Ireland Church, in Aghadown, near Ballydehob.

Remains of late medieval parish church of Macloneigh. Note the double round headed east window below simple tracery.

A splendid church situated in Ballingeary.

Convent in Drishane, Millstreet.
Image courtesy of Catherine Culloty.

Remains of the medieval church of Eachros, now one of the many wonderful sites along the Beara-Breifne Way. This site, as the on-site interpretive sign reads, "has long been in use as a cillín, or burial ground for unbaptised and stillborn infants, adding a deep sense of poignancy to local memory".

St. Creabhnait's Church in Annakissa, Mallow. Designed by Sir John Benson of Cork, this fine church was built in the 1850s. Saint Chreabhnait, according to local knowledge, lived in the 5th century, and dedicated her life to God, having forsaken marriage (pers. comm. Breda Coakley and Elizabeth O' Brien).

Details of 30 featured churches

Exemplar	Church	Location
1	St Berrihert's Church	Tullylease
2	St Abban 's Church	Coole
3	St Molaga's Shrine	Labbamologa
4	St Molaga's Church	Aghacross
5	St Mary's Collegiate Church CoI	Youghal
6	St Colman's Cathedral CoI	Cloyne
7	Church of the Oaks	Kildorrery
8	Ballynacarriga Castle Chapel	Ballynacarriga (TH)
9	Augustinian Priory of St Mary	Bridgetown
10	Franciscan Friary of St Cyra	Kilcrea
11	St Gobnait's Church	Ballyvourney
12	St Caithighearn's Church	Kilcatherine
13	Robert Tynte's Church	Kilcredan
14	Medieval Parish Church of Ballintemple	Churchtown
15	Former Christ Church CoI	Bandon
16	Ruined Church	Caherbirrane
17	Church of the Immaculate Conception RC	Shanagarry
18	St Fachtna's CoI Cathedral	Rosscarbery
19	St Anne's CoI	Castlemartyr
20	St Patrick's RC	Dunmanway
21	St Luke's CoI	Douglas
22	St John the Baptist RC	Kinsale
23	Christ Church CoI	Fermoy
24	Church of the Ascension CoI	Timoleague
25	Church of the Holy Cross RC	Charleville
26	Church of the Nativity of the BVM RC	Ballyhooly
27	Methodist Meeting Hall	Bandon
28	Former Presbyterian Church	Clonakilty
29	Convent of Mercy	Bantry
30	St Colman's Cathedral RC	Cobh

Easting	Northing	RMP	NIAH	RPS
135940	118698	CO006-006006	N/A	00019
186040	95025	CO036-019002	N/A	00846
176349	117674	CO010-003004	N/A	00027
173332	111711	CO019-002002	N/A	N/A
210120	78059	CO067-029003	20823029	1126
191828	67679	CO088-019006	20826003	00587
170859	110447	CO018-047002	N/A	N/A
128771	50779	CO108-051003	N/A	00688
169323	99760	CO034-027002	N/A	00811
151063	68256	CO084-024002	N/A	00556
119823	76807	CO058-034007	N/A	00369
63965	53235	CO0101-005001	N/A	00668
201420	69954	CO077-043002	N/A	00536
191588	73727	CO076-030002	N/A	N/A
149162	55170	CO110-091008	20844035	00701
130542	79897	CO059-097	N/A	N/A
198130	66438	CO089-009002	20908918	00599
128673	36589	CO143-023008	20855029	00790
196249	73323	CO077-054003	20825019	00530
123691	53185	CO107-053002	20838003	00683
169949	69263	N/A	20871042	00481
163707	50598	CO112-034003	20851011	???
181134	98914	CO035-021	20821022	167
147138	43857	CO0123-051	20856005	01375
153316	122973	N/A	20806001	01045
172829	99309	N/A	20903416	00289
149253	55024	CO110-019010	20844187	00951
138338	41430	N/A	20846157	20000042
100083	48342	N/A	20834003	01295
179807	66562	N/A	20827192	10016001

Glossary of Terms

Age of Enlightenment

This refers to a time from the mid 17th century through to the 18th century when many people began to question the established beliefs of the medieval times. Prompted by the scientific revolution of the 16th & early 17th centuries, writers and thinkers began to use a rational and scientific approach to resolving religious, political, economic and social issues. Thinking developed that people had equal rights and value. This ultimately led to key historic events such as the French and American revolutions. In Ireland, this prompted the relaxation of the Penal Laws.

