



ENVIRONMENT
AND HERITAGE
SERVICE

NISMR: Main Details

SMR Number DOW 043:085
Townland CARNACAVILL
Edited Type MULTIPERIOD CHURCH, GRAVEYARD AND ROUND TOWER: MAGHERA
Grid Ref J37223411
Council DOWN
Protection State Care and Scheduled

Site Summary This site consists of a modern church, a ruined medieval church (possibly C13th) & the stump of a round tower, set in a roughly circular graveyard. In the graveyard are several simple cross-carved stones & a fragment of C13th grave slab. Traces of a smaller enclosure can be seen in the graveyard. The round tower is c.100m NW of the graveyard; its upper part blew down in 1710 & the remaining stump is c.5.5m high. Excavation discovered intense activity in Early Christian times. See SM7 for further details.

Last Described	15/03/1995	Described By	DM
Map	1G255	Altitude	0-50 F
Site Name	MAGHERA CHURCH		
Parish	MAGHERA	Barony	IVEAGH UPR;LWR HALF
Town	Other Ref		
General Type	ECCLESIASTICAL SITE	General Period	E.CHRIST. MED/L.MED
Specific Type	Specific Period		
ROUND TOWER	E.CHRIST.		
GRAVEYARD	MED/L.MED		
CHURCH	MED/L.MED		
Land Use on Site	Land Use Around Site		
Cemetery			
Threats	Condition	SUBSTANTIAL REMAINS	
NONE APPARENT			
Input By	Date		
Last Edited By James Bamford	Date	16/04/2008	

Print

Dr. Hamilton

During a visit to Maghera Parish Church the rector, Rev. B.R. Russell, drew my attention to the James Orange Hall, now in the ownership of the church. He asked me to enquire if the Department would be interested in joining with the church in using the hall as an interpretive centre for the area including the round tower and other monuments.

Perhaps you will arrange a reply direct.

He is at the Rectory, Dundermy, Co. Down.

The James Orange Hall is adjacent to the church entrance.

~~At~~ think

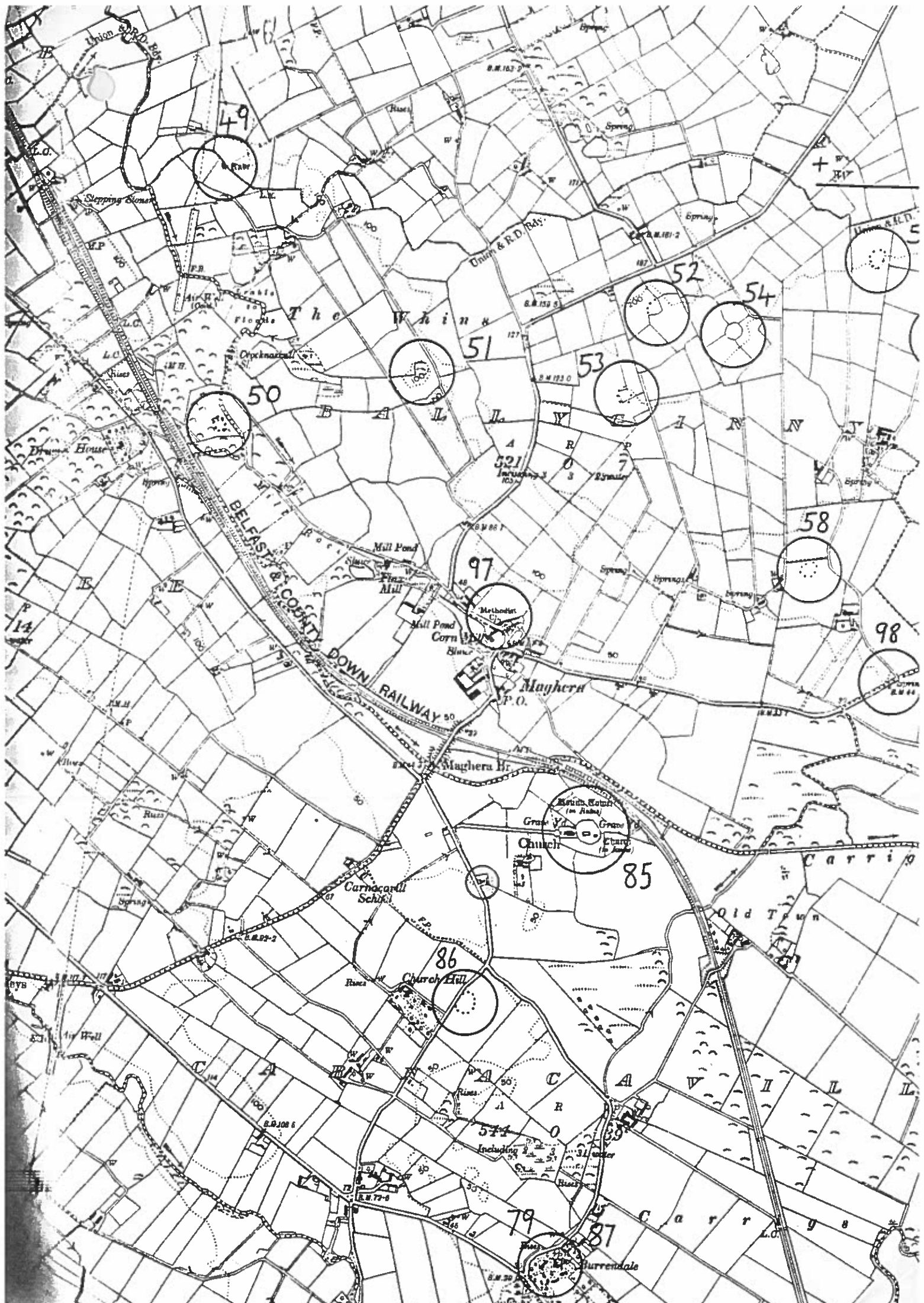
16/7/90

SM7/ DOWN 43:85

Mrs Givers,

Please would you get a map attached to this (but only a temporary file as it will be a B-file matter)? I can't visualise the Orange Hall tho' I dug at Maghera! We don't get a lot of visitors, but there are possibilities. Please then pass to Mr. Fisher initial views, but NB a letter to Rev. Russell is needed.

Ann Hamlin. 18.7.9



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85

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The Wain

Maghera P.O.

Carnacall School

Church Hill

Methodist Church

Old Town

Surrendale

BELFAST & COUNTY DOWN RAILWAY

Carriaga

Carriaga

Stepping Stone

Mill Pond

Mill Pond

Corn Mill

Maghera

Maghera Br.

Grass Yd.

Including 2 3 31

Including 2 3 31

Including 2 3 31

B.M. 103 0

B.M. 101 2

B.M. 159 5

B.M. 193 0

B.M. 06 1

B.M. 92 2

B.M. 108 6

B.M. 72 6

B.M. 20

L.O.

L.O.

L.O.

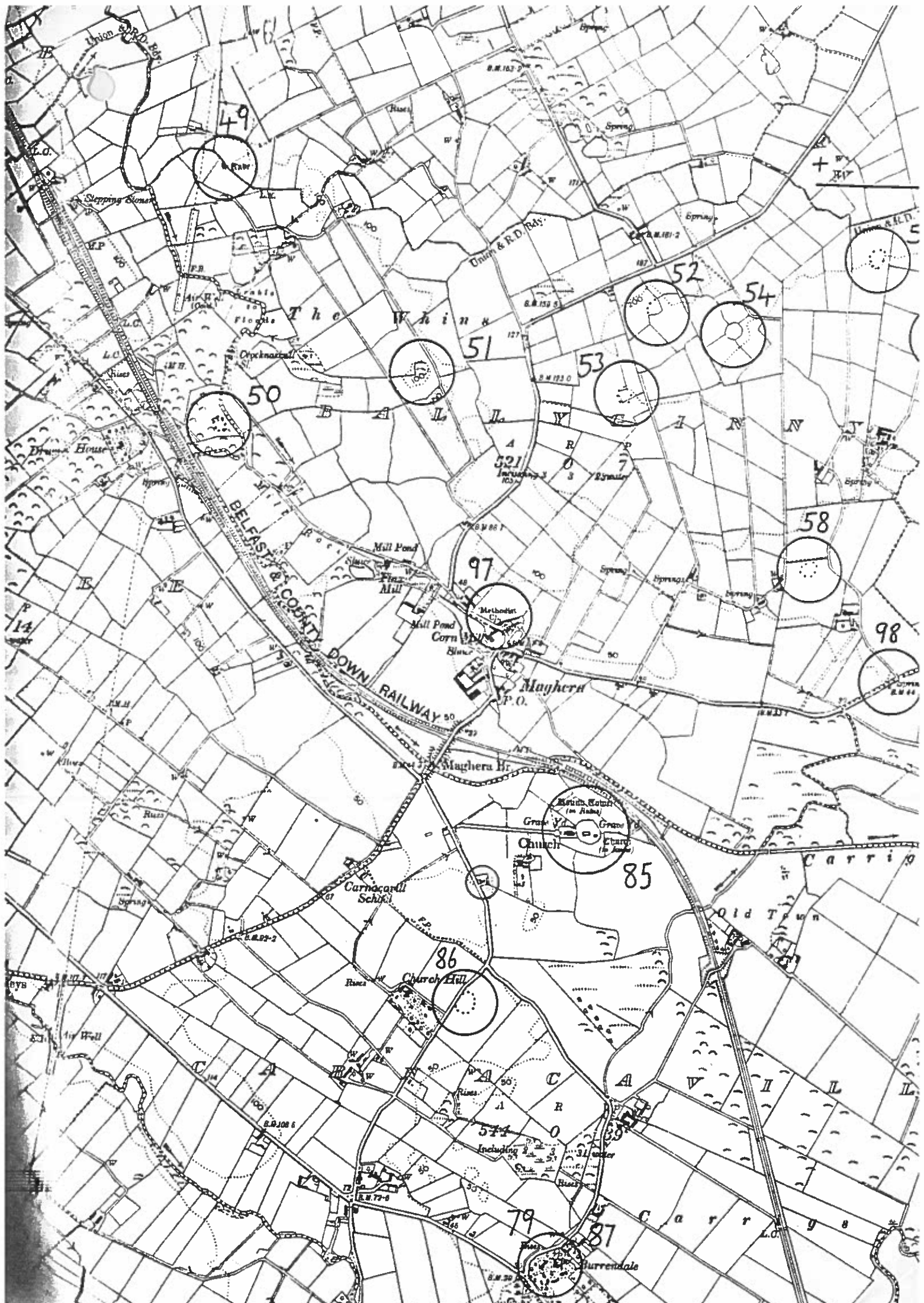
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This ancient ecclesiastical site lies on low ground S. of Maghera village and within 150 m. of the W. bank of Carrigs River. In an introduction to an excavation report of 1965 Dr. Hamlin notes that the site consists of a modern church (1825), a ruined medieval church (possibly 13th century) in a roughly circular graveyard, and the stump of a round tower. In the graveyard are several simple cross-inscribed stones and a fragment of a 13th. century grave slab. The graveyard wall has been claimed to be the monastic cashel, but it may simply be the graveyard boundary. Traces of a smaller enclosure can be seen in the graveyard, but the area is densely buried in and the ground level has risen considerably. The round tower is about 100 m. N.W. of the graveyard. It's upper part was blown down in about 1710 and it 'lay at length and entire on the ground, like a huge gun without breaking to pieces' (Harris, 1744, 82). The remaining stump is about 5.5 m. high, roughly built of boulders with split stone pinnings. The entrance at the E. is about 1.7 m. above the ground.

Historically the site is connected with the 6th. century St. Donard, who is the eponymous source for the highest mountain in the Mourne range, but of whom little is known. Reeves considered an orbit under 506 in the Annals of the Four Masters was too early (Reeves, 1847). Giraldus Cambrensis stated (Top. Hib. III, 2) that the saint founded a "nobile monasterium" at the foot of the Mournes. There are several references in medieval times to Maghera as a parish church but not as a monastery. In the 17th. century Colgan recorded that St. Donard's bell and shoe were preserved in the church with great veneration. The earliest name for the site appears to be Rathmurbhuilg - "the rath at the sea swell". Other names include Fortmurbhuilg (1152), Rath (1438), Rathra (1610) and Maghera (1622).

Dr Hamlin's excavation discovered evidence of intensive activity on the site during the Early Christian Period. The absence of English-style medieval pottery suggested that the life of the monastery may have ended before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans. An excavation carried out by Dr. C. Lynn found a ditch about

4-5 m, inside the line of the surviving graveyard boundary hedge to the S. of the modern church, Dr. Lynn interpreted this as part of an enclosure ditch that would have been a typical feature of an ecclesiastical site in the Early Christian Period,

(A Latin cross inscribed stone thought to have been from this site but previously preserved at Burrendale (an A.S.C.D., [No. (3)], p. 307) has been removed to a new site noted in the SM7 file for DOWN 43:79)

Jope, H.M., (Ed.) *Archaeological Survey of Co. Down* (Belfast, 1966) pp. 306-7.

The Round Towers of Ulster, U.I.A. IV (1856), 131.

Hamlin, A. *Early Christian Churches in Ulster* (Ph.D. dissertation in library of Queen's University, Belfast, 1976 pp. 645-652 (Incl. further bibliog.).

Reeves, W. *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor and Dromore* (Dublin, 1847) pp. 27-28, 154-5, 207-8.

Chart, D.A. (Ed.) *A Preliminary Survey of the Ancient Monuments in Northern Ireland* (Belfast, 1940) p. 125

Harris, W. *The Ancient and Present State of the County of Down* (Dublin 1744) pp. 82, 121.

Dourdieu, *Down*, (1802), pp. 287-8

J.R.S.A.I 16 (1883), pp. 20-2.

O'Laverty, J. *An Historical Account of the Diocese of Down and Connor*, vol. I (Dublin 1878), p. 47-56.

Lett, Canon H.W., *J.R.S.A.I* 35 (1905), pp. 230-3.

O'Donovan, O.S. *Letters*, (1909), 72-9.

Evans, E.E., *Mourne Country* (1951), pp. 86-8, 93-4, 99-101.

Evans, E.E., field note-book IV p. 118 (SM5/31).

U.I.A 8 (1902), p. 198.

P.R.I.A 2 nd. Series, 1 (1870-74), p. 275.