Aisle

A passageway, which seperates seating areas or between seating areas and a wall in the body of the nave, within a church.

Altar

The table that is used when preforming ceremonies in a church. It is located near the east wall of the chancel and is generally under a window.

Altar Step

As the altar is such an important area within the chancel the altar step or steps separate the celebrant from the congregation and the elevation adds to the importance of the altar.

Arch

An arrangement of stones in a curved or pointed fashion over a span of space or an opening in a wall. The arch is constructed in such a way that it supports its own weight and potentially the weight above it.

Aumbry

A cupboard built into a wall where the celebrant stores the sacred vessels near the altar.

Bellcote

A small shelter, built in stone or brick, which contains one or more bells and is located on the gable of a church that does not have a tower.

Board of First Fruits

This was a Church of Ireland body established in 1711, to support the building of Anglican churches in Ireland. This was funded from taxes collected on clerical income, which were in turn, funded by tithes. In the early 19th century substantial funds were given to the Board by the Westminster Parliament, following the Act of Union of 1801. This was used to support the building of approximately 700 new churches throughout the country. The Board was replaced by the Ecclesiastical Commission following the Church Temporalies Act of 1833.

Brehon Law

This was the statute that governed the people of Ireland during early Medieval times. The laws were in existence until the 17th century when English law was enforced.

Buttress

An architectural structure that strengthens a wall. It is a feature of a masonry wall and can be built into or against it as a form of support and in Gothic buildings permitted taller and wider windows.

Chamfered Pillars

These pillars are created by cutting off the sharp corners or by cutting out grooves in the length of a stone column.

Chancel

This is the east section of the church where the religious ceremonies take place and it generally contains the altar or the communion table in Anglican churches. It can sometimes be separated in medieval churches from the nave by a rood screen.

Chevron

A V shaped pattern – the V can be facing different angles. A number of chevrons arranged together give a zigzag effect. This form of decoration is common in Romanesque architecture.

Choir

The part of a church immediately west of the chancel. It derived its name from the fact that it was where benches were located for those who sang or chanted during Mass.

Church

The name given to the building where Christians worship. The complexity of the buildings vary through the centuries from small timber structures to vast and ornate stone-built cathedrals.

Cloister

Derived from the Latin word for enclosure, a cloister is a covered walkway, usually shaped like a quadrangle or square and located to one side of a monastic or convent church. All of the monastic buildings are usually arranged around the cloister, to allow rapid movement to and from the church.

Collegiate Church

A Church where the daily office of worship is maintained by a college of canons, a community of priests who did not take monastic vows, but who offered Masses, prayers and songs for their benefactors.

Cruciform

This term means having the shape of a cross. It refers to the lay-out of a Gothic style church whereby the nave and the chancel have two transepts, one jutting out to each side, giving a cross shape. This is of course extremely symbolic.

Finial

An ornament or distinctive decoration at the apex of the roof of a timber or stone building

Gothic Style/Gothic Revival

An architectural style that flourished in western Europe from the 12th to the 16th centuries and enjoyed a widespread revival in the 19th. Some of the features of the style include pointed arches, flying buttresses and large windows with ornate tracery. The aim of the design was to leave as much light as possible into the building. Elements of the Gothic style were reused in new churches from the 19th century onwards, in what became known as the Gothic Revival.

Hagiography

The term given to written descriptions of the lives of saints.

Lady Chapel

A separate chapel within a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary. It would typically contain an additional altar.

Lancet

A slender, narrow window with a pointed arch at its top. The name came about because of its resemblance to a lance.

Mason's Mark

A symbol etched into a dressed stone. It was done by the mason to identify his work.

Mass Houses

A place of worship used in times when the Penal Laws suppressed public worship for Roman Catholics.

Medieval

This refers to the period from the 5th to the 16th century.