J.R.S.A.I 42 (1912) pp. 225-6.,

DOWN 43:85

March 1995

DM

STATE CARE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF NORTHERN IRELAND

Historic Monuments and Buildings Branch DOENI

MR	Td	Type	
DOWN 43:55	CARNACAVILL	Church, graveyard & round tower	
No.	Site Name	Parish	Alt
	Maghera Church		50' -
3	GR	Barony	DC
255	J 3717 3415		

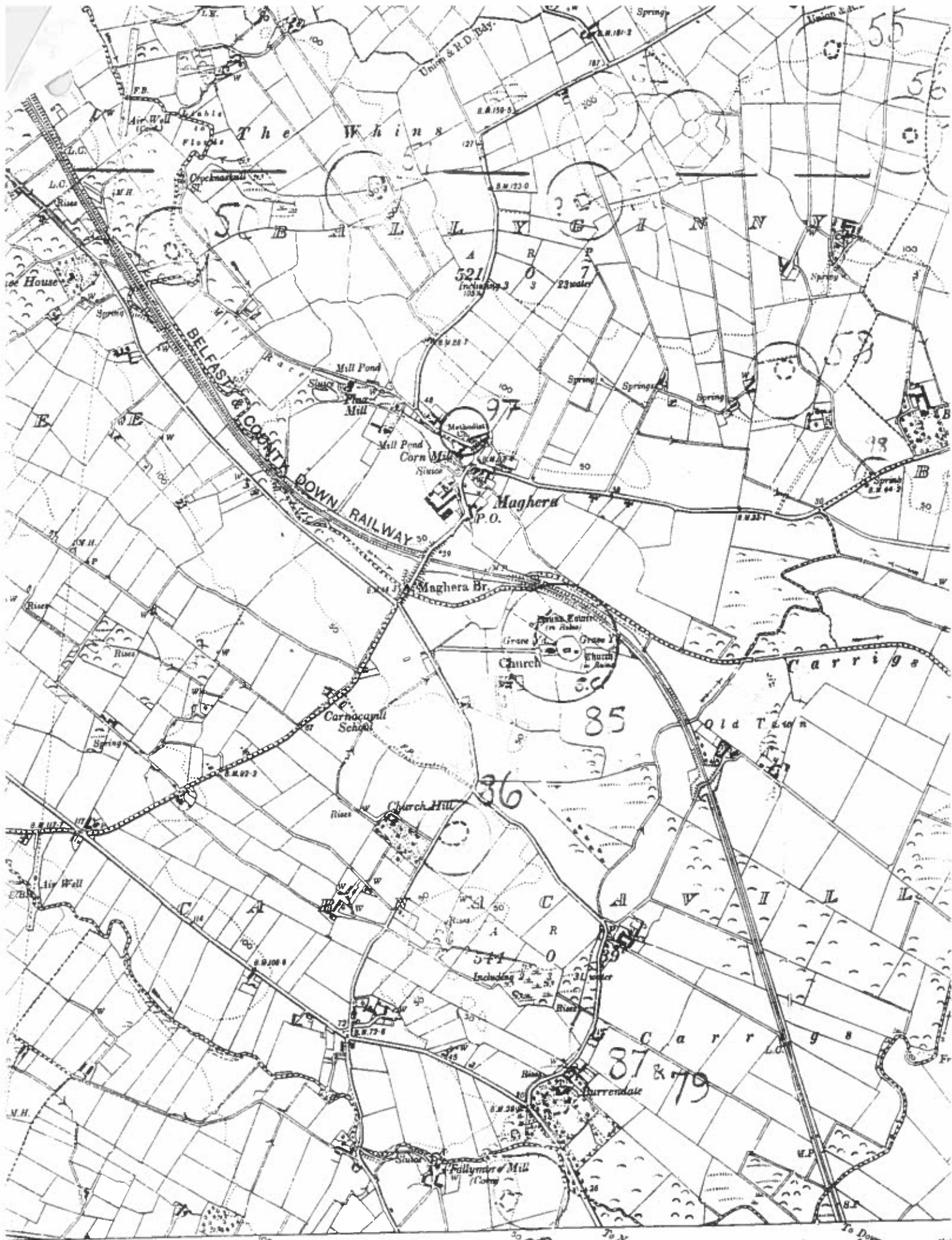
IS

IB

Condition	Substantial	Threat	01.	Check/Action	Schedule
22	remains				
Land use	4/36 Graveyard & pasture 36			Field boundaries	
Site description				Photos?	✓

OVER

DM	Date of visit	15/3/95	SM2	Input
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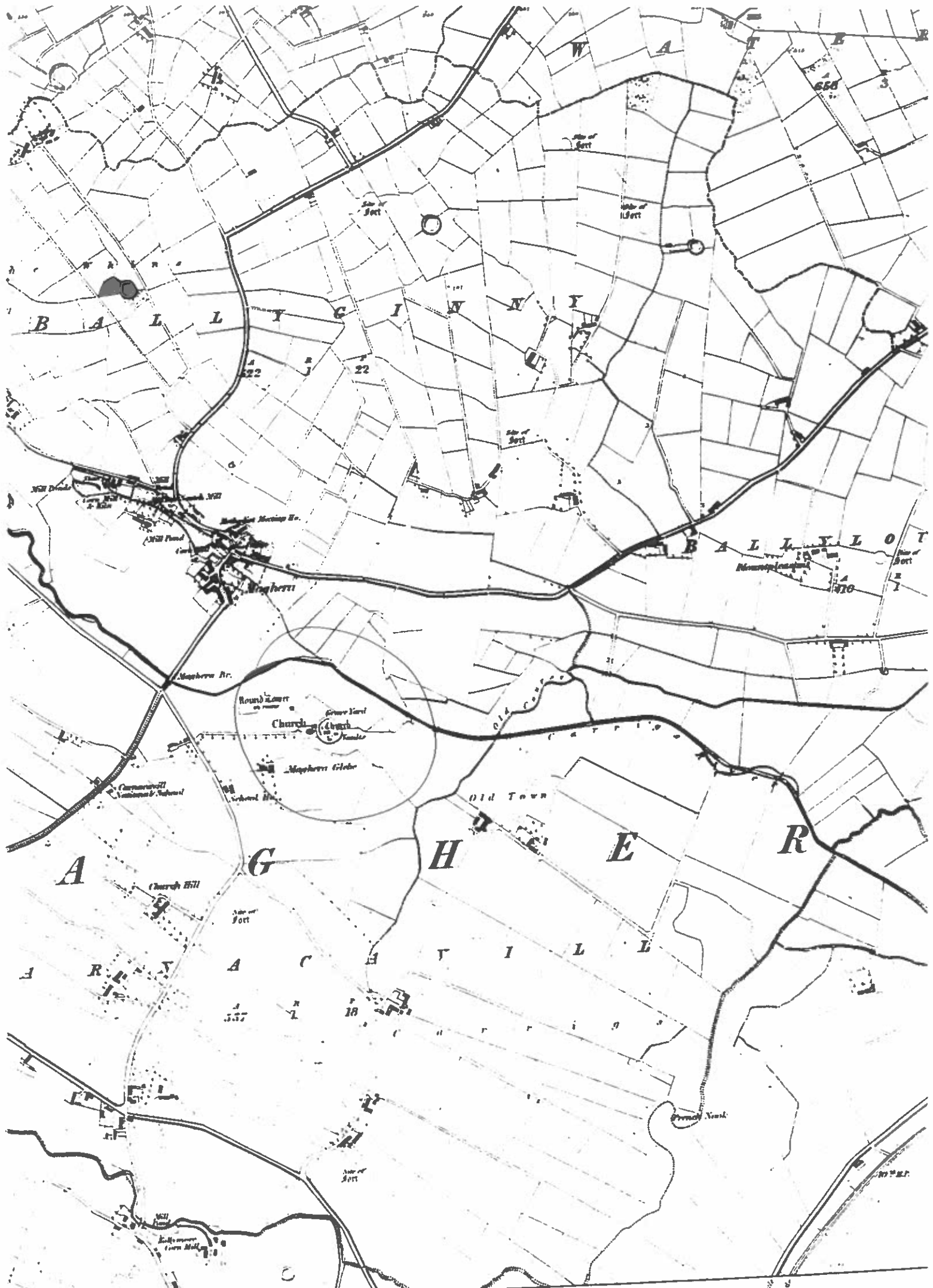


TOLLYMORE TP

On 43:85

Scale - Six Inches to One Statute Mile or 880 Feet to One Inch - 1





DN 43.85 2nd Ed.

(Dunens Dyoces.)

b. — ^aAlba ecclia — x.m^r — xiiij. s. iiij. d.
^aVicaria eiusdem — iij. m^r — v. s. iiij. d.
 [cia. vij. fi. viij. s. viij. d.]
^aSm^a taxacois — lxxiiij. fi. vj. s. viij. d. — Inde De-
 Decan de Lechayh.

^aEcclia de Mocorne — x.m^r — dec. j. m^r.
^aEcclia de Rath — xx. s. — decia. ij. s.

^aCapella

^wWhite-church. — Now the parish of Ballywalter, so called from a village of that name. — Ord. Survey, s. 12. This church was occasionally called by its Irish name *Temple-ghn* (campull fion 'white church'). — Ul. Inq. In the charter of James I. it is styled 'Ecclesia Alba'. — A. D. 1437, 'Johannes Oheran, perpetuus Vicarius de White-kirk'. — Reg. Octav., fol. 70. A. D. 1442, 'Jacobus OBiedran, Vicarius de Whyteckirk'. — Reg. Prene, fol. 66. The rectory was appropriate to Black Abbey. In the Townland 'White-church', about a quarter of a mile N. W. of the village of Ballywalter, is the church-yard, and within it, the ruins of the ancient church, 90 feet long, and 19 broad, having a transept on the north side, measuring 17 by 20 feet. The name occurs out of course in the Taxation, probably through a clerical error: but the letter *b* in the margin seems intended as a reference to the letter *a*, between the names 'Ral-fetona' and 'S. Andree', where 'White-church' ought, in due order, to appear. ^aLechayh. — This rural deanry com-

(Diocese of Down.)

b. — White-church^w — 10 marks - 13s. 4d.
 The vicarage of the same — 4 marks — 5s. 4d.
 [£7 8s. 8d.]
 Sum of the Taxation, £74 6s. 8d. — Tenth thereof,

Deanry of Lechayll.

The church of Mocorne^b — 10 marks - Tenth, 1 mark.
 The church of Rath^c — 20s. — Tenth, 2s.

Rever.

vol. i. p. 131. A. D. 1406, Patrick Oweya presented by the King to the church of 'St. Colman of Kylkele'. — Cal. Canc. Hib., p. 183. From these authorities, it appears that the names Morne and Kilkeel were used indifferently to denote the same parish. In 1526, Kilcayll was described as a 'Plebani' or Mother-church, having under it several tributary chapels. — Reg. Cromer, fol. 473. Of these, the names of five are preserved, viz., Kilcoo, Kilmegan, Ballochaneir, Tamlaght (in the townland Lisnacree), and Greencastle. — See *Appendix*.

^cRath. — Now Maghera parish. — Ord. Survey, s. 43. The name of this parish was originally Rath-murhuilg: afterwards, as in the Taxation, simply Rath; and subsequently with a prefix, Macheaire-Ratha. Thus Colgan: "Ecclesia, priscis Rath-murhuilg, hodie Macheaire-Ratha appellata". — Act. SS., p. 743, col. 2. A. D. 1610, 'Magherayrugh *alias* Rathra'. — Rot. Pat., 8, Jac. I. 'Maberina'. — *Territ.* 'Magherera'. — *Ul. Vis.* The name now appears in the contracted form

(Dunens̄ Dyoceš.)

α Capella de Villa Rili	xx·š	decia·ij·š.
α Capella de Lismochan	iiij·mʳ	v·š·iiij·đ.
α Ecċia de Kilbulcʳ	ij·mʳ·đi	decia·ij·š.
α Vicaria eiusdm	xvj·š	decia·xx·đ.
α Capella de Kenles	j·mʳ	decia·xvj·đ.
α Ecċia de Drūcath cū capella de Rathcath	xx·š	decia·ij·š.

α Capella

temporibus S. Dominicus [*tredecim* Doman-gardus? — *Colg*] nobile monasterium construxerat: mons Dominici iam usitatus nomen habet". — Topog. Hib., Dist. iii. cap. 2. Colgan, at the 24th of March, has collected a number of particulars respecting St. Donard, and states that two churches were consecrated to him (which Colgan incorrectly places in the diocese of Dromore), one, 'in vertice ejusdem altissimi montis, longe ab omni humana habitatione posita', of which some remains exist at this day; and the other, the subject of this note, wherein "asseruntur [A. D. 1645.] una nota in magna veneratione, quæ fuit olim hujus sancti, *Glanan* vulgo dicta, et unius e calcis preciosos tegumento ex auro, et argento cœlatas". — Act. SS., p. 743, col. 2. The ruins of the ancient church, 45 feet 9 inches in length, and 21 feet 6 inches in breadth, stand in the parish churchyard, outside which, on the N. W., is the stump of a Round Tower, being all that remains of the original structure which suffered in a storm about 130 years ago.—Harris, Down, p. 82. See the Calendar in *Appendix*, at 24th March.

^a *Rili-town*.—Now Ballyrolly, a town-land in the west of Down parish.—Ord. Survey, s. 37. Here, on a hill about a furlong to the left of the road leading from Downpatrick to Clough, is the old graveyard, containing the remains of a church 40 feet 10 inches in length, and 16 feet in breadth.

^e *Lismochan*.—This name is still preserved in the parish of Ballykinkar, as applied to a townland which the Ord. Survey calls 'Lower Ballykinkar'.—s. 44. Here, about 100 yards S. W. of 'Lismahon Fort', formerly stood a little chapel which was familiarly called 'Killywoolpa'; it had a cemetery attached to it, the last interment wherein took place about seventy years ago. The site of both has been under tillage for the last thirty years. Thomas Ketel, who was raised to the see of Down in 1305, had previously been parson of 'Lismoghlan'.—Pryme, Rec., vol. iii. p. 1118. A. D. 1427, it was found that Janco Durtas had been seized of two and a-half carucates of land in Lismoghlan, with the advowson of the church.—Cal. Canc. Hib., vol. i. p. 242. The tithes

(Diocese of Down.)

The chapel of Rili-town ^a	20s.	Tenth, 2s.
The chapel of Lismochan ^e	4 marks	5s. 4d.
The church of Kilbulcʳ	2½ marks	Tenth, 3s.
The vicarage of the same	16s.	Tenth, 20d.
The chapel of Kenles ^f	1 mark	Tenth, 16d.
The church of Drumcath ^g , with the chapel of Rathcath ^h	20s.	Tenth, 2s.

The

of Ballykinkar parish are appropriate to Christ Church in Dublin, under which also the lands are held.—See *Appendix*.

^f *Kilbulcʳ*.—Exact position unknown to the Editor: probably in or near the modern parish of Loughinisland. A. D. 1334, it was found that Nilo Svered held six carucates of land in 'Kylbulc', under the Earl of Ulster.—Inquis. P. M. The rectory of 'Kylbulc', an. val. 53s. 4d., was appropriate to the priory of Regular Canonons of Down.—Inq., 3 Ed. VI. The rector of 'Killbulc' paid six shillings proxies to the Bishop.—Ul. Vis.