Mortuary Chapel

This can either stand alone or be attached to a church. Its purpose is to house a tomb and it would often have been constructed and used for the interment of one family who were benefactors of the church.

Mullion

A vertical piece that separates the different sections of a window.

Nave

The nave is located west of the chancel and is the main part of the church used by the congregation who come to worship. It is generally divided by aisles.

Neo-Classical Architecture

This appears in the mid 18th century and is a revival of the ancient Greek and Roman style of Architecture. Its characteristics are grandeur of scale and the use of columns, round-headed arches, simple triangular pediments and cornice mouldings.

Neo-Gothic Architecture

The revival of the Medieval Gothic style that took place in the 19th century

Oculus

This is the Latin word for eye and is used to describe a circular opening or window. In many churches you will see numerous oculi decorating the top of an ornate stained glass window.

Ogee-headed Window

A decorative devise to the top of a narrow lancet window, formed by two mirrored S-shaped curves, which are both convex and concave. These are commonplace in churches of 15th/16th century date.

Orientation

Most churches are built in an east-west direction. The east end of the church contains the altar in the chancel and to the west is the nave with possible transepts jutting out to the north and south. Symbolically, light flooding through the east window from the rising sun commemorates the risen Christ. However, on a much more practical level the rising sun lights the altar for the first Mass of the day.

Penal Laws

These were a set of laws introduced in the late 17th century, following a succession of suppression of popery laws, and continued to be enforced into the first half of the 18th century. Both economic and religious, which restricted property ownership and other civil liberties, as well as the freedom to public worship for those that were not part of the Established Protestant Church. They effectively drove Roman Catholic worship underground until the middle of the 18th century, and were also applied to other Non-Conformist religions such as the Presbyterians and the Quakers.

Piscina

A small wall niche in the chancel, near the altar. The base of the niche is rounded like a bowl, with a drain hole at the bottom. This is where the water used to wash the sacred vessels during communion is disposed of.

Quoins

Masonry blocks built into the external angles of a wall. They are usually differentiated from the adjoining walls by the materials used and can be ornate.

Reformation

A 16th-century movement that aimed to rectify the abuses within the Catholic Church.

Reredos

A screen made from wood or stone, located directly behind the altar and generally decorated with sacred symbols.

Romanesque

This was the architectural style favoured in Medieval Europe up to the twelfth century and took its influence from the buildings of the ancient Roman Empire. Romanesque buildings tended to be robust in appearance with lots of plain, featureless walls. One of the main traits of this style is the use of semi-circular arches above windows and doors. In Ireland, it developed an almost unique Hiberno-Romanesque style, which was most commonly used in the decoration of doorways and windows. This style made use of decorative elements such as chevrons, and stylised animal and human heads to embellish these portals.

Rood Screen

Although no medieval rood screens survive in Ireland, we know that they would have existed and that their purpose was to separate the congregation in the nave from the celebrant in the chancel. Rood is the old form of the word cross and we know that the rood screens were highly decorated and that there was a large wooden cross above the screen.

Rustication

Treatment of ashlar stone to emphasize the stone shape or texture. It takes many forms such as channels, chamfered and rock faced.

Sacristy

A room where the sacred vessels and vestments are stored when they are not in use. It can either be found in the church itself or as a separate annexe building.

Sarcophagus

An ornate stone coffin either displayed above ground or buried.

Sedilia

A stone seat built into the south wall of the chancel. It was used at various times by the celebrants during the course of the Mass.

Snecking

Courses broken by smaller stone

Splay

An opening – such as a window or doorway, that is constructred in such a way that it is wider at one side of the wall than at the other. It is usually winder on the inside to throw light into the interior of the building.

String Course

A projecting piece of stone or brickwork, which is often ornate and runs externally and horizontally around a building. It is used as a decorative device to break up a monotonous area of wall fabric and often marks the floor levels in a multi-story building or the stages of a bell tower.

Synod

In modern times this refers to the governing body of a church. Historically it would have been used to refer to a meeting of clergy and perhaps some laity with the purpose of making decision on the doctrine of the church.

Tomb

The tomb wall in a Medieval church is located in the North wall of the chancel. This was regarded as the most revered burial place, right beside the altar. Only very important people were buried in these tombs, either those high up in the religious order or wealthy patrons of the parish.

Tracery

Ornamental stonework that supports the glass in a Gothic style window.

Transept

In a cruciform church, the transepts are the small extensions/projections to the north and south of the main body of the building and allow space for extra Masses to be said.

Truss

A framework of timber that is designed to support a roof.

Vestry

A room, either within a church or adjacent to it, that is used by the clergy for changing into ceremonial vestments.

Voussoir

The tapered stones which, when combined into a circular or curving point, form an arch.

References

Anon. 1839 Castlemartyr or A tale of Old Ireland. Cunningham, London.

Anon. 1867 Irish Builder, IX, pp.120-121

Anon. 1877 Irish Builder, XIX, p.31.

Anon. 1892 Eugine Daly Stained Glass Artist and Ecclesiastical Decorator. Strattends Dublin Cork and the south of Ireland commcical directory. Strattons, Dublin.

Bence-Jones, M. 1988 A Guide to Irish Country Houses. Constable, London.

Berry, H. 1905 Sheriffs of the County of Cork: Henry III to 1660. The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquarians of Ireland 15, pp.39-52.

Brunicardi, N. 1984 Christ Church Fermoy. Eigse Books, Fermoy.

Caulfield, R. 1882 Annals of the Cathedral of St. Coleman-Cloyne. Purcell & Co., Cork.

Cleary, R.M. 1995:035 Labbamolaga Middle, Cork. www.excavations.ie

Coombes, Rev. J. 1971 Fr. James Doheny (1786-1866) Nation Builder. The Fold 1971 - Diocesan Magazine of the Diocese of Cork and Ross.

Cotter, E. (2012) A report on some architectural fragments from the Medieval Church at Kildorrery, Co. Cork for Cork County Council.

Cotter, E. (2006) Architectural change and the parish church in post –Reformation Cork (The Parish in Medieval and early Modern Ireland. Ed. Elizabeth FitzPatrick & Raymond Gillespie)

Cross, F. L., ed. (2005). "Francis of Assisi". The Oxford dictionary of the Christian church. Oxford University Press.New York.

Dickson, D. 2005 Old World Colony Cork and South Munster 1630-1830. Cork University Press, Cork.

Dowse, Rev. J. 2001 The Coming of John and Charles Wesley to Bandon. The Bandon Historical Journal 17, pp.3-6.

Duffy, S. 2012 Part 1: Origins. In Duffy, S. (Ed.) Atlas of Irish History. Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.

French, N. 2003 Rosscarbery – Its History & Development. In Peters, C. (Ed.) Saint Fachtna's Cathedral, Ross A History. Published by the Select Vestry, Ross Union of Parishes.

Guest, E. 1937 Ballyvourney and Its Sheela-na-gig. Folklore 48(4), pp.374-384.

Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R. N. 1970 Medieval Religious Houses of Ireland. Longman, London.

H.M.R. 1977 'Review, addenda' in The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquarians of Ireland Vol.107, 152-156.

Harris, D. 1938 Saint Gobnait, Abbess of Ballyvourney. Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland 8(2), pp.272-277.

Hurley, P. 1906 Some Account of the Family of O'Hurly. Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, 11, pp.76-88.

Hutchison, S. 2003 Towers, Spires and Pinnacles: A History of the Cathedrals and Churches of the Church of Ireland. Wordwell, Bray.

Irish Builder Vol IX 1867, pp.120-121 (image page 121).

Irish Builder, Vol. XIX, 1877, p.31.

Kalkreuter, Britta 2001 'Boyle Abbey and The School of the West.

Leask, H. 1938 Tullylease, Co. Cork: its Churches and Monuments. Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, 43, pp.101-108.

Leask, H. 1955 Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings Volume One. Dundalgan Press, Dundalk.

Leask, H. 1960 Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings Volume Two. Dundalgan Press, Dundalk.

Leask, H. 1960 Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings Volume Three. Dundalgan Press, Dundalk.