^g *Kenles*.—The rectory of 'Kenlys in McCarthan's country', an. val. £8, was appropriate to the priory of Regular Canonons of Down.—Inquis., 3 Ed. VI. The Terrier, however, assigns it to the priory of Cross-beaters;—"Capella de Kenles is the Prior's of St. John in Down". By the charter of James I., 'Kinles' was attached to the Precentorship of Down, and, though the name is now obsolete, it may be presumed to have been one of the eight denominations which formed the corps of that dignity, and are now known by the gene-

ric name Loughinisland.—See *Appendix*.
^h *Drumcath*.—Now Drumcaw ('Opium coica' the battle ridge), a townland in Loughinisland parish, about a mile west of Senforde.—Ord. Survey, s. 36. The north and east walls of the old church are yet standing; the former about 10 feet, the latter about 24 feet high. Length, 45 feet; breadth, 17½ feet. The rectory of 'Drumcath' with the chapel of [Rathcath], an. val. £6, was appropriate to the abbey of St. Patrick's of Down.—Inq., 3 Ed. VI. A. D. 1583, the tithes of 'Drumcath' and 'Rathcath', in 'McCarthan's country', were leased by the Crown to Gerald Earl of Kildare. A. D. 1609, 'Drumcath' and 'Racath' were annexed to the Precentorship of Down. A. D. 1640, tithes valued at £40 per an.—Inq. Down, 1657. A. D. 1651, 'Dromca' parish found to contain eight townlands; the tithes, producing £30 per an., possessed by the Commonwealth.—Inq. Down, 1657. A. D. 1718, by Act of Council, Drumcaw was made part and parcel of Loughan-island parish.—Enrolment, Reg. Down.

ⁱ *Rathcath*.—Now Clough, a townland

same year died Maolchothaigh, son of Lachtnain, Cowarth of Congall and Mocholmoe.

F. C. 1016, "Dairman ua Maoltreáda coinhaba Conigall, euccnach forpcete, reabhneoir, 7 eupreop, becc".

"Dermot O'Maolteachta, Successor of Congall, learned scholar, scribe, and bishop, died".

From this date out Bangor was on the decline, and in a century more was reduced to the lamentable condition which St. Bernard pictures in his Life of Malchis.

V. RATH-MURBURG.—This church is now called Maghera (as has been shewn above at p. 27), and lies about nine miles S. W. of Downpatrick. The only bishop of this church whose name is recorded is St. Domangart, its founder, who was born at the close of the fifth century^b. The Calendar of the Four Masters considerably anticipates the year of his death, when it states:—

"Domangart mac Eachae eppreop o Rath-murbulg in Odhnanatgur in Dairia. C^o Dⁱ 506".

"Domangart, son of Eachach's, Bishop of Rathmurbulg, in Dalriada and in Dalriada. A. D. 506".

Another compilation of the O'Clerys states expressly, "ogur fuair beq. pum bliagum 506",—"and he died in the year 506". *Dairiada*, which is in all the Calendars, as the territory in which this saint's church stood, Colgan properly changes to *Dalaradia*. The error probably crept into them from an early transcriber's confounding this Murhulg, now Murplough, with Murbulg, now also Murplough, on the N. E. coast of the county of Antrim. That the Murplough of the county of Down is intended, is proved by the following passages:—

"Domangart o Rath-murbulg i n-Dairia-
Dairia o pharb Slanga"^c.
"S. Domangartus de Slicth-Slanga".

Sliebh-Slanga

^f See above, p. 94.
^g "Seacht gairte ad timon dechainte"—(Volcan. Acta SS., p. 742)
^h M. March 21th.
ⁱ The Four Masters place this death at 501.
^j The An. U., at 506, record the death of Domangart Mac Nisse, Bishop of Connor; but this is evidently incompatible with what is stated at 513. They have confounded two persons. Tigernach corr.
^k Calcut. Cashel in Colgan, Acta SS., p. 714. 2.

Sliebh-Slanga was the ancient name of Slieve-Donard, at the foot of which mountain is the church in question.

All these churches, eventually, becoming united, were grouped into one diocese, and placed under the superintendence of one bishop, whose cathedral was fixed at Down, the capital of the district, and gave its title to the whole. The names of the bishops, prior to the Invasion, of whom there is any record, having been noticed, it remains to give the succession which filled up the interval between that event and the Reformation. The names, and other particulars, have been collected by the industry of Sir James Ware, principally from writs and other law records, the accuracy of which is unquestionable; and the list which has been added by Harris is employed, where available; to which the Editor has subjoined some particulars not hitherto noticed:—

NAME.	PREVIOUS STATION.	SUCCESSION.	WEAKEN.
MALACHI		1176	1201
RALPH	Abbot of Melrose,	1202	1213
THOMAS		1213	after 1237
RANDALP		before 1251	1253
REGINALD	Archdeacon of Down,	1258	1265
THOMAS LINDELL		1266	1276
NICHOLAS	Prior of Down, and Treasurer of Ulster,	1276	1304
THOMAS KITTEL	Parson of Lesmoghlan,	1305	1313
THOMAS BRIGHT	Prior of Down,	1314	1327
JOHN OF BALCONINGHAM	Rector of Arvlyn,	1328	1329

RALPH

^a See above, p. 27.
^b He attended a chapter in the Abbey of Bangor, in 1251. (Royal Letters, No. 812. Tur. Lond.)
^c According to Ware the see was vacant for some years; and yet the license for a new election, which was granted November 24, 1258, is expressed—"sede vacante per mortem Radulphi" [Radulph] not "Radulphi" [Frankal].
^d An undated letter of his, in which he styles himself Bishop of Down, is preserved among the Letters in the Tower of London, (No. 8911); it has been printed, by Prynne (Records, vol. iii. p. 113*b*), but undated by, at least, eight years.
^e See above, p. 91.
^f See above, pp. 28, 50.
^g Ware does not include him in the list, because he received no provision from Rome. The Pope granted this favour to Ralph, and caused him to be consecrated by Bertram, Cardinal Bishop of Tuscanum. Yet John, after his election, received his writ of institution, Aug. 24, 1328, which he enjoyed till May 28, 1329. Meanwhile, it is probable, he was consecrated, and the matter was compromised by his translation to Cork, which see he held from 1330 to 1347.
^h See pp. 21, 34.

Previous to the erection of Ballymoney Church, Mass was celebrated on an altar built of sods and stones under the shade of a large thorn in the farm belonging at present to James Burns, in the townland of Drumena. Mass was also celebrated at the friary, in Moneycaul, and at Burren-Rock* where two cavities which once held the Holy Water are still to be seen cut into the rock. The site of the present church was also hallowed by the great sacrifice having been there offered up in the days of persecution on a large stone which has been built into the eastern wall of the church-yard, but unfortunately the mason barbarously broke into two parts this venerable relic of the past, because, in his opinion, it marred the symmetry of his work !

* Burren (*Boirren*—a rocky district)—the word according to a manuscript preserved in Trinity College, quoted by O'Donovan, is derived from *Borr*, great, and *Onn*, a stone. There are townlands of that name in the parishes of Dromann, Clonallon, and Kileo. A. D. 565 "Demna, son of Cairill, king of Ulidia, son of Muireadhac Muinderg, was killed by the shepherds of Boireann (Burren)." This Demna was cousin german to St. Demangart, from whom Slieve Donard is named.

O'Leaverty W I

PARISH OF
MAGHERA OR BRYANSFORD.

THE parish of Maghera, sometimes called, from one of its churches, the parish of Bryansford, consists of the civil parish of Kilcoo which are not included in the ecclesiastical parish of Kilcoo. The name of this parish was originally Rath-murhbunig (pronounced nearly Ra-murlough), which signifies "the rath at the sea inlet." There are two townlands named Murlough—one of which is in this parish and the other in the parish of Kilmegan. The "Calendar of the Four Masters" places the death of St. Donard about the year 506, but it considerably antedates the event, "*Donngort, son of Eachach, Bishop of Rathmurburg, in Dalriada and Dalarradia, A.D. 506.*" The church of St. Donard was in Dalarradia, not in Dalriada, which is in the north of the county of Antrim. The error which occurs in nearly all the Irish martyrologies seems to have crept into them from an early transcriber having confounded Murlough on the coast of County Antrim with Murlough on Dundrum Bay. That it is the Murlough in the county of Down that is intended, Dr. Reeves shows by the following quotation from an ancient MS. :—" *Donard, from Rath-murburg, in Dalriada (recte Dalarradia), from Siabh-Slanga.*" Siabh-Slanga (mountain of Slange) was the ancient name of Slieve Donard, which received that name from one of the early colonists of Ireland, whose death is recorded by the Four Masters

under the year of the world 2533. "Shingie, son of Partholun, died in this year, and was interred in the cairn of Shingie Slanga." The cairn of Shingie still forms a very conspicuous object on the summit of Slieve Donard, but the hero Shingie is forgotten in the traditions of the neighbourhood, while the memory of St. Donard is enshrined in the veneration of the people. Geraldus Cambrensis names Shingie "Solimus," and Donard "Dominicus." He says—"That exceeding high mountain which overlapps the sea that flows between Ireland and Britain is called Shingie. And because at the foot of it, after the lapse of many ages, St Dominicus had erected a distinguished monastery, it more commonly bears the name of Dominicus' mountain." The monastery to which Geraldus alludes is that of Maghera. Colgan speaking of St. Donard, says:—"Two churches were consecrated to him—one at the base of a very high mountain overhanging the sea in the eastern parts, which was called Rath-murthlag (Law-murrow), now Maclaurie-Rathin (Maghera); the other is situated on the top of the same very high mountain, far away from every human dwelling; which, nevertheless, even during the severe and terrible persecution of the heretics, used to be frequented with a great concourse of people, and frequent pilgrimages in honour of that miracle-working servant of God, who shone there in many miracles." Harris, writing in 1744, thus describes the scene of this pilgrimage—"On the summit of this mountain are two rude edifices (if they may be so termed),* one being a heap of stones piled up in a pyramidal

* In a letter dated Castlewellan, April 23rd, 1834, Dr. O'Donovan describes the remains of the hermitage of St. Donard:—"There are two circular cairns upon its (Slieve Donard's) summit, one to the N.E., the other to the S.W. The form of that to the N.E. is now much destroyed, and the well, which my guide informed me was springing in the centre of it, is filled with stones. This, he says, was done by the Sappers. If it were they who filled this, they

figure, in which are several cavities, wherein the devotees shelter themselves in bad weather, while they hear Mass; and in the centre of this heap there is a cave formed by broad, flat stones, so disposed as to support each other without the help of cement. The other edifice is composed of rude walls, and partitions, called chappels, and perhaps was the oratory and cell erected by St. Domangard, before linked. Sir William Petty mentions in his maps a chapel on the N.E. side of Slieve Donard, which he calls Leniort's Chappel; but probably for want of due information he has corrupted the name, and the true name of it is Donard's Chappel." Dr. O'Donn, writing on the 23rd September, about the year 1752, to his agent in Rome, says—"I have to add that I would be glad if I could get those indulgences of Crumdugh extended to Struel, for on that Fryday the Christians visit Struel as well as Mount Donard, which is ten miles distant from Struel." This holy retreat of St. Donard perched on the high mountain which still perpetuates his stretch away from its sides, involuntarily forces on the imagination a feeling of total severance from mankind, and seemed to have had very little to do, but my opinion is it was done by some devout visitor, who thought that it was his duty to destroy every vestige of superstition. The cairn to the S.W. is much more perfect, but it is destroyed in a great measure to erect the Trigonomical Station, which, in the course of ages, may puzzle antiquarians to discover its scientific use. The well in this cairn is now dried up, and I can scarcely believe that it ever contained spring water. To the E. of the well is a stone which, to me, appears to have been used by the saint as an altar; and it would also appear probable that he had roofed this cairn and used it as a little chapel. This conjecture is corroborated by the fact that Sir William Petty called it a chapel and Colgan a church. I am also of opinion that this cairn had been used as a Druidical place of worship, and that the hermit took advantage of the pile (as the Sappers have of the chapel) to form a little house and a place of worship for himself and his visitors."

recalls to our minds how the saints valued Heaven, and what price they were prepared to pay for it. Father MacCana, in his "Irish Itinerary," says:—"I cannot forbear to observe how our saints, scorning the earth about which the miserable race of man so vehemently contends sought a loftier range; for it is a fact for which I can vouch that, on the summit of that lofty pile, and in a different region of the world, as it were, they sought an abode of holy retirement, of which heavenly seclusion the traces still remain; for in that elevated region of the sky there still exists a hermitage sacred to St. Domanghart. From the foot of the mountain on the east there stretches an agreeable plain, where there is a fortress of the Magenis family called *Nero Castle*,* which was burned by the hostile Scots in 1643. In this plain, not far from the aforesaid castle, is situate the parish church of Maghare-rath

* "The ancient name of Newcaste was *Balaghbeg, Bealachbeg*,—the little road or highway,—which is still the name of the townland wherein it is situated. It is said to derive its present name from the castle erected by Felix Magenis, in 1388; but this is not reconcilable with history, for we find mention made of it by the name *Newcastle* (Fearnat an chaislein nui—'the ford or pass of the New Castle') in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, at the year 1433—a century and a half before the erection of the Castle by Felix Magenis; but the all likelihood on the Castle existed here before that time, and in The Castle here spoken of was, some few years ago, in excellent preservation, and rented by the Board of Customs for the accommodation of officers of the revenue. It was situated, as Harris observes, close to the sea, but it has been pulled down and on its site the hotel has been erected."—*Account of Newcastle* by J. A. Wilson. "Prior to 1641 the Town and Castle belonged to Sir Con Magenis, but after the rebellion of that year the property was confiscated and granted to Robert Hawkins, great grandfather to Robert Hawkins who assumed the surname of Magill. The date 1588 was inscribed on a stone placed over the front entrance of the Castle, built by Felix Magenis."—*Rev. G. Hill's edition of the Montgomery Memorials*. Newcastle passed from the Magills to the Mathews, and subsequently to the Annesley family."

PARISH OF MAGHERA OR BRYANSFORD.