Lee, P. 1926 The ruined monuments of Sir Robert Tynte and Sir Edward Harris in Kilcredan Church Bellycrenane. The Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society. 31 no 134, pp.86-7.

Lewis, S. 1837 Topographical Dictionary of Ireland. Samuel Lewis & Co., London.

Lober, R. 1981 Sculptured Memorials to the Dead in Early 17th century Ireland. Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, 81C, pp.267-293.

Lober, R. et al. 2014. Ecclesiastical Architecture. In Lober, R. Campbell, H. Hurley, L. Montague, J, and Rowley, E. (Eds.) Art and Architecture of Ireland: Volume IV, 1600-2000. Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

MacCotter, Paul 2013 A History of the Medieval Diocese of Cloyne. Columba Press, Dublin

Maher, D. 1999 Kilcrea Friary – Franciscan Heritage in County Cork. Tower Books, Cork.

Monk. M. and Sheehan, J. (Eds.) 1998 Early Medieval Munster Archaeology, History and Society. Cork University Press, Cork.

Moss, R. 2003 A History of Ross Cathedral. In Peters, C. (Ed.) Saint Fachtna's Cathedral, Ross A History.

Published by the Select Vestry, Ross Union of Parishes.

Moss, R. 2008 Appropriating the past: Romanesque Spolia in 17th century Ireland. Architectural History, 51, pp.63-86.

Moss, R. 2014a Augustinian Canons (Canons Regular, Austin Canons). In Moss, R. (Ed.) Art and Architecture of Ireland: Volume I, Medieval c.400 – C.1600. Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Moss, R. 2014b Cross Slabs. In Moss, R. (Ed.) Art and Architecture of Ireland: Volume I, Medieval c. 400 – c. 1600. Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Moss, R. 2014c Chapels. In Moss, R. (Ed.) Art and Architecture of Ireland: Volume I, Medieval c. 400 – c. 1600. Royal Irish Academy., Dublin.

Ní Ghrádaigh, J. 2003 Fragments of a Twelfth-Century Doorway at the Church of St Multose, Kinsale? The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 133, pp.68-77.

O'Brien, W. 2012 Iverni: A Prehistory of Cork. Collins Press, Cork.

Ó Carragáin, T. 2010 Churches in Early Medieval Ireland. Paul Mellon Centre/Yale University Press, New Haven & London.

Ó Carragáin, T. 2014 Shrine Chapels. In Moss, R. (Ed.) Art and Architecture of Ireland: Volume I, Medieval c.400 – C.1600. Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Ó Clabaigh, C. 2012 The Friars in Ireland 1224 – 1540. Four Courts Press, Dublin.

O'Donoghue, A.J. 1970 History of Bandon. Cork.

O' Donovan, John (1990) Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland. De Burca. Dublin

O' Dwyer, F. 1989 A Victorian Partnership- the Architecture of Ashlin and Pugin. In J. Garby (ed.) 150 Years of Architecture in Ireland. Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland, Dublin.

O'Flanagan, P. 1988 Irish Historic Towns Atlas No.3 Bandon, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

O'Keeffe. T. 1998 Architectural Traditions of the Early Medieval Church in Munster. In Monk. M. and Sheehan, J. (Eds.) Early Medieval Munster Archaeology, History and Society. Cork University Press, Cork.

O'Keeffe, T. 1999 An Anglo-Norman Monastery Bridgetown Priory and the Architecture of the Augustinian Canons Regular in Ireland. Cork County Council/Gandon Editions, Kinsale.

O'Keeffe, T. 2000 Medieval Ireland – An Archaeology. Tempus Publishing, Stroud.

O'Kelly, M. J. 1952 St., Gobnet's House, Ballyvourney, Co. Cork. Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, 57, pp.18-40.

O'Kelly, M. J. 1958 Church Island near Valencia, Co. Kerry. Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy 59C, pp.57-136.

O'Kelly, M. J., Lynch, A. and Cahill, M 1975 Archaeological Survey and Excavation of St. Vogue's Church, Enclosure and Other Monuments at Carnsore Co. Wexford. Dublin.