51

(Maghera); the name of the saint to whom it is sacred my memory does not this moment supply. One thing I can state, that it, as well as many other sacred places, was endowed with no inconsiderable estates by the chiefs of the MacArtaun family, who formerly enjoyed an extensive rule in these parts, and I may add that I know not of any other nobles who were more generous to the Church of God than the lords of that most ancient family, for it is an acknowledged fact that they both built all the churches in the territories of Ivechia (Ivagh) and Kiannalgarrahy (Kinalarty) and endowed them with the choicest lands." Father MacCana ascribes too much to the MacCartans, for many of those churches were endowed by the Magenis and other co-relatives of the MacCartans. The ruins of the ancient church of Maghera, of which the western gable and the south wall remain, measure forty-five feet nine inches in length and twenty-one feet six inches in breadth. The windows in the south wall are narrow and of elegant design. The church is surrounded by a *wall*. A little to the N. W. is the stump of a Round Tower. Only about twenty feet of it now remains. Its doorway is towards the East, and about seven feet above the ground. Harris, speaking of the graveyard, says:—"Near it formerly stood an high tower, which, about thirty years ago, was overturned by a violent storm, and lay at length and entire on the ground, like a huge gun, without breaking to pieces, so wonderfully hard and binding was the cement in this work." The Round Tower was, therefore, thrown down about the year 1710 or 1712. The founder and patron saint of Maghera was St. Donard, whose festival occurs on the 24th of March. Colgan, writing in 1645 on St. Donard, states that in the church of Maghera "there are preserved in great veneration a bell called *The Gloman* which

formerly belonged to this saint, and one of his shoes enshrined in a precious covering of silver and gold." These sacred articles are now unknown in the locality, nor is there the slightest tradition respecting them. In the Irish "Tripartite Life of St. Patrick,"* which is now preserved in the Bodleian Collection, there occurs the following curious legend:—"There are moreover keepers of Patrick's people in Erin still. . . . There is another man from him in Slabh-Slinge—that is Donnagart, son of Eochaidh. It is he that will raise Patrick's relics a little before the judgment. His cell is in Rath-murthnig, at the side of Slabh-Slinge. And there is always a leg (of nutton), with its accessories, and a vessel of ale before him every Easter, which is given to Mass people on Easter Monday always."† The story of the leg of nutton and its accessories may have had its origin in the belief that plenty would attend during the year the person who heard Mass on Easter Monday in Maghera Church, while the legend that St. Donard is preserved alive to raise the relics of St. Patrick before the general judgment seems to indicate that he was present in Downpatrick at the translation of that saint's relics referred to in the "Book of

* See Life of St. Patrick, by Sister M. F. Cusack.

† This legend is still preserved among the people. Dr. O'Donovan writing from Downpatrick, April 24th, 1834, says (see Letters in the Royal Irish Academy):—"You may remember that nearly two years ago we asked several questions of the officer who surveyed the district, respecting Slieve Donard. He said that there was no tradition respecting St. Donard in the district; the fact is otherwise, for St. Donnaght says Mass every Sunday on his altar, in the N. W. Cairn on the mountain. There is a cave running from the sea shore, on the South of Newcastle, to the summit of the mountain, if report be true. Some men entered this cave, but after they had gone some distance, St. Donnaght, in his robes, met them, and admonished them of their folly. He also told them that it was his own peculiar residence to the day of judgment." The cave to which the legend collected by Dr. O'Donovan alludes is named "Donnaght's Cave."

Armagh"—"When the church was being built over the body, the men who were digging the ground saw fire bursting forth out of the sepulchre, and flying back, they were afraid of the torching fire of flame." A statement in Harris's "History of the County Down" is confirmatory of this opinion. He says:—"A tradition in this neighbourhood highly celebrates the virtues, devotion, and miracles of St. Donard, now called Donogh, or Donut, and that by his application much money was collected for building the Cathedral of Down."

We have seen that St. Donard was a bishop, and it may have been because Maghera was a see that it enjoyed the privilege of having a round tower, for when the whole question of the Round Towers is investigated it will be found that they were the insignia of cathedral churches. We have documentary evidence to prove that there once was a bishop in every church in Down and Connor which has a Round Tower. There is not preserved the name of any of St. Donard's successors in the see, and it would seem that at an early date it, like many other minor sees, became incorporated in the diocese of Down, the bishop of which enjoyed the ancient see lands of Maghera. In a list of the possessions of the see of Down at the end of the twelfth century, which are recited in a patent roll of the Tower of London, as quoted by Dr. Reeves, there is the entry "Rath-murval along with Rathsilan." The former is Maghera, but there is a difficulty in identifying Rathsilan, as there is no place in that neighbourhood known by the name; and yet, as is evident by the grouping of the names, it must have been in the neighbourhood of Maghera, and, like Maghera, it must have been in early times the scene of the piety and labours of some eminent ecclesiastic. Rathsilan signifies "the Rath of Gilhan." St. Donard had a brother named Gilhan, whose church was somewhere in the neighbourhood. Mengus

the Gullee, in his tract on the "Mothers of the Saints of Ireland," refers to Gillen (Kilken) in a passage which is here translated from Colgan's Latin translation of the original Irish:—"Derinilla, called Celduin-Glicheach (*i.e.*, of the four provinces), was the mother of SS. Donnungart (Donard), son of Eachach, and Ailleen, and Aidan, and Mura of Fathen (Fahan in Enishowen), and Mochumma of Drumbo, and *Gillen of Achadhacri, in the territory of Lecale, at the bank of estuary of Dunderum.*" In a field in Wateresk belonging to Mr. Savage, and immediately adjoining his house, are the remains of an ancient cemetery which once was enclosed in a rath. The bodies were interred in graves lined with flagstones, and a large granite stone stood in the cemetery, but it has been rolled into a stream which bounds the field; on this stone is inscribed a simple cross formed by the intersection of two pair of parallel lines. This site exactly corresponds with that of the church of St. Gillen, as described by Jagers, the Ulster. It is in the territory of Lecale, and it is close to the estuary of Dunderum, while it adjoins the hands attached to the Church of Maghera, which would account for the expression in the "Patent Roll," "Rath-murval (Maghera) along with Rath-scilhan." By the privileges recited in this "Patent Roll" the bishop was empowered to create boroughs where he might think it would be advantageous, as at Kirieth (Kilchief), Rath-murval (Maghera), to be ruled by such laws and customs as he might select. In the "Terrier of such lands as appertain and belong to the Bishoprick of Down and Connor," a document of the date of 1617, is an entry—"at Rathra, *alias* Matherath, four townlands, spiritualities, and temporalities." At the margin of this entry the name of "Jn. O'Loughlin" is entered as tenant. This name is now

changed into O'Loughlin,* and one of the townlands of Maghera is named Ballyloughlin. In 1622 the Magonises had laid claim to the ancient see lands of Maghera; and the Protestant bishop complains—"Ten the four Townes of Magherem being unrently known by the Bys. landes were lately found by an Inquisition to Sir Arthur Magneley (Magenis), and to some of his freeholders of the which Inquisition a great part of the Jurors were of the name of Magyness." In the report of the Protestant bishop in 1622, it is described "Magherah, a chappel ryuous consisting of four or five townes very small.—The Bys. Mensall—the two partes of all the Tithes belong to yo Bp." This was obviously

* Dr. O'Donovan, in a letter dated Castlewellan, April 20th, 1834, says:—"There is a great number of O'Loughlins here. They have a tradition among them that seven townlands in the neighbourhood of Dunderum had anciently belonged to the family; but they are puzzled to ascertain what brought O'Loughlins to this county, or at what period they settled in it. They have traditions of the family as figuring in this county at an early period, even as far back as the times of John De Courcey. It is my own opinion that they have no connexion with the Munster family, but that they are descended from Mauritius MacLoughlin, *alias* O'Loughlin, who erected and endowed the monastery of Newry. They are very respectable and numerous in this neighbourhood, as appears manifest from the number of priests they have supplied—all clever and talented. The priest of Hilltown is one of the most interesting men I have met with." It is probable that the O'Loughlins of Maghera are the O'Lachthans, formerly chiefs of Little Motharr (Mourne), a district occupied by the O'righalla, in the northern portion of Meath, where it adjoins the County Monaghan; we have seen that many of the O'righalla emigrated to Mourne, in the County of Down. The following notice of the family occurs in O'Dugan's Topographical Poem—

"O'Lachthann over Little Motharr

His superiors are not found."

In confirmation of this surmise the reader will observe that *Donat O'Laghina* was appointed to the parish of Maghera in 1488. In Meath the O'Laghins have changed their name into O'Loughlin, some even translate it into Green. The O'Loughlins still retain graves in the cemetery of Maghera.

h	CO	Down	PARISH	O.S. 43: 85
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nd graveyard, Round Tower
closure - Maghera Church.

below So'

J 372 341

monastic site associated with St Donard.

old parish ch. 'of Rath' - Tax. Pope Nicholas, 1306

5-carved stones

excursion to graveyard of mod Col., disturbing earlier rem... (SM 11/1)

1. 'Old Church'
'Round Tower'
+ enclosure etc.
2. 'Round Tower (in ruins)'
4 'Church (in Ruins)'
+ enclosures, etc.

Excavation: 1965 : A. Hamlin

Field Visits

Files SM 7; SN 5/31; SM 11/1 ;
Plans

Scheduled

Listed

State Care

Photos ✓

Rbt 66870 5(M) 12/75 TP

PR

H.V (1856) 131. The Round Towers of Ulster
 Co. Down Survey. 306-7
 Hamlin. 1976 - 645-652 (incs. further bibliog.)
 Reeves D.C.D. 27-28. 154-5. 207-8
 PSAMNI. 125
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 JRSAL 16 (1883) ~~20-21~~ 20-22
 Dubouidien, Down (1802) 287-8
 O'Learty (1878) I. 47-56.
 JRSAL 35 (1905) 230-233. Canon H.W. Lett.
 O'Donovan O'S letters 1909. 72-9
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 E.E. Evans field note-book IV p118 (SMS/21).
 UJA 8 (1902) 198
 PRIA 2nd ser. 1 (1870-74) 275 } Cross-slabs
 JRSAL 42 (1912) 225-6 } [SMS/117]



MEDIEVAL CHURCHES

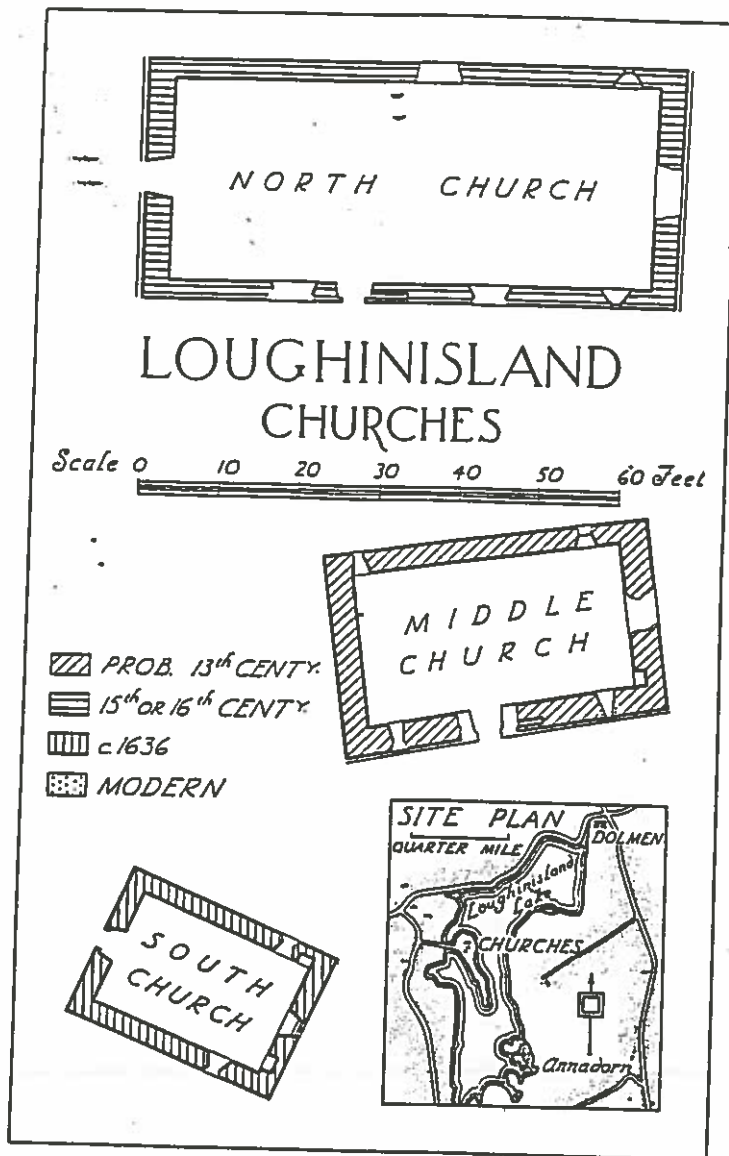


FIG. 203 (No. 948).

ings, and some of this material is incorporated with the Silurian grit in the rubble masonry of the middle church, though not there used for dressings; there is very little porphyritic dyke material in the S. church walling.

The inscription in the N. church, and the door and window dressings of the S. church, are of a hard grey-blue Carboniferous limestone (Castle Espie stone) weathering pale buff.

The slaty and shaley facies of the Silurian have been used for pinnings in the interstices and in one case for a sill.

For an earlier account of these churches by J. Seeds, with elevations and details, see *Ulster J.*

Archaeol. 16 (1910), 65-77. See also W. Reeves, *Eccles. Antiq.*, 213-6, and J. O'Lavery, *Down and Connor*, 1 (1878), 85-108, for historical account.

949. MAGHERA CHURCH AND ROUND TOWER; CARNACAVILL Td (fig. 204; plate 85)

O.S. 43. Grid ref. 372341

The church stands within a circular walled enclosure, which has been described as a cashel (*Prelim. Survey Anc. Mons N.I.* (1940), 125). The 'cashel wall', however, is probably no more than the graveyard boundary, though the church does appear to lie within a small circular earthwork (not concentric with the present graveyard wall), much multi-

lated by grave digging, the bank of which can be traced on the S.W., and the ditch probably on the N. of the church.

The church is a ruined rectangular gabled building, 45 ft. 10 in. by 21 ft. 5 in. internally, with walls 2 ft. 9 in. to 3 ft. thick, and was built possibly as early as the 13th century. It is of rubble construction, incorporating numerous boulders, some of granite, and includes some split stone. The W. gable and N. wall still stand to original height; the other walls are reduced to foundations. There is a narrow light, probably original, set high in the N. wall, with semicircular head and internal splays. The W. door is indicated by a featureless gap, now blocked, and an entrance on the S., with re-built jambs, is of doubtful date. In the W. gable and at the E. end of the N. wall are longitudinal sockets, probably of bond timbers.

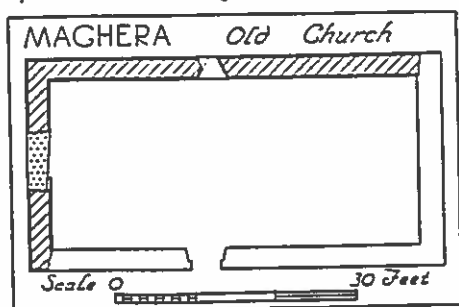


FIG. 204 (No. 949).

In the churchyard to the S. is a broken 13th century coffin-lid (pl. 111) serving as a headstone; it is a tapering slab incised with the stepped base and lower part of the shaft of a cross. A number of cross-inscribed stones have been found on the site (*J. Royal Hist. Archaeol. Assoc. Ireland*, 6 (1884), 20-22; *Ulster J. Archaeol.* 8 (1902), 94, 198) two of which remain.

(1) Granite boulder, bearing incised equal-arm cross with serifs; built into lower blocking of W. door of church.

(2) Stone bearing incised Latin cross, with transverse arms, three in number, on lower part of stem, all with serifs; in graveyard N.W. of church.

(3) A stone, possibly from the site, bearing an incised Latin cross each arm of which supports a smaller similar cross, all with serifs, is preserved at Burrendale, near Newcastle (*Ulster J. Archaeol.* 9 (1946), 50-51).

The ruin of a round tower, surviving to a height of about 18 ft., stands 100 yards N.W. of the church; it was reduced to a stump during a gale c. 1710 (*Harris, State of Co. Down* (1744), 82). The tower is about 9 ft. in internal diameter, with walls 3 ft. 3 in. thick, built of roughly-coursed boulders with

pinnings. A ragged gap on the E., 6 ft. 9 in. high and 4 ft. wide, with re-built segmental head, indicates the position of the entrance, 5 ft. 6 in. above ground level. The face of the tower does not exhibit appreciable batter in the surviving height.

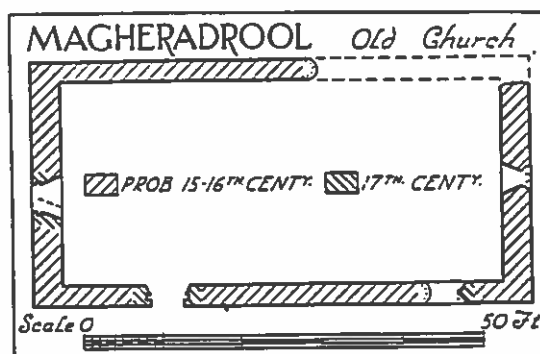


FIG. 205 (No. 950).

950. MAGHERADROOL CHURCH (fig. 205) 29:9
o.s. 29. Grid ref. 379513

This ruined church is a rectangular gabled building, 55 ft. by 25 ft. 6 in. internally, the E. and W. walls 3 ft. 9 in. thick, the N. and S. walls 2 ft. 9 in. thick, of rubble construction. Both gables stand to original height, reduced in thickness by internal offsets, and the side walls, except the E. half of the N. wall, which has been destroyed, also stand to their original height. The building is probably of the 15th century; the E. window, a narrow splayed light, is perhaps of this date. The W. window was originally similar, but has been enlarged towards the S. probably in the 17th century; the present rectangular light was framed in timber, the splayed opening covered by timber lintels. A similar timber-framed window was inserted at the E. end of the S. wall and the original entrance on the S. was replaced by a timber-framed door.

951. MAGHERALIN OLD CHURCH (fig. 206; plate 105)
13:30 o.s. 13. Grid ref. 128589

This church, now much ruined and overgrown, preserves traces of its later medieval structure, though no remains of any earlier church can be found (contrary to *Prelim. Survey Anc. Mons N.I.*, 91), and an early foundation on this site must remain doubtful (cp. E. D. Atkinson, *Dromore; an Ulster Diocese* (1925), 210-5). It was ruinous in 1657, but was rebuilt shortly after the Restoration, as can be traced in the structure. Through much of the 18th century it was used as a pro-Cathedral of the diocese of Dromore. It continued in use as a parish church until 1845, when the new church was built.

Howlin 1976, 645-53.

645.

(Brickland, see Drumsallagh.)

~~MAGHEA~~ Domongart, Carnacavill townland. O.S. 43; J/372341.
Domongart (Donard), from whom nearby peak of Mourne
Domongart mac Echdach in M.T., unlocated, at 24
 March; in glosses to M.O. at 24 March (name only) and 18
 March 'Domongart son of Eochaid of Sliab Slanga'; in M.G.
 at 24 March 'gracious Domongort [glossed] son of Eochaid,
 from Raith Murbuilg in Dál Riada' (mistake for Dál nAraidi,
 probably from confusion with Murlough Bay, NE. Antrim in Dál
riada). M.D. calls him 'bishop' and gives death as 506, but
 this date not in any early source and Reeves believed too
 early (1847, 154-5). No early evidence for date, but sixth
 century seems likely. Does not appear in earlier Patrician
 sources, but in Tripartite Life Patrick blesses unborn saint
 in mother's womb (Stokes 1887, 225), and puzzling passage
 'There is another man from him in Sliab Slánge, namely
 Domongart son of Echaid; he it is that will upraise
 Patrick's relics shortly before Doom. His church is Rath
urbuilc on the side of Sliab Slánge, and there is a lárac
 [fork] with its surroundings, and a pitcher of beer before
 him on every Easter, and he gives them to mass-folk on Easter
 Tuesday always' (ibid., 121). No early Life, but sources
 suggest royal birth. History of site otherwise obscure.
 Medieval and later history: Giraldus Cambrensis knew of
 monastery here: 'this latter [mountain] is usually called
 Dominic's Mountain, because St Dominic [for Domongart] built
 a fine monastery at its foot' (O'Meara 1951, 77). Medieval
 parish church, Rath in 1306 taxation. Collation to 'rectory
 of St Dongarde's parish church, Rath' in Primate Swayne's

1438 (Chart 1935, 176). Church reported ruinous in
 Colgan collected information about saint and church
Wadh-murbhuilg, hodie Machaire-Ratha appellata'
 (1744, 73). Accounts survive by many later visitors to
 church and mountain. Present parish church built 1825 W. of
 church and graveyard. SITE: low-lying, under 50 ft,
 close to S. of Carrigs river, $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. from sea and Dundrum Bay,
 at N. foot of Mournes.

MATERIAL: 1) ENCLOSURE (Fig. 53). Graveyard often taken to
 be in early enclosure (e.g. A.M.S.C. 1928, 26 and P.S. 1940,
 125), but 'cashel' may be simply graveyard boundary wall.
 oval, long axis NW.-SE., about 200 by 165 ft. Stone wall
 about 10 ft thick. Co. Down 1966, 307, points out traces of
 smaller enclosure, inside but not concentric with graveyard
 wall. Encloses higher nuclear area, bounded to W. and SW. by
 traces of wall, to N. by slight ditch, but all much mutilated
 by graves. Revetment found in 1965 excavation (see below)
 may be part of enclosure, but more excavation needed to
 confirm or disprove suggestion. Air photographs in A.M.S.C.
 1928, pl. on p. 26 and Co. Down 1966, pl. 85.

(1) No early CHURCH survives. Ruin in graveyard probably
 thirteenth century (Co. Down 1966, 307). No sign of earlier
 fabric incorporated and no earlier fragments reported.
 Colgan reported church dedicated to Donard on top of Slieve
 Donard, and Harris gives useful description of 'two rude
 edifices', one believed to be saint's 'Cell or Oratory' (1744,
 121). Valuable account by O'Donovan in O.S. Letters of 1834
 (1909, 73-4). Are clearly prehistoric cairns, much damaged
 by O.S. surveyors, but one probably passage grave, other
 multiple cist cairn (Co. Down 1966, 85-6, at 2,796 ft and

3,720 ft). Long visited by pilgrims. Not impossible used as cell for retreat from monastery on the plain but hardly susceptible to proof. Gwynn and Hadcock introduce possible confusion by listing Maghera and Slieve Donard (Rath Murbuilc) separately and not making it clear whether one or two churches intended: 1970, 398 and 404.

(iii) ROUND TOWER (Pl. 65) about 250 ft NW. of graveyard, oddly far from ruined church if this does occupy early site. Surviving stump about 18 ft high. Blown over about 1710: Harris gives well-known account 'about thirty Years ago [it] was overturned by a violent Storm, and lay at length and entire on the Ground, like a huge Gun, without breaking to pieces; so wonderfully hard and binding was the Cement in this Work' (1744, 82). Internal diameter about 9 ft, walls 1 ft 3 ins thick, roughly coursed granite boulders and split shale with liberal use of pinnings and mortar (much modern). Door faces E., 5 ft 6 ins from ground. Ragged gap (no jamb or sill stones) with rebuilt segmental head. No detectable batter, and no joist holes or offsets inside. Natural shale visible inside tower. Excavated in 1840s but unfortunately no detailed report. Petrie refers briefly to finding of human remains (1845, 88) and Getty quotes 1843 report: 'Mr Duffin, in whose Glebe it is, has had it dug about to a considerable depth, and all the soil cleared off, and that the inside has been sunk several feet deep' (Getty 1856, 131). 'Donovan in 1834 enquired about function: 'All the old inhabitants of this district, who know nothing about the written theories, tell me that the one at Magheraw was the bellfry belonging to the old church. They call it the Claig-theach, and have never heard of any other then existing in

Ireland' (1909, 72). Excavation in 1965 showed lowest visible course of masonry is base of tower; no regular offset at base. Tower built on slight knoll of shale (Pl. 67 and Fig. 53). Co. Down 1966, 307 and pl. 85.

iv) BURIALS. Graveyard according to Harris 'a noted burial place' (1744, 82), raised high above surroundings, clearly long use. In addition to probably early slabs listed below, was fragment of Anglo-Norman cross-carved coffin lid, suggesting thirteenth century use (Bigger 1902, 94 and Co. Down 1966, pl. 111). In 1965 parts of four burials (including one infant) found in trench F2 running N. from foot of tower (Pl. 67 and Fig. 53). All E.-W. No slab linings, nails or other features. Further excavation needed to show whether these four are part of more extensive cemetery. See reference above to finding of human remains in/near tower in 1840s. Occurrence of burials so far from enclosed graveyard interesting and discussed further above (pp. 107-8).

v) CROSS-CARVED STONES. Five stones, of which two now missing; sixth in garden nearby may be from Maghera, but not certain. 1) (Pl. 66 and Fig. 59) NW. of NW. corner of ruined church, at edge of higher part of graveyard. Slab of Millurian slate, 2 ft 5 ins maximum visible height (early reports give 3 ft), 1 ft 5 ins maximum width, narrowing slightly towards base, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 ins thick. Dressed to rectangular outline. E. face Latin cross with four cross-bars (lowest usually covered with soil). Shaft unsteady: curves slightly. All lines have cross-bars on ends (cross-potent). Drawing by Patterson (op. cit. below) shows base with seriph, but not accurate in other respects. Patterson 1870-4, 275, fig. 2, also 1883-4A, 21, fig. 2 and in U.J.A.

8 (1902), 198, fig. 2; Crawford 1912, 225-6, a; Co. Down 1966, 307.

2) (Pl. 66 and Fig. 59). Small granite boulder, once built into inner side of blocked W. door of ruined church, now loose at W. end. 1 ft 3 ins wide, 1 ft 1 in. high, 1 ft 2 ins thick. On flat face, to E. when set in wall, equal-armed linear cross potent, of shallow pecked lines. Patterson 1883-4A, 21, fig. 1 and U.J.A. 8 (1902), 198, fig. 3; Crawford 1912, 225-6, d; Co. Down 1966, 307.

3) (Fig. 59). I have never found this, despite long searching. Patterson (op. cit. below) illustrates tall stone, 3 ft 4 ins high, 7 ins wide, unknown thickness. Small linear Latin cross with seriphs at top of stone. Below cross crude outline figure: circle for head with features indicated, triangular body, stick-like legs, with open circle above head to right. Figure may not be contemporary with cross, but difficult to pursue further unless found. Patterson 1870-4, 275, fig. 1, also 1883-4A, 21-2, fig. 3 and U.J.A. 8 (1902), 198, fig. 1; Crawford 1912, 225-6, b.

4) (Fig. 59). Rough boulder near S. edge of graveyard, close to vault and Anglo-Norman slab. Described by Bigger (op. cit. below) as 2 ft 5 ins high, 1 ft 6 ins wide at base. On E. face three large outline Latin crosses potent, pecked, with clearly secondary inscription 'Dan Green Maghera Miller'. I found this only recently and have not yet been able to draw or photograph it. Bigger convinced it was a 'Christianised' pagan stone. Bigger 1902, 94, with drawing; Crawford 1912, 225-6, e.

5) (Fig. 59). Like 3) known only from Patterson's drawing. Reported to be 1 ft 6 ins high, 10 ins wide, with roughly

rectangular outline. Elaborate decoration of ringed Latin cross in false relief with distinctive diamond-shaped centre. Surrounding area sunk in shape of cross with concave outline and cross-bar at base. Patterson 1883-4A, 22, fig. 4; Crawford 1912, 225-6, c.

v) (Pl. 68, not very clear photograph, and Fig. 59). In garden at Burrendale House near Bryansford, and now rather obscured by plants. Original provenance unknown, but Maghera most likely. Unlikely in graveyard in Patterson's time (1870s) since he clearly made careful search. Granite block, rectangular outline, 2 ft $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins high, 1 ft $3\frac{3}{4}$ ins wide, $\frac{1}{2}$ ins thick at top and 1 ft $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins at base. Large linear Latin cross with short cross-bars at ends of limbs, and similar smaller cross standing on each arm. Lines pecked. Patterson 1946, 51, fig. 2.

vi) EXCAVATED EVIDENCE. In 1965 three trial trenches excavated NW. of graveyard (Fig. ~ 53) to test potential of area for further work. Trench C8, 32 ft NW. of graveyard wall, showed strong indications of ploughing, truncating features and mixing finds. Several features found, filled with dark, charcoal-flecked loam: shallow gulleys, hollows, pit and stake-holes (Fig. 53). Natural here was river gravel, quite unlike shale to W. Finds small in size and fewer than further W., but included 18 sherds of souterrain ware and one crucible fragment. Trench F2 (Pl. 67 and Fig. 53) ran N. from foot of tower. Slight hump of small rubble and mortar at foot of tower, thinning N.-wards. Brown stoney loam overlay natural shale with traces of two phases of ploughing. Silt-filled E.-W. depression fairly recent, but earlier features included pit with iron smelting debris,

three post-holes, and burials mentioned above. Trench E⁴ (Pl. 67 and Fig. 53) 30 ft E. of tower, running E.-W. in line with door. Most productive and complicated of trenches. At W. end dump of clean sand ran out of trench W.-wards towards tower, revetted to E. by massive granite boulders (one in situ, two slipped, Pl. 67). Stones traceable on surface for about 40 ft to S., 6 ft to N., then turn W. for about 25 ft and disappear. Under dump grey clay layer with such bone, slag and some souterrain ware sherds, above natural altered shale. Signs of waterlogging at base. Into shale one large post-hole cut, stone-packed, 1 ft 2 ins deep. Centre of trench substantial path of large, probably re-used stones ran from NE. to SW., overlying massive granite wall, un-mortared but packed with gravel and pebbles. Uncertain from narrow trench whether fragment of massive N.-S. wall or angle (N.-S. wall turning E.). To E. of wall clear, undisturbed layers. Two dark layers with charcoal and occupation material overlay sticky grey clay with bone and slag, over natural shale. Area W. of wall difficult to interpret: layers slope down into ditch E. of granite revetment (see above). Natural shale only reached in part of trench. About 150 souterrain ware sherds (no glazed or wheel-made pottery), one blue glass bead, burned and unburned animal bone, much iron working débris. A very promising area which has suffered less from ploughing than elsewhere.

vii) RELICS. Colgan reported in church 'asservatur una nola [bell] in magna veneratione, quae fuit olim huius sancti, Glunan vulgo dicta, et unus e calceis [shoe] pretioso tegumento ex aureo, et argento coelatus' (1645, 743, quoted by Reeves 1847, 28). O'Donovan in 1834 wrote in O.S. Letters

I can hear no account of St Downart's buckle and bell, which were preserved at Magheraw in Colgan's time' (1909, 72). Crawford 1923, 174.

Bronze 'badge' reported from churchyard with crucifixion scene: Patterson believed late medieval. Present whereabouts unknown. Patterson in J.R.S.A.I. 13 (1874-5), 17.)

Colgan 1645, 743; Harris 1744, 82, 121; Dubourdieu 1802, 267-8; Lewis 1837, II, 329-30 seems to be some confusion with Maghera (De.) repeated by Archdall 1873, 280-2; Reeves 1847, 27-8, 154-5, 207-8; O'Laverty 1878, 47-56; Lett, H.W., 'Grove Donard, in the County of Down' in J.R.S.A.I. 35 (1905), 230-233; O'Donovan 1909, 72-9; Evans 1951, especially 86-8, 93-4, 99-101; Co. Down 1966, 307.

Achadh-chail may be in Maghera parish, but identification tentative and site not certainly identified. Colgan attributed to Oengus tract on mothers of saints of Ireland, including (brother of Domongart) Cillen 'de Achadhcaill in regione de Leth-Cathuil ad ripam aestuarii de Duindroma' (1645, 587). Kenney does not list this source and I cannot trace it further back than Colgan. Hogan gives several references to Achadh-chail. Reeves listed possessions of Co. of Down in late twelfth to early thirteenth centuries, including 'Rathmurvul [Maghera] cum Rathscillan et omnibus aliis pertinentiis suis' (1847, 165). Is this name derived from Cillen? O'Laverty suggested site: 'In a field in Wateresk belonging to Mr Savage, and immediately adjoining his house, are the remains of an ancient cemetery which was once enclosed in a rath. The bodies were interred in graves lined with flag-stones, and a large granite stone stood in the cemetery, but it has been rolled into a stream which bounds the field; on this stone is inscribed a simple cross, formed by the intersection of two pairs of parallel lines' (1878, 54). Morris suggested another site, 'Sillan fort',

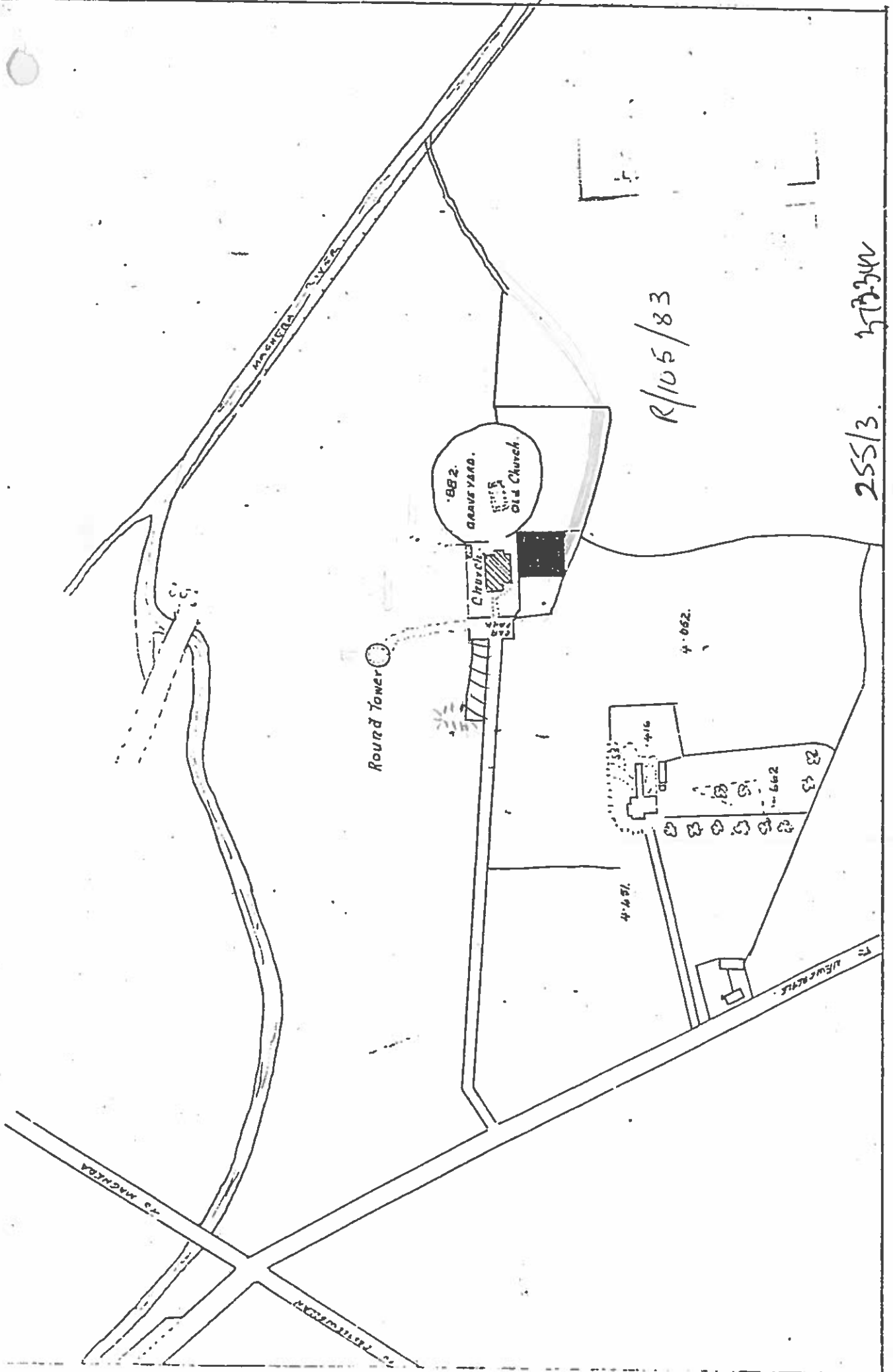
less than $\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Newcastle on Bryansford road, 45 yds
 distance. I have not yet been able to pursue this question
 further. Reeves 1847, 165, 217, 236; Archdall 1873, 220-1;
Slavery 1878, 54; Hogan 1910, 7; Morris, H., in D.C.H.S.
 9 (1937), 39-40; Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 372.

147.

MAGHERALIN parish and townland. O.S. 13; J/128589. Place-
 name strongly suggests early church: 1306 taxation 'church
 of Lan'. Nineteenth-century writers, including O'Donovan and
 Reeves, wrongly identified Magheralin with Linn-duachail, now
 thought to be Linns, Co. Louth, near Annagassan (Reeves 1847,
 110-1, gives many annal entries for this site). Magheralin
 also associated in M.O. at 22 May with Rónán, glossed 'of
Land Rónáin Find in Húi Echach of Ulster', also M.T., M.G.
 and M.D. Colmán at 30 March belongs to Linns (see above),
 but is Colmán of M.T. at 30 Oct., of Camus and Lann Mocholmóc,
 to be placed here at Lan? 1178 'Lann Rónáin Fhinn, chief
 sanctuary of all Ulaidh, was plundered by John de Courcy,
 and Tomás Ó Corcráin, its erenach, was beheaded' (M.I.A.)
 ruined late medieval church in large graveyard with raised,
 roughly oval nuclear area. O'Donovan, visiting 1834, reported
 'In an adjoining field a quantity of human bones have [been]
 dug up, which points to the site of the ancient burial ground.'
 SITE: about 150 ft, in damp surroundings with small stream
 S. of graveyard. General slope gently S.-wards to river
 Lagan $\frac{1}{4}$ m. away.
 NO EARLY MATERIAL: it would be reassuring to find some in
 view of historical uncertainties. Not certain present
 cemetery occupies earliest site.

Reeves 1847, 110-1, to be used with caution; O'Donovan 1909,
 15-16; Atkinson 1925, 210-11; Co. Down 1966, 307-8.

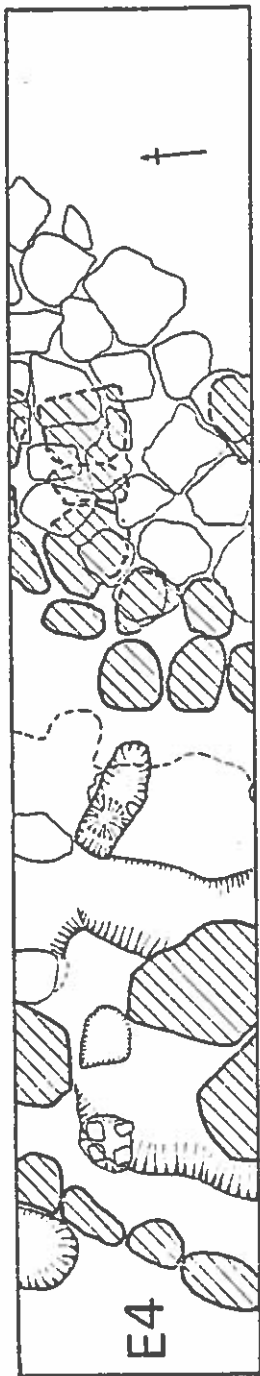
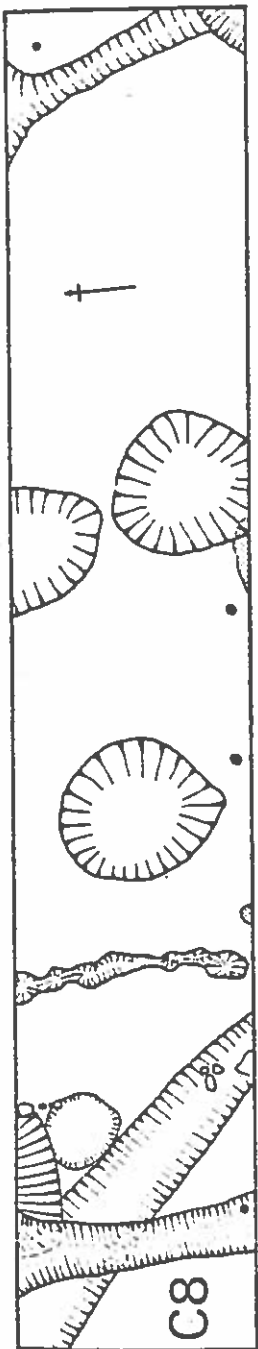
SITE PLAN - MACHERA CHUECH.
SCALE 1:2500.



Hamlin 76

MAGHERA CO. DOWN

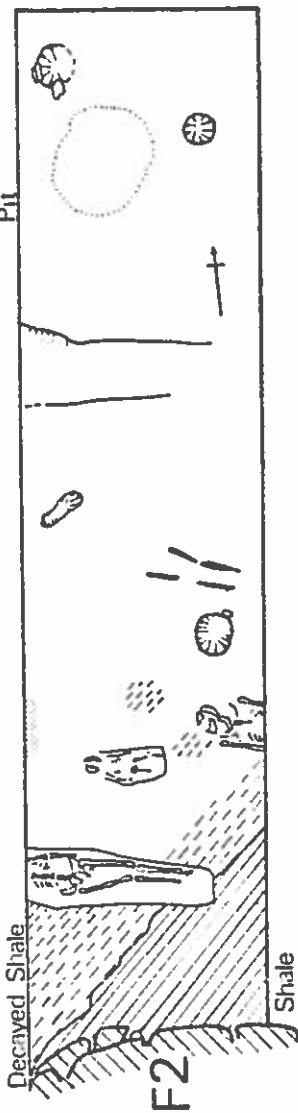
Plans of excavated trenches



Wall under path

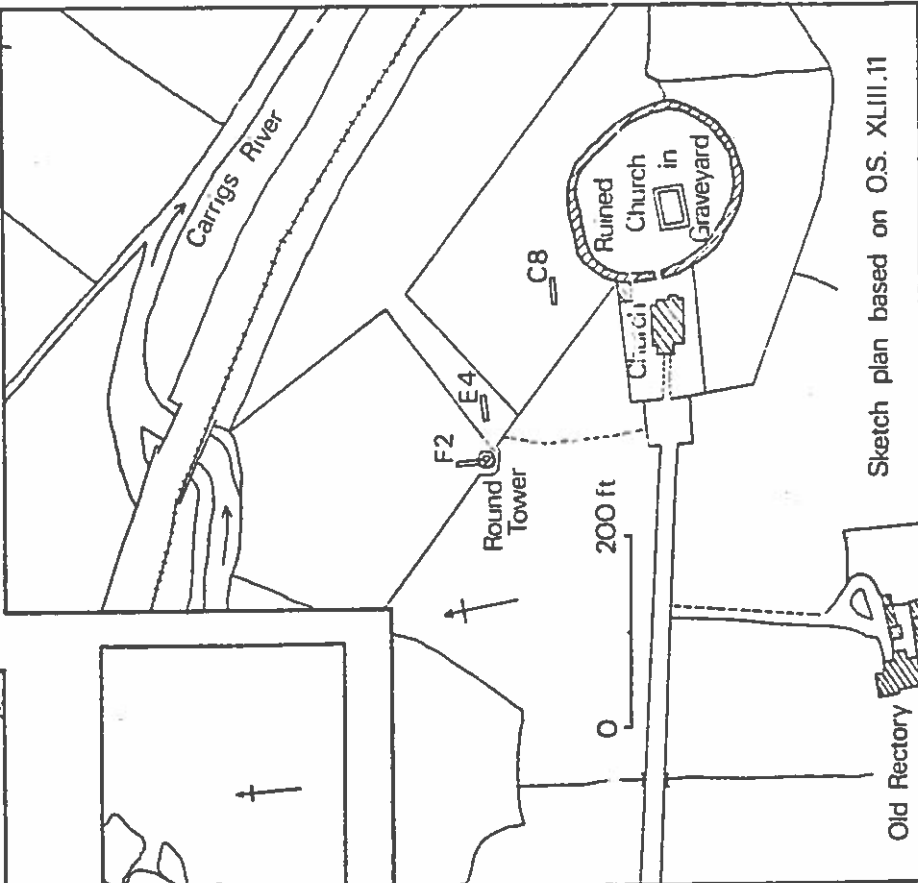
Revetment

Stone row



• Stake hole

• Burning



Sketch plan based on O.S. XLIII.11

Fig. 53

MAGHERA CHURCH AND ROUND TOWER

On the outskirts of the village of Maghera, three miles north of Newcastle, behind the modern parish church (Church of Ireland). The associations of this locality are very ancient; it is believed that St. Donard, after whom the chief peak of the Mourne Mountains is named, established a church here in the 6th century.

The church is a ruined rectangular gabled building, 45 ft. 10 in. by 21 ft. 5 in. internally, with walls 2 ft. 9 in. to 3 ft. thick, and was built possibly as early as the 13th century. It is of rubble construction, incorporating numerous boulders, some of granite, and some split stone. The west gable and north wall still stand to their original height; the other walls are reduced to foundations. There is a narrow light, probably original, set high in the north wall. The entrance on the south, with rebuilt jambs, is of doubtful date.

The church stands within a circular walled enclosure which some authorities have referred to as a cashel. The 'cashel wall', however, is probably no more than the graveyard boundary, though the church does appear to lie within a small circular earthwork (not concentric with the present graveyard wall), the bank of which can be traced on the south-west, and the ditch probably on the north of the church.

In the churchyard is a broken 13th century coffin-lid serving as a headstone. A number of cross-inscribed stones have been found, two of which remain. An equal-armed cross is incised on a granite boulder built into the lower blocking of the west door of the church.

The ruin of a round tower, surviving to a height of 18 ft. stands in a field about 120 yards north-west of the church. It was blown down in a violent gale about 1714, and according to Harris, 'lay at length and entire on the ground, like a huge gun, without breaking to pieces; so wonderfully hard and binding was the cement of this work. The tower is about 9 ft. in external diameter, with walls 3 ft. 3 in. thick, built of roughly coursed boulders with pinnings. The entrance was about 5 ft. 6 in. above the existing ground level.

See the Archaeological Survey of Northern Ireland - County Down - Page 306, 307.

Ministry of Finance
Monuments Branch
Churchill House
Victoria Square
BELFAST
BT1 4QW

HIS TOPIC

An approximately triangular area, 40m. E.-W. by 25m. N.-S., was designated as the site of an extension to the graveyard of the present church adjacent on the N. The threatened area lay 15m. SW. of the ruin of the medieval church and 80m. SE. of the round tower stump. The S. boundary of the area was formed by a curving field hedge incorporating a row of boulders thought to delimit an early ecclesiastical enclosure.

As there was little pressure on time and as the threatened area was fairly remote from the probable early focus of activity near the round tower, it was decided to sample the entire threatened area using a series of 40 small trial trenches laid out on a grid pattern in rows aligned N.-S., 1m. wide and 1m. apart. This system provided an adequate sample of the whole area but involved the excavation of a volume of soil equivalent to only one quarter of the site. It also had the advantages of easy laying out and recording, and little time-wasting if some areas, or indeed the whole site, had few or no archaeological remains. Areas or features shown to be of interest could be subsequently completely excavated with the advantage of information already available about the extent of the features and the proximity of others.

The excavation revealed traces of activity, generally vague, both in the Early Christian and medieval periods. The topsoil was fairly uniform in thickness, c. 20cm., over the entire level site and evidently resulted from prolonged tillage. There was a dearth of clearly modern finds, however, and pieces of broken china, etc., were scarce. At the S. side of the area there was a broad zone in which small pieces of slag or clinker were encountered regularly, up to 10 from the topsoil of any one trial trench. Finds of a few small sherds of souterrain ware and of heat-glazed clay tuyères suggested that this debris was derived from a transient phase of early metalworking of which no clear structural trace, or even hearth, was encountered. The only clearly medieval finds from topsoil were two small jug sherds and two iron socketed arrowheads.

Stratified undisturbed deposits survived in only limited areas of the site and the majority of features appeared at the base of topsoil, cut into the surface of subsoil. Between the features, which may have been truncated, the topsoil gave way immediately to subsoil. Three main types of features were revealed.

1. A series of faint shallow gullies, c. 15cm. wide and 5cm. deep, filled with brown loam. Most of the gullies were parallel, trending SW.-NE., but a few others ran at right angles or had other orientations. As the features were discontinuous - only a few ran from one trench to the next - spacing could not be worked out but was certainly not regular. The minimum separation between two parallel gullies was 10cm., but 3-5m. would be a more usual average. These features do not appear to have been structural; they contained no trace of wattle walling, for example, nor were they for drainage as the gravelly subsoil is very free-draining. Most of the

few sherds of medieval everted-rim ware so far identified came from the fill of one of these gullies. At one point two successive gullies appeared to have been separated by a thin fossil soil or a layer of upcast subsoil, in which case their use may have continued over a long period. Some of the gullies extended across several test trenches and one may have been continuous for more than 10m. It can only be suggested that the features were created in the course of agricultural operations, perhaps in cutting drills in the early medieval period, but it must be admitted that they are very straight and level and show no signs of individual spade-marks.

2. Several deep pits and substantial gullies, some containing souterrain ware, occurred at the S. edge of the site against the boundary hedge/bank. The features did not combine to suggest the certain plans of structures but it is likely that occupation took place in the area during the Early Christian period.
3. The most important feature discovered was a large ditch, apparently the earliest feature on the site. The ditch was V-sectioned, 4m. wide and 2m. deep; it was traced for a distance of approximately 25m. E.-W. and continued beyond. The outer edge of the ditch was 4-5m. inside the line of the surviving boundary hedge on the S. and appeared to run parallel to it. No trace of a bank associated with the ditch was found. The feature was completely excavated in only one 2m. wide section. The gravelly infilling was very homogeneous and not informative. No organic material came from the bottom and the only finds comprised a few sherds of thick souterrain ware from high up in the fill.

The ditch presumably dates to the Early Christian period and, if so, would form a more typical early ecclesiastical enclosure, however short-lived, than the present field hedge. It should be possible in future to trace the line of the ditch around the perimeter of the site by excavation and, less hopefully, by aerial photography.

The excavations were conducted by kind permission of the Rev. J. D. Cauldwell of Maghera parish church. The assistance of J. Quinn and N. Crothers during the excavation is gratefully acknowledged.

C. J. Lynn

C. J. Lynn

REPORT OF EXCAVATIONS AT MAGHERA, CO. DOWN 1965

Trial excavations on a small scale were undertaken at Maghera (Carnacavill td.) between 10th June and 18th July 1965. The possible area of the early monastic site is large, the stump of the round tower being some 250 feet from the old churchyard wall. The site is now rough pasture, and there are many visible surface features - ditches and field walls - but none is clearly ancient, and most are shown on the first edition six inch Ordnance Survey map. Three trenches were opened, five feet wide within a thirty foot grid.

One trench ran north from the foot of the tower on the north side. The surface features here were a shallow scoop around the foot of the tower, and beyond a slight hump, falling away northwards. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of two feet six inches.

The lowest visible course of masonry was found to be the base of the tower, resting on solid natural Silurian shale, here forming a slight knoll. Two stones remained of a rough offset, apparently not a constant feature (of Nendrum), but making up the level where the shale fell away. The slight hump visible on the surface consisted of earth and stones (mainly pinnings) with some decayed mortar. Amongst this rubble was found a piece of a decorated granite quernstone. The stones may be a gradual accumulation, but are more likely to be connected with mid 19th century clearance at the foot of the tower. Below this rubble lay brown loam with small stones which in turn overlay orange decayed shale. Four burials were found, orientated East West, including one infant. In one case the burial occurred in the brown stoney layer; in two cases the burials lay on the shale surface; the remaining burial lay in a rock-cut grave at the foot of the tower. There were no nails or other associated finds.

At the north end of the trench the rubble layer gradually thinned out and disappeared. No burials occurred and the layers did not correspond exactly with those further south. They were complicated by a wide shallow silt-filled cut; apparently a ditch, into which some of the rubble seemed to have tumbled. Several features were found in the orange decayed shale surface. An oval pit, cut from a higher level, was filled with dark loam with charcoal and much iron-working debris. Three post-holes were found, one associated with a stake-hole. The identification of natural at the north end of the trench was problematical. An orange surface appeared to be decayed shale, and stones and granite boulders embedded in it could be the remnant of a thin skin of boulder clay. But charcoal flecking was found to persist sporadically, and because of pressure of time it was impossible to be sure that the undisturbed surface was everywhere exposed.

One aim - the identification of an original ground surface - was not fulfilled. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the trench is the occurrence of burials at the foot of the tower, far from the old graveyard. This does somewhat reinforce the theory that there may have been an earlier church nearer to the round tower than the present medieval ruin; but there was, of course, no indication of the date of the burials. It is not possible to draw conclusions from the three post-holes and the pit in such a restricted area.

Following a short electrical resistivity survey a trench was opened quite close to the old graveyard wall (there was not time to dig a trench against the wall itself as originally planned). Topsoil here was very thick, and the absence of stones very marked compared with the other trenches. There were strong indications that the land here had been ploughed, and a local visitor confirmed that the field had been under crop within the last ten years or so. There are no surface features in this area, which tends to be marshy, and features are likely to have been truncated by ploughing.

The trench did produce several shallow features - slight gullies, ill-defined hollows, the edge of a deep pit, and five small stake-holes. Finds from the trench tended to be small and included sherds, fragments of burned clay, a crucible sherd, bone fragments and struck flints. The identification of

undisturbed ground was again difficult - again charcoal flecking persisted to some depth in what appeared to be undisturbed iron-stained gravel. This was markedly different from the decayed shale in the tower trench, and may be a river gravel.

Again it is impossible to interpret features exposed over only a small area, but this area may perhaps have been devoted to agricultural or industrial purposes rather than intensive occupation.

A third trench, sited East of the tower, in line with its entrance, proved the most interesting and productive. It was sited to cross several surface features, including a ditch and a massive row of stones. The trench produced about 140 sherds of souterrain ware including many rims and fragments with horizontal cordons, also one blueglass bead fragment, much burned and unburned bone, and a vast amount of debris from iron-working in the form of slag, ore, ironwaste and clay from furnaces.

A substantial path, marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map, crossed the Eastern end of the trench diagonally from S.W. to N.E. It included some stones of enormous size which were almost certainly re-used from an earlier structure. The excavation of this part of the trench was much complicated by these stones, some of which were too large to remove. East of the path the stratification was undisturbed and very sharply defined. There were two layers of dark earth with much occupation debris, with streaks of clay and more concentrated charcoal. Underneath lay one foot to one foot six inches of sticky dense grey clay with much iron-working debris, burned stones, and bone. This overlay natural - in this case unmistakable - in the form of greenish-yellow clayey decayed shale.

The two occupation layers ran westward under the path area and thinned and disappeared. Above them, immediately under the path stones, was a layer of black earth with stones in which a great deal of pottery was found. When the path stones had been removed as far as possible, a wall of large granite boulders was exposed, running N.S. across the trench. The stones were not mortared, but gravel and pebbles had been packed in amongst them and in places had become concreted, presumably through some natural agency. A line of three large stones ran Eastwards at right angles to this N.S. wall, close to the north section and large stones packed with pebbles and gravel just appeared in the north section. It is possible that we are here close to a re-entrant angle in a fairly substantial building.

West of this N.S. wall lay a complicated series of layers, including one of thick dense charcoal. These layers sloped down to a depression, visible on the surface before excavation. This area was extremely complex. The depression had, from its finds, clearly been an open ditch in fairly recent times, but it followed the line of an older feature, a ditch or slot. At right angles to this was another slot, terminating eastward in a large post-hole with an associated stake-hole. These features ran diagonally to the line of our trench, in a different alignment from the wall. The ditch, running S.W.-N.E. seems to have been revetted with a row of massive granite boulders set on end. Three of these were in our trench, one in situ, one sagged forward from its socket and one fallen forward into the soggy ditch fill. Behind these massive stones was packed some twelve inches of yellow sterile sand which ran westward out of the limit of the trench, towards the foot of the round tower. On this sand, one foot back from the revetment and in the same alignment was set a row of smaller stones which may in turn have revetted some material packed behind the larger row. The yellow sand had clearly been brought from elsewhere and the whole complex gives the impression of considerable care and effort in its construction.

Underlying this yellow sand and the complicated layers West of the wall, was about one foot of grey clay, again with iron-working debris, burned stones and bone. This overlay natural which in parts was covered with a thin layer of orange clay with charcoal flecking. A large stone-packed post-hole, fourteen

The stratification in this trench was complicated. The stratigraphical relationship of the various features to each other was not always clear during excavation, and problems are likely to remain unsolved. But from the concentration of finds and the indications of structures of both wood and stone, it does seem that work in this area on a larger scale would be worthwhile.

The excavations have shown that there was considerable activity in this area during the period in which souterrain pottery was in use, though unfortunately no imported pottery and no distinctive metal objects were found to help in closer dating. It is interesting that no English-style medieval pottery was found. There was a gap between the souterrain pottery and 19th century "picnic wares". The life of the monastery on this spot would seem to have ended before the Anglo-Norman invasion, although Giraldus Cambrensis knew that St. Donard had founded a "nobile monasterium" at the foot of the Mourne. The excavation has emphasised the difficulties of approaching a large site on a small scale and of interpreting features seen only in small trenches much encumbered by large stones. To test the whole potential area would be a formidable undertaking, but more work in the most productive area would seem justified by the results of the small-scale 1965 season.

Ann Hamlin
Archaeology Department
Queen's University
August 1965

Interim Report on Excavations at Maghera, Co. Down, 1965.

Small scale trial excavations on the early monastic site (Carnacavill townland. Grid ref. 372341) were done in good weather from 21st June to 18th July. The work was made possible by a small grant from Queen's, and the kind loan of equipment by the Ministry of Finance.

The site

lies near the Carrigs river on low ground south of Maghera village, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the sea near the foot of the Mourne mountains. The 1859 Ordnance Survey 6 inch map (sheet 42) shows the sites of at least 62 raths and cashels in the area. On the site are a modern church (1825), a ruined medieval church (possibly 13th century) in a roughly circular walled graveyard, and the stump of a round tower. In the graveyard are several simple cross-inscribed stones and a fragment of a 13th century grave slab. The graveyard wall has been claimed to be the monastic cashel, but it may simply be the graveyard boundary. Traces of a smaller enclosure can be seen in the graveyard, but the area is densely buried in, and the ground level has risen considerably. The round tower is about 250 ft. N.W. of the graveyard. Its upper part was blown down in about 1710. The remaining stump is about 18 ft. high, roughly built of boulders with split stone pinnings. The entrance points east, 5 ft. 6 ins. above ground level. The tower and church ruin are in the care of the Ministry of Finance, and excavation was done with the kind permission of the Maghera Select Vestry through the Rev. J. D. Caldwell and of Mr. John Quinn of Ballybannan. The area is rough pasture and, unlike many early monastic sites, unencumbered by recent burials. Clearance round the foot of the tower was done in the mid 19th century, but no detailed account survives.

History

The site is connected with the 6th century St. Donard, of whom little is known. Reeves considered an obit under 506 in the Annals of the Four Masters was too early. Giraldus Cambrensis stated (Top. Hib. III. 2) that the saint founded a "nobile monasterium" at the foot of the Mournes. There are several references in medieval sources to Maghera as a parish church not a monastery, including a valuation of 20s. in 1306-7, and the collation of a rector to "St. Dongarde's parish church" in 1438. In the mid 17th century Colgan recorded that St. Donard's bell and shoe were preserved in the church with great veneration. The earliest name for the site seems to be Rathmurbhuilg ("the rath at the sea inlet"). Other names include Portmurbhuilg (1152), Rath (1438), Rathra (1610), and Magherera (1622).

Excavation

Three trenches were excavated, 28 ft. by 5 ft.

- (i) One ran N. from the foot of the tower and was excavated to a maximum depth of 2 ft. 6 ins. The lowest visible course of masonry was found to be the base of the tower, resting on Silurian shale, here forming a knoll. Two stones remained of a rough offset, apparently simply

fragment of a decorated granite quern stone. This rubble is more likely to be connected with mid 19th century clearance than a gradual accumulation from the tower. Below was brown loam with small stones which overlay orange decayed shale. Four orientated burials were found, including one infant. One grave was cut in the solid shale at the foot of the tower. There were no associated finds. At the N. end of the trench the rubble thinned and disappeared. No burials occurred, and the area was complicated by a wide, shallow silt-filled ditch running E.-W. into which some of the rubble had fallen. Into the underlying decayed shale were cut an oval pit, filled with iron-working debris, and three post-holes (two in line N.-S., 11 ft. apart, the third to the N.W.). The most interesting feature of the trench is the occurrence of burials at the foot of the tower, far from the walled graveyard. This does somewhat reinforce the theory that there may have been an earlier church nearer to the round tower, but there was of course no indication of the date of the burials.

- (ii) The most complicated and productive trench was sited 30 ft. east of the tower, running E.-W. in line with its entrance. It produced about 150 sherds of souterrain ware including many rims, some with decorated horizontal cordons, one blue glass bead fragment, burned and unburned animal bone, and much iron-working debris. The trench was much encumbered by large stones which often made stratification difficult to follow.

A substantial path, marked on the 1859 O.S. map, was found just below the sod, running from S.W. to N.E. It included some huge stones, almost certainly re-used. Under the path was black stony loam, very rich in sherds, possibly dumped from elsewhere as make up for the path. East of the path the stratification was undisturbed: two dark layers with much charcoal and occupation material and bands of concentrated charcoal overlay 1 ft. 6 ins. of sticky grey clay. This contained much bone and slag and a few sherds and overlay natural decayed shale. The two occupation layers ran E. out of the trench, and to the W. butted up against large granite boulders, apparently forming the E. edge of a wall under the path. The stones were not mortared, but loose sand, gravel and pebbles were packed around them and in places had become concreted. A double row of 6 stones ran N.-S. across the trench, and 6 ran E. from these, partly under the N. balk. We may be near a re-entrant angle, or more likely, we may have a massive N.-S. wall, some 7 ft. wide, from which some stones have been removed (perhaps for the path above). A wall of such proportions suggests a boundary, but it does enclose occupation material to the east.

West of this wall a complicated series of layers, including one

hole and an associated stake-hole. These features ran diagonally to our trench, in a different alignment from the wall. It was an area of great complexity and difficult to interpret. The ditch was revetted to the west by a row of massive granite boulders set on end. One was in situ and two had sagged forward. Behind them was packed 10 ins of yellow sterile sand, clearly brought from elsewhere, which ran W. out of the trench towards the tower. On the sand, 12 ins. from the revetment and in the same alignment was a row of smaller stones. This complex gave the impression of considerable care in its construction, but provided no dating evidence. It may be comparatively recent, connected with some clearance or levelling at the foot of the tower. Underlying all these layers was dense grey clay with bone, slag and sherds, overlying natural decayed shale. Into the natural a large stone-packed post-hole, 1 ft. 2 ins. deep, had been dug near the W. end of the trench, its base reaching ground water.

(iii) Following a short electrical resistivity survey a third trench was opened some 32 ft. N.W. of the old graveyard wall. Topsoil here was very thick, large stones were absent, layer distinctions were blurred, and the outline of features vague, all indications that the ground had been ploughed. The trench did produce several features - shallow hollows and gulleys filled with dark, charcoal-flecked loam, and four small, pointed stake-holes. At the W. end three features intersected. The earliest was a small ditch, running from S.E. to N.W.; this was cut by a deep (at least 2 ft.) pit; finally both were cut by a small N.-S. gully.

Undisturbed material here was orange-brown gravel and pebbles, perhaps a river gravel, quite different from the shale elsewhere. The trench produced finds of all kinds, including 18 sherds and a crucible fragment, but in small quantity and of small size. The impression was of an area somewhat peripheral to the area of main activity, perhaps connected with agriculture or industry. It is interesting that this trench, so close to the claimed monastic "cashel" was so much less productive than those in the tower area, though the extent of plough damage remains uncertain.

Conclusion

Interpretation of small-scale work is difficult, and speculation at this stage must be tentative. But the three trenches have provided abundant evidence of fairly intensive activity during the period in which souterrain ware was in use (unfortunately not closely definable in the absence of closely dated finds but in general terms "early Christian"), and traces of structures in both stone and timber. It is interesting that no English style medieval pottery was found: there was a gap between souterrain and 19th century "picnic" wares. The life of the monastery may perhaps have ended on this site before the Anglo-Norman invasion, and a change of site for the church from near the tower to the walled graveyard may seem unlikely, but is possible.

sequence of souterrain ware. Few early Irish monastic sites have been excavated, and no Ulster monastic site dug on any scale since H.C. Lawlor excavated Nendrum in 1922-4. The result of the 1965 Maghera excavations do seem encouraging enough to warrant further work in the area of the tower.

Very many thanks are due to Miss Susan Limbrey of the University of London Institute of Archaeology and to all the volunteers from Queen's and elsewhere without whose help this work could not have been done. Material from the excavation, plans, photos etc. can be seen at 17, University Street, Belfast, 7.

Ann Hamlin,
Department of Archaeology,
Queen's University,
Belfast.

November 1965.

Early monastic site assoc. St. Donard.
Medieval parish ch of Rath [1306]

Ch. ruins in graveyard. Round tower and
outer enclosure. X carved stones. etc.

See Hamlin (1976)

Exc. .. 1965.

10. Maghera. S.E. In the churchyard $\frac{1}{4}$ m. S. of Maghera and
Carnacavill, 43 $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. N. of Newcastle Station.

(a) A slab 3 ft. above ground and 16 in. wide, upon it a roughly incised cross 30 in. long with four cross-bars.

(b) A slab 3 ft. 4 in. by 7 in., having at top a small Latin cross, and below a rude human figure with a small circle above the head.

(c) A slab 18 in. above ground, carved with a ringed cross having a central

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diamond-shaped hollow. The cross is in relief in a panel of the required shape.

(d) A square stone 18 in. high, built into the W. gable of the ruined church. On it is a plain Greek cross, 9 in. by 9 in., with slightly enlarged ends. See *Journal R.S.A.I.*, vol. xvi, p. 20 (D.I.).

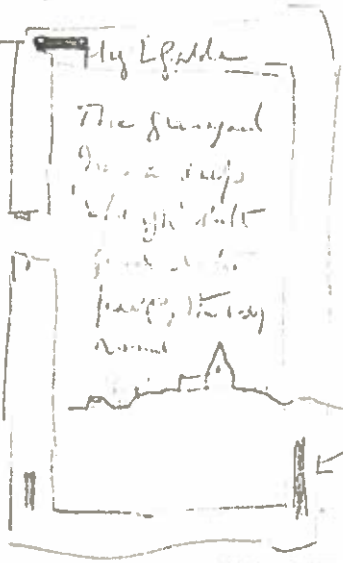
(e) A rough boulder-stone 29 in. high by 18 in. wide, having on the E. side three Latin crosses potent, also a modern inscription.—See *Ulster J.A.* (New Series), vol. viii, p. 94 (D.I.).

Crawford H.S.
JRSAI 1912
p. 225-226.

Cannecross. Magnesian Old Church - Red. Tower

Moles in walls of church

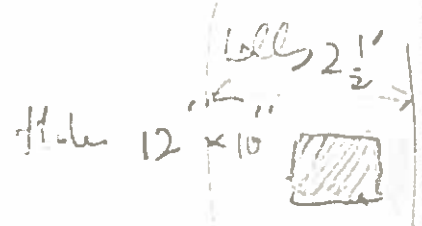
Hy 2/3



1774 etc
Granite from
... Tower ...



Granite
Fine lettering
... ..



Ex E.C. Evans field note-book IV p118.

MAGHERA. COUNTY OF DOWN.

"A mile east of Briansford, on the road to Dundrum, at Maghera, are the ruins of an old church, where is a noted burial-place, and near it formerly stood an high Round Tower, which, about 30 years ago, was overturned by a violent storm, and lay at length and entire upon the ground like a huge gun, without breaking to pieces, so wonderfully hard and binding was the cement in this work." Such is the brief notice found in *The Ancient and Present State of the County of Down*, published in 1744. The tower, therefore, fell about the year 1711, or 145 years ago. The South Munster Society of Antiquaries, in a document quoted by Dr. Petrie,* gives the authority of Sir William Betham, for a statement that "the Tower of Maghera has also been opened" and human remains found. Mr. Joseph William Murphy, of Belfast, having made some inquiries respecting this, received the following note from Mr. Andrew Lindsay, dated Maghera, 5th Nov., 1813:— "I have just been over to see the Round Tower and to ascertain in what state it is. I find that Mr. Duffin, in whose glebe it is, has had it dug about to a considerable depth, and all the soil cleared off, and that the inside has been sunk several feet deep."

The name of this parish was originally Rath-Murhhuilg, afterwards, as in the Taxation of Pope Nicholas, edited by Dr. Reeves, simply Rath; and subsequently with a prefix, Machaire-Ratha. Only about twenty feet of the lower part of the tower now remain, containing the doorway, which is towards the east, and about seven feet from the ground.

U. J. A. 4 (1856) 131.

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Date

Copyright

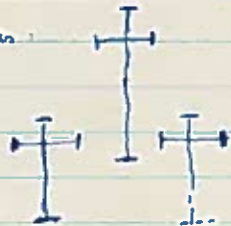
Maghera Church

DOWN

Spire baseless, large; on smooth E face, three pointed-arch
crosses, engraved on which later inscription Dan' Green/
Maghera Miller

Maghera Miller

Graves arranged thus:



Baseless spire just with churchyard boundary, S of church,
close to recumbent (13) coffin lid

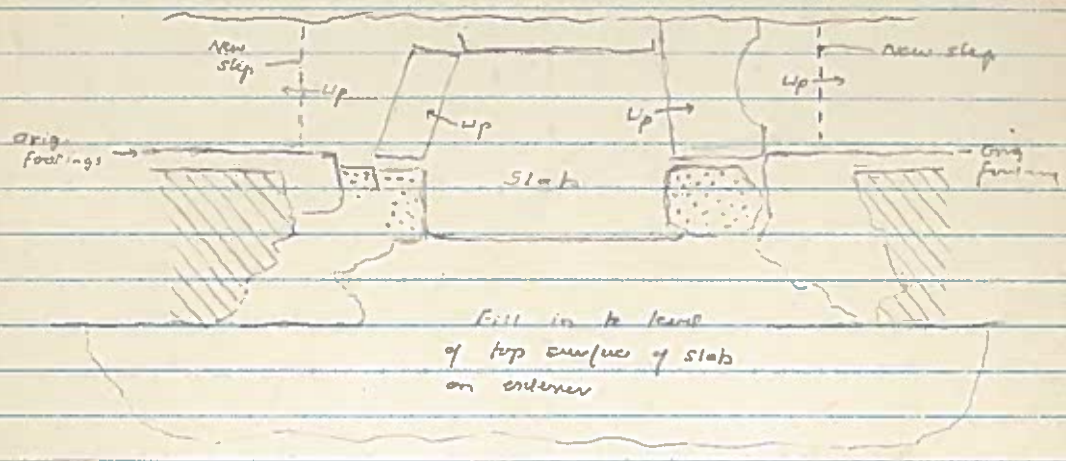
MAGHERA

Down
43:85

~~Item 36:6~~
DHU c.1975

Maghera Church

S wall site of Logua door



Query: extend excavation to level of footings from SW angle up to W door. — No

Items: pointing window; grit for retaining walls and steps outside W door.

Reference.....

Mr Hatrick

Please indicate on the map extract where the
Orange Hall is, and return to Manas Meek
please.

Ann Hamlin

20.7.90.

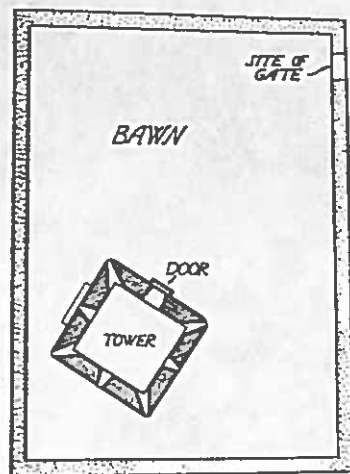
Miss Meek

I have marked the map and also attached
a photo of the hall

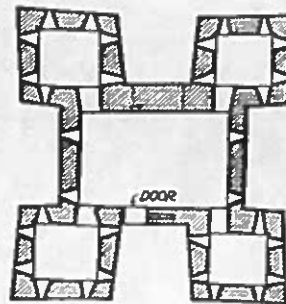
~~R. E. Hatrick~~

1/8/90.

— EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY CAMPAIGN FORTS —



MOYRY - Co ARMAGH
LORD MOUNTJOY'S CAMPAIGN - 1600-2



MOUNTJOY - Co TYRONE
1600-5

0 SCALE OF FEET 50

EMJ 197

FIGS. 3-4. Ground plans of the campaign fort at Moyry, Co. Armagh, and of the 3-storey building (brick on stone footings) within the fort at Mountjoy, Co. Tyrone (see pl. XIII).