O'Sullivan, A., McCormick, F., Kerr, T. R. and Harney, L. 2014 Early Medieval Ireland AD 400-1100 The Evidence from Archaeological Excavations. Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

Ó Rian, P. 2011 A Dictionary of Irish Saints. Four Courts Press, Dublin.

Ó Rian-Raedel, D. 1998 The Question of 'Pre-Patrician' Saints of Munster. In Monk. M. and Sheehan, J. (Eds.) Early Medieval Munster Archaeology, History and Society. Cork University Press, Cork.

Pochin Mould, D. 1991 Discovering Cork. Brandon Books, Dingle.

Power, B. 2007 Fermoy on the Blackwater, Bridgetown Press, Cork.

Power, D. et al. 1992 Archaeological Inventory of County Cork. Volume I: West Cork. Stationery Office, Dublin.

Power, D. et al. 1994 Archaeological Inventory of County Cork. Volume II: East and South Cork. Stationery Office, Dublin.

Power, D. et al. 1997 Archaeological Inventory of County Cork. Volume III: Mid Cork. Stationery Office, Dublin.

Power, D. et al. 2000 Archaeological Inventory of County Cork. Volume IV: North Cork. Stationery Office, Dublin.

Ronan, S. et al. 2009 Archaeological Inventory of County Cork. Volume V. Stationery Office, Dublin.

Shaffery P and Shaffery M. Buildings of Irish TownsTreasures of everyday architecture (1983)

Shaffery P and Shaffery M. Irish Countryside Buildings (1985)

Sheehan, J. 2009 A Peacock's Tale: Excavations at Caherlehillan, Iveragh, Ireland. Nancy Edwards (Ed.) The Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 29, pp. 191-206.

Smith, Charles (1815) The Ancient and Present State of the County and City of Cork. New edn. John Connor. Cork

Smith, W. 1830. A Consecutive History of the Rise, Progress, and Present State of Wesleyan

Methodism in Ireland. T.W. Doolittle, Dublin.

Stacey, Robin Chapman (1998) Among Druids and High Kings. Caxton Publishing Group, London.

Stalley, R. 2012 Cathedral Building in Thirteenth Century Ireland. In Stalley, R. (Ed.) Irish Gothic Architecture Construction, Decay and Reinvention. Wordwell, Dublin.

Stout, G. and Stout, M. 2011 Early Landscapes: from Prehistory to Plantation. In F.H.A. Aalen, Kevin Whelan and Matthew Stout (Eds.) Atlas of the Irish rural landscape (2nd Edition). Cork University Press, Cork.

St Ledger, A. 2013 Cork, Cloyne and Ross. In Costecalde, C and Walker, B. (Eds.) The Church of Ireland An Illustrated History. Booklink, Hollywood, Co. Down.

Stalley, R. 2012 'Cathedral Building in Thirteenth Century Ireland'. In Stalley, R. (Ed.) Irish Gothic Architecture Construction, Decay and Reinvention. Wordwell, Dublin.

'The Conservation of Places of Worship' Advice series Department Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (2011) Travers, R. 1985 The Church of the Ascension, Timoleague. Timoleague Historical News Sheet, 1, pp.1-4.

Travers, R. 1985 The Church of the Ascension, Timoleague. Timoleague Historical News Sheet, 1, pp. 1-4.

Tsarion, M. (2007) The Irish Origins of Civilization Volume 1. Taroscopes; Seattle USA.

Williams, J. 1994 A Companion Guide to Architecture in Ireland 1837-1921. Irish Academic Press, Dublin.

Williams, J. 1994 Architecture in Ireland 1837-1921. Irish Academic Press. Dublin

Wilson, A. 2004 The Building of St Colman's Cathedral, Cobh. Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies, 7, pp. 233-265.

Church towers and steeples reaching for the sky, are landmark beacons and powerful symbols of faith.

Image courtesy of MacDara Ó Hicí.

Index

This illustrated publication tells the story of heritage churches in the County of Cork, from the earliest times right up to the recent past. With over 200 illustrations, this publication will provide the reader with a great insight into the heritage churches of the County; their different styles, dates of construction and the many fascinating details related to them.

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

DANIEL NOONAN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY