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The Anglo-Norman Earthworks of Co. Kildare,  
1169-1350

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The Anglo-Norman Earthworks  
of Co. Kildare,  
1169-1350.

*John J. Barry*  
Doctor of Letters  
August, 1931



YMBSIS

3091

SUMMARY

The Anglo-Norman earthworks of Co. Kildare are explored in the course of this thesis by a thorough investigation of all available documentary, cartographic and photographic evidence, in conjunction with a systematic field survey of identified earthwork sites.

**The Anglo-Norman Earthworks of Co. Kildare, 1169-1350**

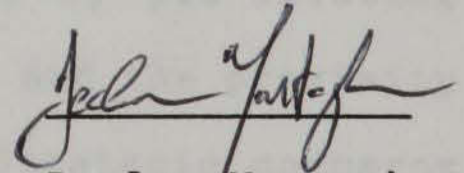
by

**Declan Murtagh**

Submitted for the degree of Ph.D.  
at  
**Trinity College, Dublin**

I hereby declare that this thesis is entirely my own work and has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other university.

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**Declan Murtagh**

**August, 1993**

**SUMMARY**

The Anglo-Norman earthworks of Co.Kildare are explored in the course of this thesis by a thorough investigation of all available documentary, cartographic and photographic evidence, in conjunction with a systematic field survey of identified earthwork sites.

The initial chapters focus on the historical background, source material and a review of these earthwork sites in their Irish and European context. The core of the text is a historical and archaeological evaluation of Kildare's Anglo-Norman earthwork sites based on distributional analysis and morphological classification in an attempt to answer the fundamental questions of function and chronology. The contribution of these sites to the development of a settlement infrastructure is then examined.

The distribution of motte castles in Co.Kildare was determined by the initial subinfeudation process which in turn was overwhelmingly influenced by pre-existing territorial boundaries and settlements and the proximity of navigable and overland routeways. Strategic concerns were respected but were not a paramount locational factor, as most of Kildare's motte castles were settlement rather than campaign related. Research revealed that identification of ringwork castles should be restricted to the results of archaeological excavation

and thus the verified interpretation of definite historical reference.

Positive site identification was increased by 100% from that of previous surveys, one of which included the documentation of the construction of a moated site with a gate tower at Grangeford Townland in the late 1270s, which confirms the accepted Irish chronology for this site type.

Although some of the moated sites in Co.Kildare exhibited strategic characteristics there was no evidence to suggest that they had a specific military agenda. A high proportion of these sites were located in clusters close to pre-existing and well established settlements.

Finally, placename evidence is used to illustrate the contribution of these sites to the establishment of a developed and settled society.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I should like to thank Dr. Terry Barry, friend and supervisor, for his academic guidance and constant encouragement throughout the long life of this thesis. I remain indebted to his indefatigable counsel. Deserved of special mention are the members of the Post-Graduate Medieval Seminar Group, Trinity College, Dublin. Dr. Sean Duffy and Linzi Simpson epitomise the essential qualities of this erudite assembly where theories were advanced, moulded and developed in an atmosphere of scholastic stimulation, unsolicited advice and friendship.

I am especially grateful to the staff of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, Office of Public Works, for all their help over the years. I would like to acknowledge the financial support from the Grace Lawless Lee Fund, Trinity College, Dublin.

This thesis is dedicated to the resolute perseverance of Anne, my family and friends, for whom field survey will never be the same.

Reports of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records of Ireland

Statutes, Ordinances, and Acts of the Parliament of Ireland, King John to Henry V

English Historical Review

The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis, 1169-1171 Scott, A.W. & Martin, P.E.

Society of the Group for the Study of Irish Historical Settlements

Archaeological Survey of Ireland

Irish Association of Professional Archaeologists

Trinity College, Dublin

Trinity College, Dublin

Trinity College, Dublin

## ABBREVIATIONS

AFM	Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters
Alen's Reg.	Calendar of Archbishop Alen's Register
Antiq. Jn.	Antiquaries Journal
Arch. Jn.	Archaeological Journal
BAR	British Archaeological Reports
Civil Survey	The Civil Survey, Vol.VIII, County of Kildare
CBA	Council for British Archaeology
CDI	Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland
CJR	Calendar of the Justiciary Rolls of Ireland
DKR	Reports of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records of Ireland
Early Statutes	Statutes, Ordinances, and Acts of the Parliament of Ireland, King John to Henry V
EHR	English Historical Review
Expugnatio Hibernica	The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis, (ed) Scott, A.B. & Martin, F.X.
GSHIS Bull.	Bulletin of the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
IAPA	Irish Association of Professional Archaeologists
IHS	Irish Historical Studies
IPM	Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem
Ir. Geog.	Irish Geography

JCHAS	Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society
JKAS	Journal of the Kildare Archaeological Society
JLAHS	Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society
JRSAI	Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland
Med. Arch.	Medieval Archaeology
MSRG	Moated Sites Research Group
Normans	G.H.Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans
NLI	National Library of Ireland
NMI	National Museum of Ireland
OPW	Office of Public Works
Ormond Deeds	Calendar of Ormond Deeds
OS	Ordnance Survey
PRIA	Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy
PRO	Public Record Office, London
PROI	Public Record Office, Dublin
Red Book of Kildare	The Red Book of the Earls of Kildare
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
Song	The Song of Dermot and the Earl
St. Joseph	Photographs by J.K. St. Joseph, Committee for Aerial Photography, University of Cambridge
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin
Tresham	Rotulorum Patentium et Clausorum Cancellariae Hiberniae Calendarium
UJA	Ulster Journal of Archaeology

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1. Historical Background

Medieval Kildare comprised not only the modern county of Kildare, with which the present study is concerned, but also the greater parts of counties Louth, Offaly, and part of county Wicklow.

CHAPTER 1

Kildare, which received statutory recognition as an independent county in 1197, have as yet eluded definition. The difficulties encountered in such an undertaking were outlined by Binns in his

1. Historical Background

Kildare. The question was no further resolved by O'Byrne

2. Kildare: Geography and Medieval Demography

The choice of study area tackled in this thesis, modern

3. Anglo-Norman Settlement: An Introduction

author's reservations over attempts to satisfactorily define the latter.

<sup>1</sup> Binns, *Irishman's*, and *Acts of the Parliament of Ireland*, Vol. 1, p. 119. (ed.) M.F. Berry, Dublin, 1971, p. 119. Moreover that the county of Kildare, which was formerly a liberty intentive to the county of Dublin, be henceforth a county by itself, together with the crosslands and other lands, situated within the precinct of the same, totally discharged from the jurisdiction of the sheriff of Dublin, and that a sheriff be there as now is.

<sup>2</sup> *The Irishman's*, Vol. III, (ed.) Binns, R.C., Dublin, 1971, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> *The Medieval County of Kildare* (ed.) Binns, R.C., Dublin, 1971, p. 119. M.F. Berry has also written the subject of the county of the medieval county of the land of the Liberte of Kildare, Vol. II, p. 119.

## 1. Historical Background.

Medieval Kildare comprised not only the modern county of Kildare, with which the present study is concerned, but also the greater parts of counties Leix, Offaly, and part of county Wicklow. The exact boundaries of medieval Kildare, which acquired statutory recognition as an independent county in 1297, have as yet eluded definition.<sup>1</sup> The difficulties encountered in such an undertaking were outlined by Simington in his introduction to the Civil Survey of the county of Kildare.<sup>2</sup> The question was no further resolved by Otway-Ruthven in her seminal article on the "medieval county".<sup>3</sup> The choice of study area tackled in this thesis, modern as opposed to medieval, partially reflects the present author's reservations over attempts to satisfactorily delimit the latter.

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<sup>1</sup> Statutes, Ordinances, and Acts of the Parliament of Ireland, King John to Henry V (ed.) H.F.Berry, (Dublin, 1907) 25 Edw.I, 1297, p.199. "Moreover that the county of Kildare, which was formerly a liberty intenteive to the county of Dublin, be henceforth a county by itself, together with the Crosslands and other lands, contained within the precinct of the same, totally discharged from the jurisdiction of the sheriff of Dublin. And that a sheriff be there as now is."

<sup>2</sup> The Civil Survey, Vol.VIII, (ed.) Simington, R.C., (Dublin, 1952), p. xvi ff.

<sup>3</sup> Otway-Ruthven, A.J., "The Medieval County of Kildare" in I.H.S., Vol.XI, no.43, (1959), p.181-199. K.W.Nicholls has also tackled the subject of the extent of the medieval county in "The land of the Leinstermen", Peritia, Vol.3, (1984), p.535-558.



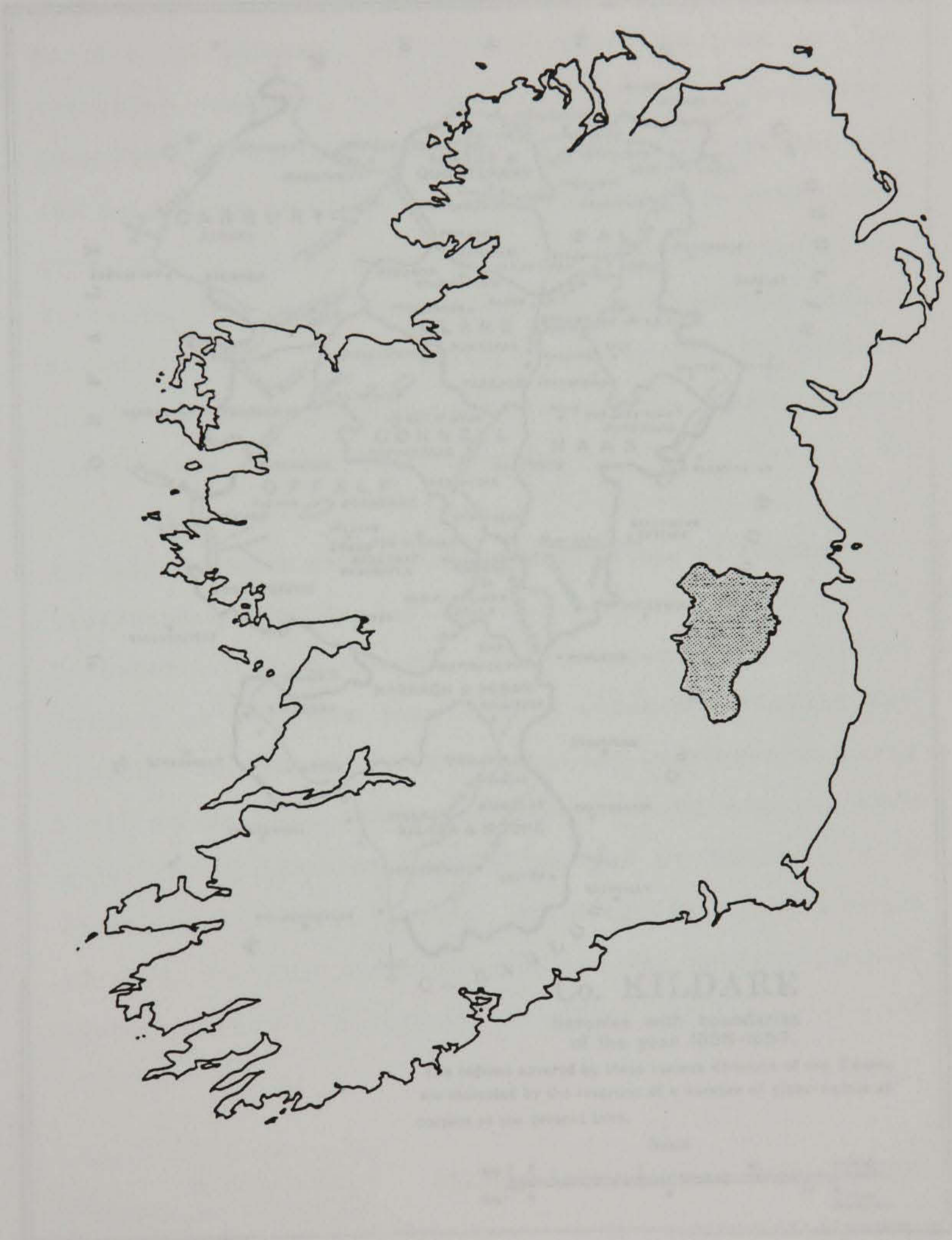


Figure 1. County Kildare - location map.

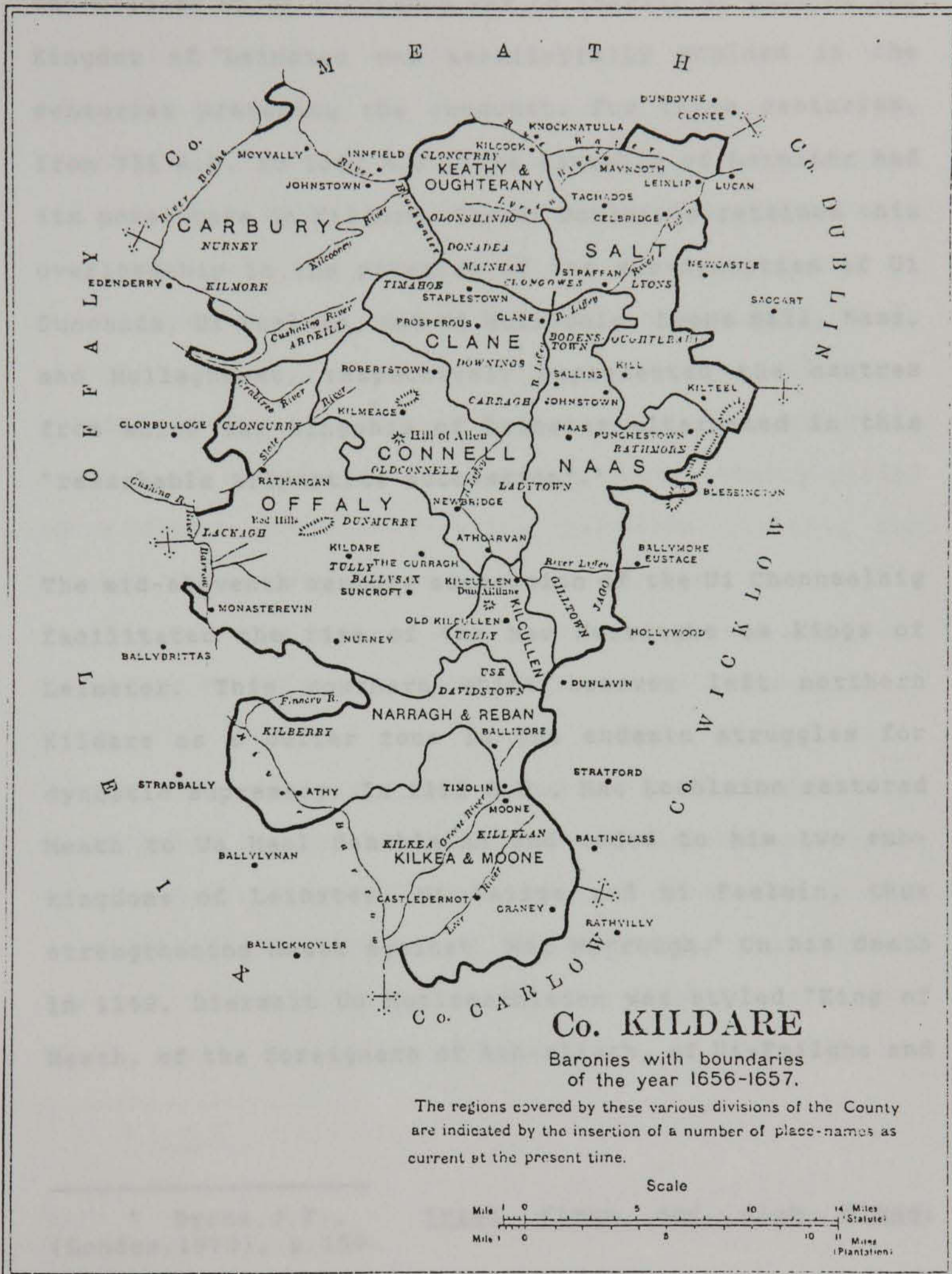


Figure 2. Kildare - (after Civil Survey, 1952).

The Kildare which Strongbow was to inherit as part of the Kingdom of Leinster was territorially moulded in the centuries preceding the conquest. For three centuries, from 738 A.D. to 1042 A.D., the kingship of Leinster had its power base in Kildare. The Ui Dunlainge retained this overlordship in the presence of its sub-dynasties of Ui Dunchada, Ui Faelain, and Ui Muiredaig. Lyons Hill, Naas, and Mullaghmast, respectively represented the centres from which the kingship of Leinster alternated in this "remarkable tripartite succession".<sup>4</sup>

The mid-eleventh century succession of the Ui Chennselaig facilitated the rise of the Mac Murroughs as kings of Leinster. This southern shift however left northern Kildare as a buffer zone in the endemic struggles for dynastic supremacy. In 1152 A.D., Mac Lochlainn restored Meath to Ua Mael Seachlainn and ceded to him two sub-kingdoms of Leinster, Ui Failge and Ui Faelain, thus strengthening Meath against Mac Murrough.<sup>5</sup> On his death in 1169, Diarmait Ua Maelseachlainn was styled "King of Meath, of the foreigners of Ath-cliath, of Ui-Failghe and

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<sup>4</sup> Byrne, J.F., Irish Kings and High Kings, (London, 1973), p.150.

<sup>5</sup> Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, (ed) O'Donovan, J., 7 Vols. (Dublin, 1848-51), 1152 A.D. This flux in the governorship of Ui Faelain is examined in Marie Therese Flanagan's, "Henry II and the kingdom of Ui Faelain", in Bradley, J., (ed) Settlement and Society in Medieval Ireland, (Kilkenny, 1988), 229-239.

Ui-Faelain".<sup>6</sup> Dermot Mac Murrough was thus not king of the "entire province of Leinster".<sup>7</sup> His pursuit of this goal was eventually to be realised, initiated by the recovery of his kingdom of Ui Chennselaig in August 1167 with the support of a force of Flemings from Wales.<sup>8</sup>

Mac Murrough had approached Henry II in Aquitaine, where he was apparently well received, and permission was granted to him to recruit among the King's subjects. Henry's own motives at this juncture were probably goaded by a desire to ease problems in Wales, letting the marcher lords play havoc in Ireland rather than within his own dominion, as apposed to any calculated move as a precursor to a latent ambition to conquer Ireland.

In May 1169, "Robert fitz Stephen...put in at Bannow in three ships...with thirty knights...a further sixty men wearing mail, and about three hundred foot archers from among the military elite of Wales".<sup>9</sup> After Mac Murrough had joined them with his own troops, they made plans for their first objective, the capture of the city of

---

<sup>6</sup> A.F.M., 1169 A.D.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 1161 A.D., "Muircheartach Ua Lochlainn...on this occasion, king of Ireland without opposition...gave the entire province of Leinster to Diarmaid Mac Murchada".

<sup>8</sup> The Song of Dermot and the Earl, (ed) Orpen, G.H., (Oxford, 1892), 1.404-419.

<sup>9</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis, (ed) Scott, A.B. & Martin, F.X., (Dublin, 1978), p.31.

Wexford. They then proceeded to restore Mac Murrough's supremacy in Leinster, successfully raiding Ossory, Omurethy, and Offelan.<sup>10</sup> Rory O'Connor who had banished Mac Murrough in 1166 was to arrest his efforts yet again, and imposed his overlordship with a hosting in Leinster. However, this time Mac Murrough was allowed to retain Leinster on certain terms, one of which called for the withdrawal and expulsion of his Welsh allies, as soon as his kingdom was subdued. This proved to be only a temporary setback, as the arrival of Richard de Clare (Strongbow) in 1170 was to witness the resumption of Mac Murrough's dynastic aspirations. After the capture of Waterford in 1171, Strongbow, through his marriage to McMurrough's daughter Aoife, was promised Leinster as inheritance on the death of his father-in-law. Dermot Mac Murrough's subsequent death at Ferns in May 1171 initiated a renewal of opposition from within the kingdom on account of Strongbow's succession. Despite this initial setback Strongbow had now achieved a strong power base in Ireland, the consequences of which were being monitored closely from across the water. King Henry II was by now as anxious to gain control of the situation as was Rory O'Connor, who laid siege to Dublin.<sup>11</sup>

The success of Strongbow in routing Rory's numerically superior forces reaffirmed Henry's fears of the

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<sup>10</sup> Song, l. 644-767; 864-875; 888-910.

<sup>11</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p. 79.

establishment of an independent Anglo-Norman kingdom on his doorstep. The reality of the situation was made more immediate by Strongbow's strong position from which he had the means to forcibly take Pembroke which had been denied to him.<sup>12</sup> Henry had placed an embargo on the country and ordered that all persons from his dominions who had gone there without his previous permission should either return before Easter 1171 or face seizure of their estates.<sup>13</sup> Strongbow's personal submission was also requested, as Henry had earlier refused to treat with the delegations, on separate occasions, of Raymond le Gros, Maurice FitzGerald, and Hervy de Montmorency, on the Earl's behalf. With the mobilization of the feudal host at Newnham, in Gloucestershire, Strongbow made a timely renewal of his feudal relationship with Henry, paid homage for Leinster and handed over the cities of Dublin, Wexford, and Waterford, with the adjacent lands along the coast.

Much emphasis has been placed on the sizable force which Henry brought with him to Ireland.<sup>14</sup> The documentary

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<sup>12</sup> M.T. Flanagan, "Strongbow, Henry II, and Anglo-Norman intervention in Ireland", in Gillingham, J. & Holt, J.C., (ed) War and Government in the Middle Ages, (1984), p.64-65.

<sup>13</sup> Strongbow's own estates had been sequestered as early as 1170, when Henry attempted to prevent his departure to Ireland.

<sup>14</sup> Otway-Ruthven, A.J., A History of Medieval Ireland, (London, 1968), p.48-49; Lydon, J.F., The Lordship of Ireland in the Middle Ages, (Dublin, 1972), p.40.

sources detail the preparations for the expedition and the shipment of foodstuffs, hand mills, axes, shovels, spades, nails, and prefabricated wooden towers.<sup>15</sup> However, the military might paraded by Henry was not to be tested. Henry on his departure in April 1172, after six months in Ireland, had effectively achieved the near total submission of the kings of Ireland, placed garrisons and constables of his choice in the major coastal ports, set the wheels in motion for a synod of the Irish ecclesiastical hierarchy which would affirm him as overlord of Ireland, and re-asserted the feudal dependency of the marcher lords who had established themselves in Leinster.

The Irish chiefs had apparently welcomed Henry's intervention. The terms of their new "feudal" relationship secured Henry's protection of their sovereignty, a later cause of much protest and little satisfaction. Strongbow was again to submit to Henry in Ireland, at which point he was confirmed in his holding of most of Leinster, while Henry kept Dublin, Wexford, and Waterford under royal control. The appointment of Hugh de Lacy as constable of Dublin, who also received the grant of the ancient kingdom of Meath, provided Henry with an effective check to Strongbow's further expansionist tendencies.

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<sup>15</sup> Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland, (ed) Sweetman, H.S., 5 Vols. (London, 1875-6), Vol. 1, No.1-No.37, p.1-6.

Strongbow had now to assert his newly defined overlordship, and secure his dominance within Leinster. The Song of Dermot and the Earl provides a list of his "already conquered...enemies of Leinster", of which Faelan Mac Fhaelain, lord of Ui Faelain, represented the only notable among the Kildare tribes.<sup>16</sup> Mac Fhaelain had been forthright in his opposition of Mac Murrough and his submission was thus of immediate importance to the success of the campaign. The consequences of this preemptive strike were later reflected in the initial subinfeudation of this part of northern Kildare. An incursion by Strongbow's forces into Ui Failge in 1172 resulted in a counter-attack by O'Dempsey as the troops returned with their spoil near Monasterevin.<sup>17</sup> The claim to territorial boundaries were now re-aligned by the combatants. Kildare town may have acted at this time as a base for Strongbow's Offaly offensive, although success was not immediate with no evidence of the exaction of hostages from O'Dempsey at this early stage. O'Moore of Laois had submitted in 1170 to the combined forces of Mac Murrough and the Anglo-Normans, which left O'Toole as the only obstacle in southern Kildare.

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<sup>16</sup> Song, 1.3208-3221.

<sup>17</sup> Annals of Tigernach, (ed) Stokes, W., Revue Celtique XVI-XVIII (1895-7), 1172 A.D. ; The Annals of Inisfallen, (ed) McAirt, S., (Dublin, 1951), 1172 A.D. Diarmait O'Dempsey, as king of Ui Failge, was later to grant a charter to the Cistercian monastery of Monasterevin sometime between 1177 and 1181.



However, Strongbow and de Lacy were summoned to the king's service in 1173 and on their return found the situation much changed with the Anglo-Norman forces on the defensive against Irish reprisals. A re-grouped sortie into Ui Faelain under the leadership of Raymond le Gros was to uplift morale and replenish their dwindling resources by the seizure of a large booty.<sup>18</sup> An extension of Anglo-Norman activity into Munster followed and although there were setbacks, such as the defeat at Thurles in 1174, the colony continued to gain ground.<sup>19</sup>

The Treaty of Windsor, 6 Oct. 1175, witnessed the creation of a divided Ireland, in the formal recognition of the existing political situation. Rory O'Connor became Henry's "liegeman" and was recognised as High King of the unconquered areas of Ireland, admittedly by the Treaty alone, and Henry was able to redefine the boundaries of the growing colony and re-organize a rather "untidy state of affairs".<sup>20</sup> O'Connor's own political inadequacy in his "titled" role to maintain the status quo, was somewhat reflected in the "responsive" nature of crown policy. This stemmed from the absence of an established

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<sup>18</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.134-7.

<sup>19</sup> Otway-Ruthven, (1968) op. cit., p.54-6. "Henry II and Ireland", Martin, F.X., in A New History of Ireland Vol.II, (ed) Cosgrove, A., (Oxford, 1987), p.102-5.

<sup>20</sup> Frame, R., Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369, (Dublin, 1981), p.16.

administration which failed to control further individual expansion and signalled the eventual abandonment of this treaty. In May 1177, the Council of Oxford made new arrangements. Thomond and Desmond were officially zoned areas of Anglo-Norman control and Henry's policy of speculative grants seemed at last to give him personal control over the direction of any future expansion. Through these grants many Irish kings, whose sovereignty had been previously guaranteed by Henry, soon found themselves made the tenants of mesne lords who were installed between them and the King.

The nomination of Henry's son John as "Dominus Hiberniae" perhaps marks the realization that the conquest of Ireland necessitated a concentrated policy under a stable government. Henry's reliance on men he basically mistrusted eventually brought about instability in governorship. Lack of commitment, perhaps interest, on behalf of the royal government, combined with a policy which created restrictive frontiers to Anglo-Norman expansion rather than its promotion, placed total conquest out of reach. Difficulties in the rest of Henry's empire relegated Ireland to an inconvenience, one which John was left to cope with as Lord of Ireland.

The death of Strongbow in May 1176, leaving a minor as heir, resulted in the seizure of Leinster into the King's hands and its subsequent division in 1177 into three

parts for administrative purposes. Dublin, Wexford, and Waterford, were apportioned to Hugh de Lacy, William FitzAudelin, and Robert le Poer, respectively. The administration of Kildare was thus left for the most part in the hands of Hugh de Lacy, who conducted a programme of castle building in the county and bordering areas in 1181-2.<sup>21</sup> The castles built in southern Kildare may have played a part in the final expulsion of the O'Tooles, lords of Ui Muireadhaigh, from this area in the early years of the 1180's.<sup>22</sup>

By the time of John's arrival in 1185 the process of sub-infeudation in Leinster and Meath was well advanced. Through a series of new grants, John sought to bind the conquered lands into a cohesive unit, to consolidate the great fiefs and make the colony a physical reality. The conquest of Munster was revitalized, the Shannon became the new frontier and de Courcy's principality of Ulster was joined to the rest of the lordship by grants made north of Drogheda.

A new force was added to the consolidation and development of Anglo-Norman settlement in Leinster with the arrival of William Marshal to Ireland in 1205. Although he held substantial holdings in England and Wales, it was the fall of Normandy in 1204, with the

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<sup>21</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.195.

<sup>22</sup> A.F.M., Vol. 3, 1180, notes p.53-4.

threat to his family's landed possessions there, which pre-empted his flight to Ireland after falling out with John over the Normandy issue.<sup>23</sup> Marshal had as early as 1189 inherited the lordship of Leinster through his marriage to Strongbow's daughter, Isabel. However, until his arrival in 1205 he had managed all his Irish holdings from abroad.<sup>24</sup> Marshal occupied himself in Leinster where he concentrated on the development of his Irish estates and by doing so kept well out of John's reach. This was a wise move as it was set against the background of a government "policy" which suppressed the independent spirit shown in his predecessors and reduced the concentration of power in individual hands.<sup>25</sup> The conflicts between Marshal and the justiciar, the ageing Meiler FitzHenry, over territorial claims in Offaly, may well have been encouraged by John, as they resulted in "the great wars in Leinster between the Englishmen there" in 1207.<sup>26</sup> The eventual defeat of the justiciar's forces was however deemed to be little more than a dispute

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<sup>23</sup> Martin, F.X., "John, Lord of Ireland", in Cosgrove, A., (1987), op.cit.

<sup>24</sup> Calendar of Ormond Deeds (ed) Curtis, E., 6 Vols. (Dublin, 1932-43), Vol. I, No. 29. Confirmation by John of grant renewals made by Marshal in Kildare prior to 1202.

<sup>25</sup> A prime example of this was the overthrow of the de Courcy lordship of Ulster in 1205, his successor being himself ousted in 1210. Adrian Empey has also suggested that the reduction of individual power was partially achieved by the strategic designation of church lands which restricted the formation of individual compact power blocks. (T.C.D. Seminar 1986).

<sup>26</sup> The Annals of Clonmacnoise, (ed) Murphy, D., (Dublin, 1986), 1207, p. 221.

between overlord and sub-tenant, as apposed to an open act of hostility against the crown.<sup>27</sup>

In March 1208, William Marshal was given a new charter for Leinster to hold by the service of 100 knights.<sup>28</sup>

John's actions during his expedition to Ireland in 1210 appear to indicate that he still questioned Marshal's allegiance, as he exacted full submission from Marshal for Leinster on this occasion and withheld from him the important castle stronghold of Dunamase. Marshal was to regain the latter and the king's favour as he emerged as the King's strongest supporter in the following years.<sup>29</sup>

During this period areas west of the Shannon became the focus for further colonial expansion. Advances were made in the 1220's into counties Kerry and Clare and Richard de Burgh attempted to consolidate a hold against the O'Connors between 1221 and 1235.

The history of Kildare was to be dominated by the further actions of Marshal within Leinster. A period of growth, evidenced by the establishment of markets and fairs, was

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<sup>27</sup> This was an ongoing dispute between Adam de Hereford and Meiler FitzHenry which concerned the same lands in Offaly confirmed by a previous Marshal grant [Ormond Deeds, Vol.I No.29], and again by Marshal in 1207 [Ormond Deeds, Vol.I Nos. 29,37]. See also Brooks, E.St.J., Knights' Fees in Counties Carlow, Wexford, and Kilkenny, (Dublin,1950), p.202.

<sup>28</sup> C.D.I., Vol.I No.381. Also Crouch, D., William Marshall, (London,1990), p.92-107.

<sup>29</sup> Marshall became regent of England after John's death in October 1216.

typical of the Marshal organisation of their estates. Although still largely concerned with their vast estates in England and Wales, they never played the part of absentee lords. However, it was political opposition to Henry III which brought about the downfall of Richard Marshal on the Curragh in 1234.<sup>30</sup>

Unfortunately Henry's connivance was not the only threat to Marshal interests within Leinster. Anselm Marshal died in 1245 without a male heir. Eighteen months later, in May 1247, the great Marshal inheritance in England, Wales and Ireland was partitioned among his five sisters.<sup>31</sup> Those shares which related to Kildare were assigned to Sybil Ferrars and Eva de Braose. The fifth share which Sybil received, which mostly relates to the modern county, was left on her death to six daughters.<sup>32</sup> The subsequent partition caused untold damage to the immediate affected lands. Although still administered as a single county, the fragmented ownership in the possession of non-resident recipients undermined the stability which Marshal overlordship had previously nurtured.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Annals of Inisfallen, 1234, p.351; Frame, R., (1981), op. cit., p.61-2.

<sup>31</sup> Orpen, G.H., Ireland Under the Normans, 1169-1333, 4 Vols., (Oxford, 1911-20), Vol.III p.79-107.

<sup>32</sup> Otway-Ruthven, A.J., "Knights fees in Kildare, Leix and Offaly", J.R.S.A.I., Vol.XCI (1961), P.165.

<sup>33</sup> Otway-Ruthven, (1959), op. cit., p.158.

By the mid-twelfth century Anglo-Norman control in Connacht was on the wane and this power steadily declined in the later quarter of the century. O'Connor was regaining control and even raided as far as Offaly in 1265. By 1270 "it was as if all of Ireland made war and all the fortifications of Offaly except the castle of Leix were destroyed".<sup>34</sup> As peace in the colony declined, Kildare was increasingly hemmed in, bordered by the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles on the one side, and O'Connor Faly, O'More and O'Dempsey on the other. The murder of Muirchertach and Art MacMurchada in 1282 did little to allay disturbance on Kildare's southern borders.<sup>35</sup> The comparative peace achieved by Fulbourne's actions in Leinster is debatable, nonetheless it was not until 1295 that the administration had to mount another expedition in this area.<sup>36</sup>

The later years of the 1270's witnessed an increased deterioration of the peace on Kildare's western border. This was alleviated somewhat by the high degree of

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<sup>34</sup> "Kilkenny Chronicle", (ed) Flower, R. & Little, A.G. Analecta Hibernica, Vol.2., (1939), 1270 AD.

<sup>35</sup> Annals of Inisfallen, 1282, p.381-3. Frame, R., "The justiciar and the murder of the MacMurroughs in 1282", I.H.S., Vol.XVIII, (1972-3), p223-30.

<sup>36</sup> Frame, R., *ibid.* p.227.

resident interest in that area.<sup>37</sup> In 1283 a pipe roll accounts how "Calvach Occonhor, Odymesy and their men, the Irish of Offaly, owe 100 marks and 100 cows, for having peace"; a similar statement made in 1286.<sup>38</sup> In this instance an appointee received the cows and then paid a money equivalent, minus a fee, to the exchequer. After the expedition of John of Saunford against the Irish of Leix and Offaly in 1289, the abbot of Monasterevin was nominated to handle the fines of the Irish of Offaly.<sup>39</sup> The documentation of de Saunford's expenses is of particular interest especially with regard to the lines of defence adopted by the seneschal's of the four counties and the location of his own manor at Ballymadden.<sup>40</sup> It is somewhat ironic that the account concludes that after the expedition the Irish of Leix and Offaly came to the King's peace "and were never hostile

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<sup>37</sup> Otway-Ruthven attributed the settler community's resistance to Irish inroads in this area to the fact that the earls of Kildare were among the permanent residents; (1959) op.cit., p.184.

<sup>38</sup> Reports of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, Ireland, 34-54 (Dublin, 1903-21), 36th Report p.74; 37th Report p.27.

<sup>39</sup> C.D.I., Vol.III, No.559. Later the abbot was charged that he received felons of Offaly into his abbey which was situated "in the march outside the land of peace", Calendar of the Justiciary Rolls of Ireland 1295-1314 (ed) Mills, J. & Griffith, M.C., 3 Vols. (Dublin, 1905-14), Vol.I, 1298 p.199. It should be remembered that Diarmait O'Dempsey, king of Ui Failge, had granted a charter to abbey.

<sup>40</sup> C.D.I., Vol.III, No.559. Ballymadden is now the modern townland of Maddenstown, situated immediately south of Kildare town.



again".<sup>41</sup>

The problems of the Leix/Offaly border were indirectly related to the Leinster partition which left the government to deal with matters which should have been those of local security. A statute directed at absentee lords a decade later highlighted the root cause of the problem which by then appeared irreversible. It ordained that their Irish lands should not be used for profit alone but that some money should at least remain " in the hands of their bailiffs, whereby their own lands may be sufficiently saved and defended".<sup>42</sup> It had become commonplace that the marchlands were left waste and uncultivated as the settlers preferred to live on their lands within the land of peace rather than on those without.<sup>43</sup> Kildare town itself was declared to be within the march two years later in 1299.<sup>44</sup> After the royal service had run its forty days in 1289, Saunford arranged for Geoffrey de Geneville, Peter de Bermingham and John FitzThomas to guard the northern marches. They were to be paid by the money which was received in scutage.<sup>45</sup> A similar attempt by Wogan during his time as justiciar

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., No.559, p.272.

<sup>42</sup> Early Statutes, 25 Ed.I, 1297, p.201.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p.199.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p.219.

<sup>45</sup> C.D.I., Vol.III, No. 559, p.272. Otway-Ruthven, A.J., (1968), op.cit., p.209-211.

witnessed the substitution of direct intervention for that of local magnates and FitzThomas and de Birmingham were "sub-contracted" to counter the Irish of Offaly. Its success however was limited.<sup>46</sup>

The early years of the fourteenth century were marked by increased disturbance in the Leinster mountains which led the government to mount continuous expeditions against the Irish in those parts. However the exactions and demands of the crown on the Irish exchequer to help fund successive campaigns in Gascony, Wales and Scotland were taking their toll. In 1327 advice was sought on means to repulse " the Irish rebels, who waste the lands of the King ...from day to day". The money for the "defence" of these lands was to be taken from the issues of the archbishopric of Dublin, "provided always that as much as possible be reserved of the issues for the expedition of the Scottish war".<sup>47</sup>

With government resources stretched local defense was once again dependant on the concerned individual landholder. Thus one Gilbert le Rede was to ensure that "one armed man and horse sufficiently armed, that is to say that this armed man to defend himself bodily have one

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<sup>46</sup> Frame, R., "The Dublin Government and Gaelic Ireland, 1272-1361", Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1971, p.418.

<sup>47</sup> Calendar of Close Rolls, 45 Vols., (London, 1892-1963), 1327-30, 12th July 1327, p.145.

hauberk with a padded tunic, an iron hat, neck guard, thigh armour, iron gloves, lance.....with a saddle for war and horses trappings...all pertinent to the arrest of malefactors and enemies of the peace within the bounds of the manor of Kilberry".<sup>48</sup> The earliest remains of the castle of Castlerudy, Kilberry, with its associated church and graveyard, possibly date from this period. This castle was formerly called Castle Reedy, named after le Rede, and the rectangular enclosure which encompasses the castle is possibly a moated site.<sup>49</sup>

The county returns for the first half of the fourteenth century all depict a colony in decline. Allowances were constantly demanded and allowed for lost rent and lands which lay waste and untilled due to the "divers wars of the Irish". The Bruce invasion of 1315-18, which coincided with the great European famine, were among the many contributory factors which were to lead to the contraction of the colony. The decreasing population trend was accelerated by the visitation of the Black Death of 1348-9 and the further outbreaks of plague which followed it.

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<sup>48</sup> Agreement between the Dean and Chapter of St. Patrick's<sup>e</sup> and Gilbert le Rede with regard to the holding of the manor of Kilberry, Co. Kildare, The Dignitas Decani of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin (ed) White, N.B., (Dublin, 1957), No. 115, p. 115. An medieval iron sword was retrieved from the Barrow at Kilberry in 1931. (National Museum Reg. No. 172)

<sup>49</sup> The church and lands at Kilberry were first granted to St. Patrick's in 1219, Calendar of Archbishop Alen's Register, (ed) McNeill, C., (Dublin, 1950), p. 42.

An image of anarchy and retreat within Anglo-Norman Kildare is easy to drum up from the documentary evidence, however all sectors of the community were hard hit by these events. The disastrous effects of the fourteenth century's worsening weather conditions were to take their toll on both the settler and the native population. In the period 1169 to 1350 Kildare underwent many changes. Most notably these took the form of governance, administration, settlement, and agricultural advance. These two centuries also witnessed a more subtle change in the people on the land and a gradual assimilation between cultures. The integrated society which was Kildare in the mid-fourteenth century faced malefactors and murrain together. Thus Kildare maintained its equilibrium and held its borders despite the every present threat of the encroaching march.

## 2. KILDARE: GEOGRAPHY AND MEDIEVAL DEMOGRAPHY

The modern county of Kildare lies mainly within the south-eastern part of the Central Plain of Ireland to the west of the Leinster mountains. Kildare covers an area of 654 square miles (418,644 acres), and is bounded to the east by the counties of Dublin and Wicklow, to the north by Meath and Westmeath, to the west by Offaly and Leix, and to the south by Carlow.

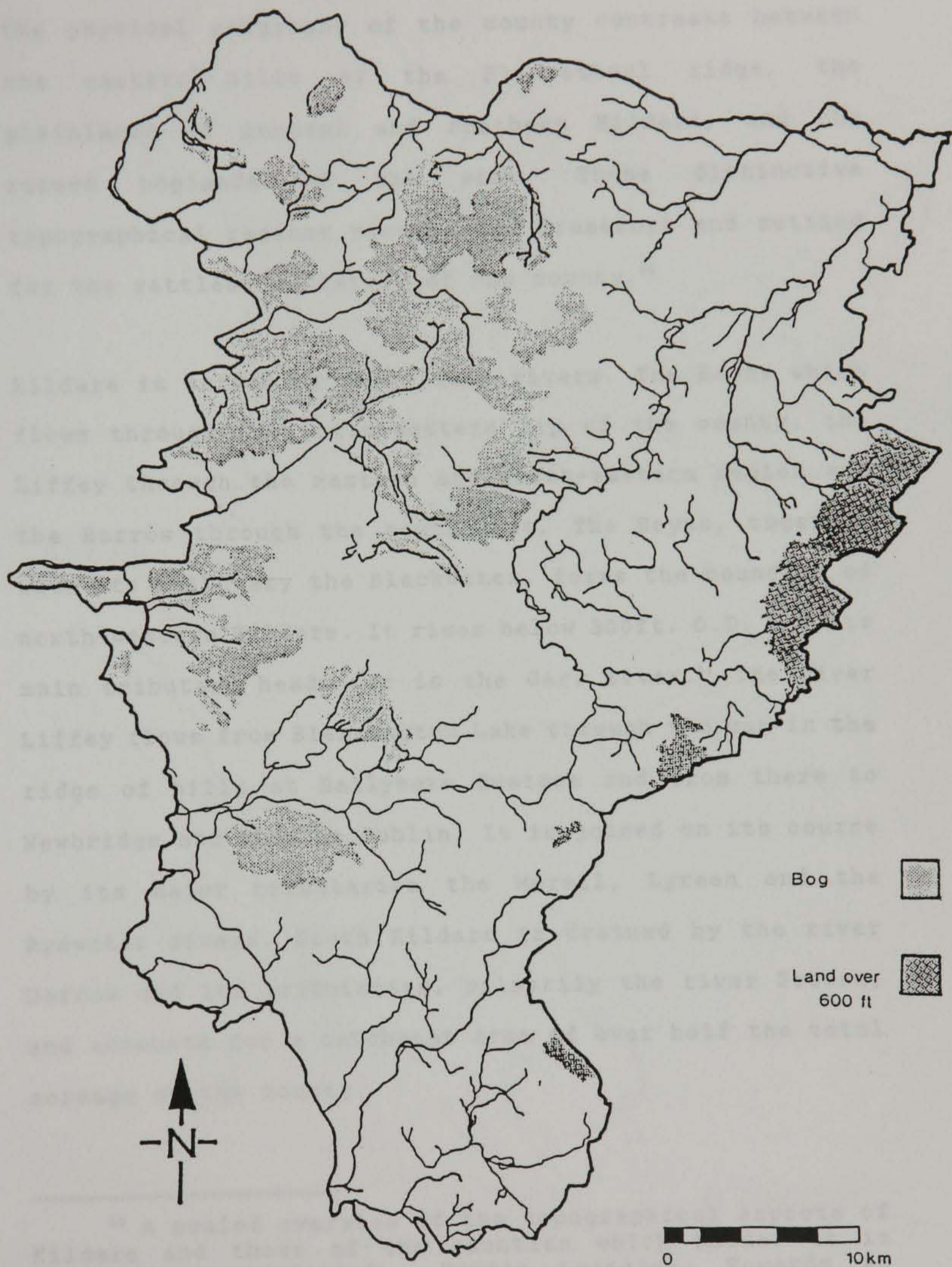


Figure 3. Topographical Kildare

The physical geography of the county contrasts between the eastern hills of the Slievethoul ridge, the plainlands of central and southern Kildare, and the raised boglands of the west. These distinctive topographical regions provide the framework and setting for the settlement history of the county.<sup>50</sup>

Kildare is served by three main rivers. The Boyne which flows through the north-western tip of the county, the Liffey through the eastern and north-eastern region and the Barrow through the south-west. The Boyne, together with its tributary the Blackwater, forms the boundary of north-western Kildare. It rises below 300ft. O.D. and its main tributary headwater is the Garr river.<sup>51</sup> The river Liffey flows from Blessington Lake through the gap in the ridge of hills at Ballymore Eustace and from there to Newbridge and then to Dublin. It is joined on its course by its major tributaries the Morell, Lyreen and the Ryewater rivers. South Kildare is drained by the river Barrow and its tributaries, primarily the river Greese, and accounts for a catchment area of over half the total acreage of the county.

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<sup>50</sup> A scaled overview of the topographical aspects of Kildare and those of the counties which border it is provided by Smyth, A.P., Celtic Leinster: Towards an historical geography of early Irish civilization, (Dublin, 1982), pl. XII p.153.

<sup>51</sup> Measurements are here given in feet above sea level (O.D. = Ordnance Datum) in accordance with current Ordnance Survey convention.

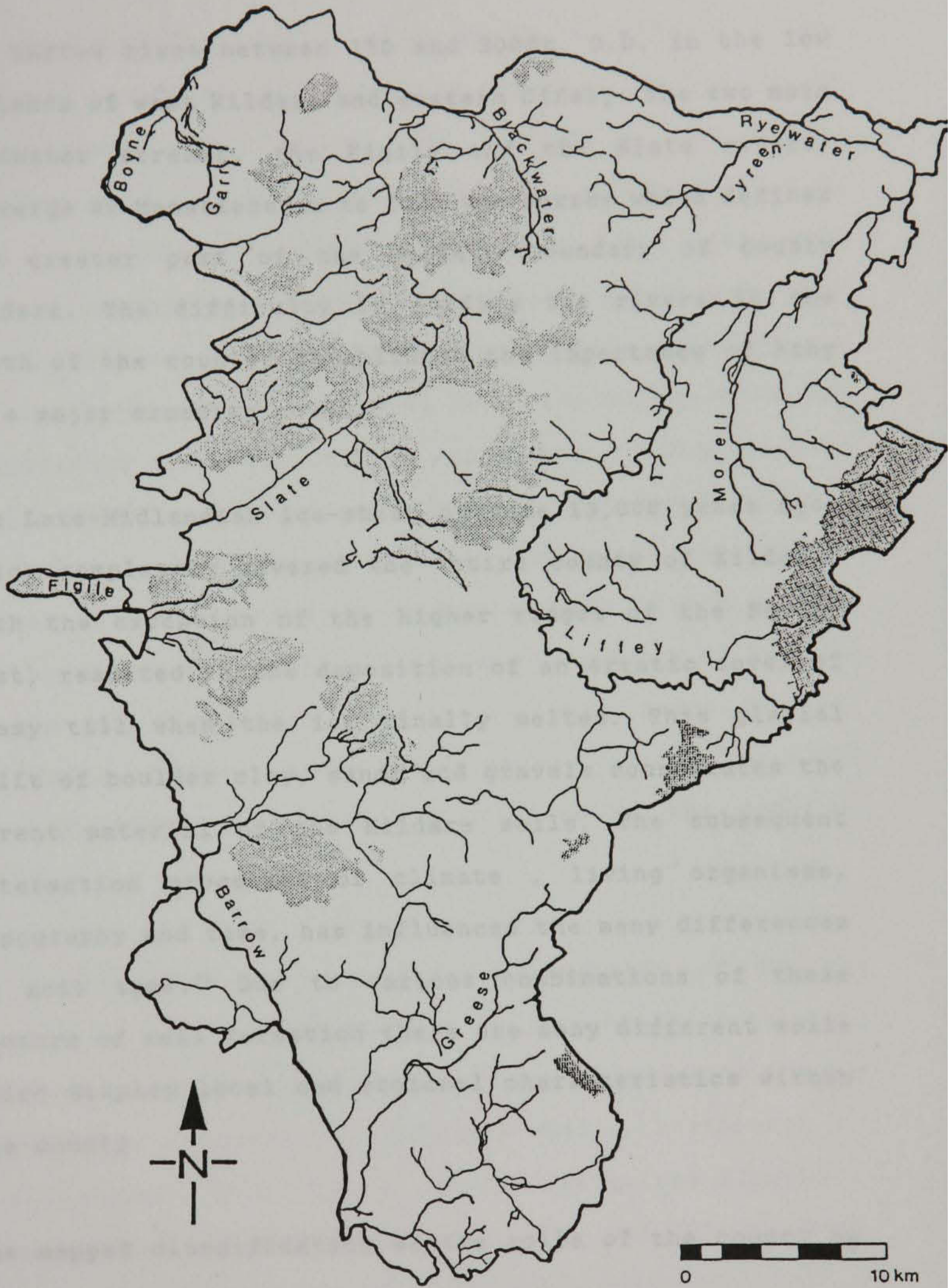


Figure 4. Rivers of County Kildare

The Barrow rises between 250 and 300ft. O.D. in the low boglands of west Kildare and eastern Offaly. The two main headwater streams, the Figile and the Slate rivers, converge at Monasterevin to form the Barrow which defines the greater part of the western boundary of county Kildare. The difficulty in fording the rivers to the south of the county, established the importance of Athy as a major crossing point.<sup>52</sup>

The Late-Midlandian ice-sheet of some 13,000 years ago, which completely covered the entire county of Kildare, with the exception of the higher ridges of the South-East, resulted in the deposition of an erratic cover of loamy till when the ice finally melted. This glacial drift of boulder clay, sands and gravels constitutes the parent material of the Kildare soils. The subsequent interaction processes of climate, living organisms, topography and time, has influenced the many differences in soil type.<sup>53</sup> Due to various combinations of these factors of soil formation there are many different soils which display local and regional characteristics within the county.

The mapped classification of the soils of the county by

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<sup>52</sup> Aalen, F.H.A., County Kildare: A Geographical Background for Planning, (Trinity College Dublin, 1970).

<sup>53</sup> Soil type has a strong influence <sup>on</sup> the nature of the overlying vegetation, including grass, <sup>^</sup>arable crops and trees.



the National Soil Survey of An Foras Taluntais provides a vital record of land resources important to its future development.<sup>54</sup> This survey may also be of use as an indicator of probable past usage. The survey in mapping the main soil groups revealed that some 53% of the soils of the county are Grey-Brown Podzolics, which form as a group some of the most inherently fertile soils in Ireland. The light medium Grey-Brown Podzolics which are especially noted for tillage crops occur in the southern half of the county while the heavier textured Grey-Brown Podzolics, which are more noted for grass production, occur in the east and the northern parts of the county. With reference to soil suitability, over 73% of Kildare soils are classified as having a wide range use for tillage, pasture, meadow and forestry<sup>55</sup>; a factor which was no doubt recognized and utilised in the medieval period.

As mentioned, the topographical make-up of Kildare reflects and contributed to the overall settlement development within the county. From Kilterahilly south through Ballymore Eustace to Corballis Hill, north-east of Castledermot, the hills of east Kildare (the Slievehoul ridge) vary in height between 400ft. and 1200ft. O.D., and form the foothills of the Wicklow mountains. Most of

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<sup>54</sup> Conry, M.J., Hammond, R.F. & O'Shea, T., Soils of County Kildare, (Dublin, 1970).

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., Appended Soil Suitability Map.

the Kildare range, however, lies between 400 and 600ft. This region is historically a frontier zone associated in the medieval period with the Dublin government's attempts to curb the threat of its "Irish enemies" in the latter half of the thirteenth century. However as a result of glacial deposits the soil cover is good on these eastern hills, roughly only 5% of the land in this region is of a very limited use-range, usually as a consequence of high elevation, which leaves this land only moderately suitable for extensive grazing and forestry. The remainder of the land in this region, despite some steep slopes, is capable of supporting most types of agriculture. The moisture deficiency inherent of steep slopes may have dictated a pasture orientated economy, particularly in the settled area around Ballymore Eustace in the medieval period.

In west-central Kildare there are extensive tracts of raised bogland, which account for just under 15% of the total acreage of the county. These boglands extend westward across the Offaly county boundary and have remained unattractive to agricultural settlement and are presently thinly populated. The lowland area between the boglands of the west and the Wicklow hills is dominated by the plainlands of central and southern Kildare. This region varies from very flat through gently rolling to undulating topography, with most of the area situated between 200 and 300ft. O.D., and is for the most part

well drained. Historically important as an area of settlement location the plainlands are only interrupted by two groups of hills. The Newtown Hills west of Kilcock represent a small area of high ground with a greatest height of 485ft. North of Kildare town a discontinuous ridge forms the summits of the Red Hills, Dunmurry Hill (768ft. O.D.), Chair of Kildare, Grange Hill and the Hill of Allen. These hills rise from 400 to over 600ft. O.D.<sup>56</sup>

With relevance to settlement studies there is only one other geographical area in Kildare and this is in the north western corner, which comprises the western portion of the modern barony of Carbury. The topography of this area varies from flat to gently sloping between 200 and 400ft. However, the area is poorly endowed physically with the respective drainage problems of an admixture of bog and sloping land. The relatively poor quality of the land is further evidenced when comparison is made with the medieval settlement pattern in the area.

In an attempt to reconstruct the medieval landscape, the sparse documentary references supplied by contemporary chroniclers has been added to by the results of pollen analysis and Carbon 14 dating in the reconstruction of the history of natural vegetation. Mitchell in a brief resume of the vegetational history of Kildare using the above mentioned techniques, noted that from about the

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<sup>56</sup> Aalen, F.H.A., (1970), op.cit.

middle of the first millennium Kildare was a land of herbs and grasses, with some forest of oak, elm and ash, with alder, birch and hazel quite widely distributed in a landscape which was predominantly agricultural.<sup>57</sup> However, as a result of prolonged forest clearance, the peatlands now alone contain remnants of the natural vegetation, with most of the deciduous and coniferous trees presently in Kildare being foreign to Ireland.

The clearance of forest in Kildare can be followed in the documentary sources. The grant in 1229 of Henry III to the archbishops of Dublin permitted the "lands to be forever disafforested" and specified the clearance of large tracts of forest in an area of south county Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare.<sup>58</sup> Together with later assarting projects which aimed to increase the available agricultural area, there was also the gradual rape of the natural woods and forests for construction, manufacturing and household purposes. The Memoranda Rolls note the destruction of the king's wood of Okethy in 1310 through the unauthorised felling of oak, ash and other timbers.<sup>59</sup> Timber was still the popular medium for house construction in this region of north Kildare, despite the

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., section 1, p.49.

<sup>58</sup> C.D.I., Vol.I, No.1769.

<sup>59</sup> Craig.D., "The Memoranda Rolls of the Irish Exchequer for 3 Edward II", Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 2 Vols., T.C.D. 1984, Vol.II, p.339-40.

existence of a stone quarry near Mainham.<sup>60</sup>

North-east Kildare also supplied a large part of Dublin's timber requirements, meeting the needs for house construction, ship building, and domestic firewood. There were objections to a new weir built on the river Liffey at Lucan in 1306 as it hindered the passage of boats which ferried firewood to Dublin.<sup>61</sup> In 1310 the seneschal of Leixlip was to allow the men of Alex Biknor, archbishop of Dublin, "colpare in bosco regis ibidem ....virgas et aliud maeremium pro carrectis, carucis et herciis necessarium".<sup>62</sup>

It was only on the western boundaries of Kildare that the natural forests remained intact. A late sixteenth century map of Leix and Offaly depicted most of the western length of the Kildare border as bounded by forest.<sup>63</sup> The Abbot of Rosglas was distrained on a number of occasions for the failure to keep the passes clear in this area.<sup>64</sup> Edward I in 1297 was intent that "the lords of the woods

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<sup>60</sup> Tresham, p.4, No.50.

<sup>61</sup> O'Neill, T., Merchants and Mariners in Medieval Ireland, (Dublin, 1987), p.99.

<sup>62</sup> Craig, D., 1984, op.cit., p.148, "to chop in the King's wood....rods and other timber necessary for carts, ploughs and harrows".

<sup>63</sup> BL. Cotton Augustus I, ii, 40 ; T.C.D. Ms. 1209 (9).

<sup>64</sup> C.J.R., 1297 p.175. Rosglas is the present day Monasterevin.

through the midst whereof the king's highway anciently was" should be "cleared from briars and trees as well standing as lying".<sup>65</sup> In the same year it was declared that "it would be for the advantage of the whole country if the pass extending by the highway through the wood of John de Valle of Ballycallan be cleared, and it would not be to the damage of John, because there is not in the wood any great oak but only underwood".<sup>66</sup>

The gradual depletion of Kildare's area under forest was well in train with the expansion of agricultural land in the thirteenth century, however the historical sources indicate that there was still a plentiful supply within the county. The plains of Kildare also merit attention in the contemporary documents. O'Huidhrin's poem speaks of "the fair-topped fruitful grass" near the Hill of Allen, "the plain of the Life....a great land of beautiful fruit" and "Ui Failghe the land of cattle".<sup>67</sup> This last reference is of interest as it refers to an area noted for grass production on account of the heavy texture of its Grey-Brown Podzolic soils.

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<sup>65</sup> Early Statutes, p.209, 25 Ed.I.

<sup>66</sup> C.J.R., 1297, p.173.

<sup>67</sup> Topographical Poems of O'Dubhagáin and O'Huidhrin, (ed) O'Donovan, J., (Dublin, 1862), p.89,83.

The calculation of Ireland's medieval population is reliant to a large degree on comparative analysis. The earliest reliable figures are those of Sir William Petty in the seventeenth century, who estimated a population of around 1,300,000 persons for the year 1687.<sup>68</sup> Connell's revision of Petty's estimates arrived at a figure of 2,167,000.<sup>69</sup> However, there had been many fluctuations in the population of Ireland between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and Petty's demographic calculations, which as yet have not been used as a starting point for the calculation of Ireland's medieval population. The evidence suggests demographic contraction in early fourteenth century Ireland, as famines resulted from the disastrous weather conditions and population decline was evidenced by the reduction in demand for basic agrarian products. The Black Death in the mid-fourteenth century, like the Great Famine of the nineteenth century, was part of an ongoing process of population decline. Unfortunately Ireland has no sources such as the Domesday or Poll Tax returns, thus calculations therefore rely heavily on comparison with the English sources.

Russell calculated the population of Ireland to be about

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<sup>68</sup> Vaughan, W.E. & Fitzpatrick, A.J., (ed) Irish Historical Statistics: Population, 1821-1971, (Dublin, 1978), p.xi.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p.2.

650,000 in c.1275-85.<sup>70</sup> Glasscock recently stated that the population of England in c.1300 had an estimated population of c.4-4.5 million, a figure at variance with Campbell's 3.75 to 5.5 million for the same period.<sup>71</sup> Although Campbell's later figure is quoted as an over estimation it is unquestionable that thirteenth century English population was increasing at a steady rate. Ireland acted as the foodstore for this growing population and probably absorbed some of it by the attraction of advantageous conditions to prospective settlers.

Population was on the increase in western Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and Ireland was no exception. A figure of c.1 million for Ireland in 1300 AD represents a safe compromise between the suggested estimates ranging from 675,000 to 1.5 million for the same period. The use of burgess figures also gives rise to a range of population estimates. As each individual

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<sup>70</sup> Russell, J.C., "Late thirteenth century Ireland as a region", Demography Vol.3 NO.2 (1966). Part of this calculation involved comparison with Wales which was one quarter the size of Ireland and had an estimated population of 400,000 in 1100 AD. England in 1275 had a population of 2.5 million based on church and parish figures (Russell was here using Domesday figures of 210-230 people per parish) and as Ireland had only a quarter of that number of parishes, a figure was arrived at c.625,00, which was not far off the earlier proposed figure of 650,000.

<sup>71</sup> Glasscock, R.E., "Land and people, c.1300", in Cosgrove, A., (1987), op. cit., p.212. Campbell, B., "Patterns of food production in late thirteenth and fourteenth century Ireland and Europe". U.C.D. seminar 1987.



represented a head of household a multiplication factor of 4.5 to 5.5, the estimated average family size, is applied to arrive at a population figure.<sup>72</sup> Given the fact that Ireland's population was still overwhelmingly rural, probably less than 5% lived in the towns, any estimation of a medieval population statistic for county Kildare is reduced to pure guesswork.

A population of 1,000 for the entire population of Cloncurry in 1304 may only be qualified as an outside estimation but is of interest when viewed as an isolated case.<sup>73</sup> Similar conclusions on the size of individual village populations may be estimated by use of known burgess figures, such as the 162 burgesses noted for Ardscurr in 1282.<sup>74</sup> As a definite statistical conclusion is not available for the whole country there is little hope of an accurate population figure for one county within the medieval period.

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<sup>72</sup> Otway-Ruthven, A.J., (1965), *op.cit.*, p.80. McIntosh, M.K., "Land, tenure, and population in the royal manor of Havering, Essex, 1251 - 1352/3", Economic History Review, Vol.33, No.1, (1980), p.21.

<sup>73</sup> Glasscock, R.E., *ibid.*, p.222.

<sup>74</sup> Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, (London, 1904-74), Vol.II p.251. Known burgess figures also exist for Ballymore Eustace, Kilkea and Moone.

### 3. ANGLO-NORMAN SETTLEMENT: AN INTRODUCTION

The settlement pattern of Ireland prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans was far removed from that which they encountered in their conquest of Anglo-Saxon England.<sup>75</sup> Ireland's predominately rural population existed without the walls of the Viking coastal towns in a number of settlement types. The ringfort, an earthen enclosure defined by a bank and outer fosse or ditch, represented the farmstead of the indigenous Irish population and each housed a family grouping. Over 30,000 examples of this settlement type have been located in Ireland. The rough chronology of the ringfort in Ireland dates to the first millennium AD, with a concentration in the second half of this period.<sup>76</sup> However, due to the lack of documentary evidence and the small percentage of these sites actually excavated, debate still continues with regard to whether their construction carried on into the medieval period.

To complement the picture of pre-Norman rural settlement it has been argued that together with the ringfort there existed unenclosed groupings of houses which may

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<sup>75</sup> Wilson, D., The Anglo-Saxons, (Middlesex, 1978), p.63-73.

<sup>76</sup> O'Riordain, S.P., Antiquities of the Irish Countryside, (London, 1942), p.1. ; Lynn, C.J., "The medieval ringfort - An archaeological chimera?", Irish archaeological Research Forum, II (1), (1975), p.29. ; Barry, T.B., The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland, (London, 1987), p.16.

represent the precursor to the modern clachan.<sup>77</sup> Their absence from the modern landscape is explained by the very nature of their construction. Built of mud and timber they have left no visible surface traces. It has also been postulated that isolated souterrains may have been associated with such unenclosed settlements. Buckley used this argument to explain the apparent gaps in the ringfort distribution for the counties of north-east Ireland.<sup>78</sup>

Monastic sites acted as focal points for population. The occurrence of arguably urban morphological features such as streets at some monastic sites, including Armagh, Glendalough and Kildare, have been used to corroborate the existence of pre-Anglo-Norman urbanization.<sup>79</sup> Simms has demonstrated that the circular enclosure of the monastery of Duleek, Co.Meath, was incorporated into the street plan of the later Anglo-Norman borough.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Evans described a clachan as a small cluster of peasant houses; Evans, E.E., Irish Heritage, (Dundalk, 1942), p.47.

<sup>78</sup> Buckley, V.M., "Ulster and Oriel souterrains - an indicator of tribal areas ?" , U.J.A., Vol. 49, 1986.

<sup>79</sup> Doherty, C., "Monastic Towns in Ireland", in Clark, H.B. & Simms, A (ed) The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe. (Oxford, 1985). p. 45-76.

<sup>80</sup> Simms, A., "Settlement patterns of medieval colonization in Ireland ", Flatres, P., (ed) Paysages Ruraux Europeens, (Rennes, 1979), p.159-177.

The organization of Anglo-Norman settlement began directly after the military conquest. Strategic locations were of initial importance but these were soon replaced by economic concerns. Desirable location characteristics included river crossing points and proximity to navigable rivers and main overland routeways. Pre-existing settlement sites were also frequently used and most of the early settlement concentrated on the lowlying quality agricultural land. In order to effectively occupy their large grants of land, the recipient magnates rapidly subdivided these amongst various retainers through the process of subinfeudation. Some of the most desirable land was withheld by the grantors for use as their own seigniorial manors. The subinfeudation process was closely aligned to the pre-existing territorial boundaries. A fine example of this occurs in the detailed account of William Marshal's grant to Adam de Hereford of half a cantred of land in Offelan.<sup>81</sup>

The subsequent introduction of the manorial system to Ireland has recently come under renewed scrutiny, particularly with regard to the "small agriculturally orientated manorial village", which has been classified as the most common of all Anglo-Norman settlement forms.<sup>82</sup> Debate and counter argument continues over the questioned

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<sup>81</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.I, No.37, p.19-20. This is further discussed below, Chapter 4, p.125.

<sup>82</sup> Graham, B.J., Anglo-Norman Settlement in Ireland (Athlone, 1985), p.17-20.

evolution and development of the manorial village. McNeill asserted that villages did not occur in medieval Ulster and argued that the manors were administered from a node which he envisaged as a fiscal centre, a place where tenants met to pay rent, grind corn and do suit at the manorial court.<sup>83</sup> A somewhat similar case was put forward for the manor of Esker, Co.Dublin, where the manor acted as an administrative centre and seat of the lord while the tenants lived on the lands they worked.<sup>84</sup>

Graham and Simms have recently clashed as they differ between conceptual theories based on the "over" emphasis of comparative English and Welsh models and the influence of the Anglo-Norman Irish territorial inheritance, respectively.<sup>85</sup> Their academic approach to solve the problem of manorial Ireland has been necessitated by the lack of continuous manorial documentation for the period. As a result, both "protagonists" in this ongoing research have incited critical attack over their previous use of

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<sup>83</sup> McNeill, T., Anglo-Norman Ulster, (Edinburgh, 1980).

<sup>84</sup> Simms, A., "Rural settlement in medieval Ireland: the example of the royal manors of Newcastle Lyons and Esker in south Co.Dublin", in Roberts, B.K. & Glasscock, R.E. (ed) Villages, Farms and Frontiers, B.A.R. (Oxford, 1983), p.133-152.

<sup>85</sup> Graham, B.J., "Anglo-Norman manorial settlement in Ireland: an assessment", Ir. Geog., 18 (1985), p.4-15 ; Simms, A. & Bradley, J., "The geography of Irish manors: the example of the Llanthony cells of Duleek and Colp, county Meath", in Bradley, J., (ed) Settlement and Society in Medieval Ireland, (Kilkenny, 1988), p.291-326.

retrogressive extrapolation.<sup>86</sup>

It would thus appear that there is no one simple model with which to define manorial Ireland. The contributions of Glasscock and Down disregard concrete models in favour of snapshots of manorial life based on the limited available source material.<sup>87</sup> Archaeological investigation has contributed relatively little to advance the state of the information available and a major excavation of a medieval rural nucleated settlement has yet to be conducted.<sup>88</sup>

The manorial extent taken at Cloncurry in 1304 provides a wealth of information relative to the tenorial and agricultural organisation of one manor in north Kildare.<sup>89</sup> The text provides useful details of the manorial economic

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<sup>86</sup> Grahams argument that Simms conclusions are based on a mis-use of late fourteenth and fifteenth evidence, (Ibid., p.3-14, also Anglo-Norman Settlement in Ireland, (Athlone, 1985), p.17), somewhat reflects Nicholls contention that Graham's analysis of the Civil Survey produced evidence not of betagh settlement but of later medieval re-settlement. Nicholls, K.W., "Continuity and decay of late medieval urban settlement in Ireland", (Conference paper, Dublin, 1984).

<sup>87</sup> Glasscock, R.E., (1987), op.cit., p.204-239; Down, K., "Colonial society and economy in the high middle ages", in Cosgrave, A., (ed) A New History of Ireland, Vol.II, (Oxford, 1987), p.439-491.

<sup>88</sup> Barry, T.B., (1987), op.cit., p.72.

<sup>89</sup> Red Book of Ormond, p.27-34. For more detailed information with regard to agriculture and the upkeep of manor buildings see "Account Roll of the priory of the Holy Trinity, Dublin, 1337-1346", (ed) Mills, J., J.R.S.A.I., Extra Vol. (1891), p.183 ff.

framework and the intensified production of grain.<sup>90</sup> Cloncurry's agricultural specialization reflected market forces and the demand of military purveyance in particular. This extent however only reflects that one particular year. Without a continuous series of these manorial extents it is difficult to arrive at a comprehensive picture of agricultural management. The determinant factors of politics, war and weather, shaped a different Cloncurry twenty years either side of the date of the extent. The description of the dilapidated manorial buildings given in 1304 is countered by incidental historical references which evidence the survival of a healthy market village.<sup>91</sup>

There are however a series of accounts for the manor of Ballysax which form a continuous series which span the better part of the 1280's. Lyons used this to examine on a year to year basis the use of demesne land, fluctuations in stock numbers, "the value of produce related to stock rearing like cheese and wool, and the price and yield of grain".<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Lyons, M.C., "Manorial administration and the manorial economy in Ireland, c.1200-c.1377", Unpublished Ph.D. thesis T.C.D. (1984), Vol.1, p.270.

<sup>91</sup> Market at Cloncurry in 1298, C.J.R., Vol.I, p.198; "the King's street...town of Cloncurry", 1305, C.J.R., Vol.II, p.90; The burgess population of the manor was calculated as 112 in 1304, Otway-Ruthven, A.J., "The character of Norman settlement in Ireland", McCracken, J.L., (ed) Historical Studies, V, (London, 1965), p.80.

<sup>92</sup> Lyons, M.C., (1981), op.cit., p.41.

In Kildare as in the rest of the colony there was a growth of small nucleated settlements, similar to ribbon developments, along the major overland routeways. One annalistic commentator refers to these as "street-towns".<sup>93</sup> Many of these were given burgess status but this status amounted to no more than a mere enticement to prospective settlers.<sup>94</sup> The phenomena of "rural boroughs", boroughs which were primarily agricultural in function and not true towns, was experienced throughout Kildare.<sup>95</sup> Nonetheless, over half the number of towns which received charters of incorporation or which evidence documentation of burghal characteristics, survived the test of the later medieval period to survive into the present landscape as functioning market towns.<sup>96</sup> Their economic capacity may have been eroded over the centuries but the real issue is whether or not they operated functionally in this elevated position within the market place in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

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<sup>93</sup> A.F.M., 1264 AD, "Art O'Melaghlin burned all the castles and street-towns in Delvin, Carly and Brawney, and drove the English out of all of them."

<sup>94</sup> Otway-Ruthven, A.J., (1965), op.cit., p.79. A plea on behalf of the townsfolk of Moone, Co.Kildare, in 1302, provides a full transcript of the original charter of burgess liberties granted of William Marshall to the "community of the town of Moen", C.J.R., p.369-371.

<sup>95</sup> Glasscock, R.E., (1970), op.cit., p.171.

<sup>96</sup> Graham, B.J., "The documentation of medieval Irish boroughs", G.S.I.H.S. Bull., 4, (1977), p.9-20; 5 (1978), p.41-45; Martin, G., "Plantation boroughs in medieval Ireland", in Harkness, D. & O'Dowd, M., The Town in Ireland, (Belfast, 1981), p.33.



Boroughs, demesne manors, rural-boroughs, sub-manors, dispersed nucleated and non-nucleated settlement types form the identity of Kildare's rural landscape. The example of the extents taken at Cloncurry, Ballymore Eustace and the lands of Walter de Mohun indicate the complexity of the settlement framework.<sup>97</sup> The interpretation of a proliferation of disparate settlement types appears to support the argument of the negative effect on prime nucleated settlements of the territorial inheritance as mooted by Simms et al. However, the economic and agricultural development of rural Kildare has to be viewed against a protracted period of change. Butlin's eclectic assessment of rural agricultural organisation as "a core area of demesne arable sometimes open, sometimes not (or possibly both) surrounded by an irregular constellation of small arable units, cultivated by lesser tenants and various classes of unfree tenants, all located in a "sea" of common pasture and waste" complements this picture to produce the evolved state of rural Kildare.<sup>98</sup> Empey attributed this complicated evolved state to the inherited population and the will of the

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<sup>97</sup> Extent of Ballymore (1326), Alen's Reg., p.189-194, also see Lyons, M.C., (1984), op.cit., Vol.I, p.100-104, Vol.II, Chapter 1, Abstract V; extent of Grange Mohoun (1305), C.J.R., Vol.II, p.28-29.

<sup>98</sup> Butlin, R.A., "Some observations on the field systems of medieval Ireland", Geographica Polonica 38 (1978), p.36.

lord based on his devised seigniorial framework."<sup>99</sup>

Kildare's settlement pattern evolved from the imposition of a feudal system on a pre-existing territorial society. The changes of two centuries complicate what was in essence a natural progression. The new settler community quickly established a farming and market orientated society. This protracted development emanated from the focal points of the first earthen strongholds to eventually envelop the entire county. The following chapters examine the role of motte-and-bailey castles and moated sites in this achievement.

## 2. Secondary Sources

## 3. Cartographic Sources

## 4. Photographic Sources

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<sup>99</sup> Empey, C.A., "Anglo-Norman settlement in the cantred of Eliogarty", in Bradley, J., Settlement and society in medieval Ireland, (Kilkenny, 1988), p.207-228.

1. PRIMARY SOURCES

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CHAPTER 2.

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## 1. PRIMARY SOURCES

Allusion to the paucity of documentary evidence has become synonymous with the study of Irish medieval history. The various disasters which befell Irish documentary material, the fire at the Irish record office in particular, has necessitated the art of "reading between the lines" as an integral part of the detective work employed to uncover clues to past settlements, as opposed to just another academic technique.<sup>100</sup> One may only envy the available English comparable data for the same period, on which some of the present author's conclusions are indebted.

The nature of the surviving documentary material, whether in original or transcript form, mostly relates to the workings of central government. The fiscal interests of these documents rarely pertain to matters at a local county or manorial level which would be most likely to provide the settlement historian with the information necessary to "repaint" the medieval landscape. However, the study of medieval settlement in Co. Kildare is far from bereft of source material.

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<sup>100</sup> For losses see D.K.R. 55th, Appendix 1, p.17-24.

The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis provides a narrative account of the invasion.<sup>101</sup> Through family connections Giraldus was linked with the first wave of the invaders, the medium no doubt through which he gained first hand knowledge of events as they occurred in Ireland. Giraldus was to spend roughly two years in Ireland, travelling over first in 1183 and then again, as part of John's entourage, in 1185. He had completed his Topographia Hibernica by March 1188 and had written the first preface of Expugnatio Hibernica in 1189.<sup>102</sup> In these writings Giraldus rarely deliberated specifically on individual castles but occasionally voiced his opinions on their effective use as part of the overall Anglo-Norman military strategy. He described a castle as a castle, and not as a motte, ringwork or earthen fortification. His writings were aimed at an audience which had no need for further descriptive explanation. Although of little assistance in the provision of answers to the specific questions of castle type, construction method and primary function, his work allows a chronological analysis of the systematic construction of

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<sup>101</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis, (ed) Scott, A.B. & Martin, F.X., (Dublin, 1978).

<sup>102</sup> Topographia Hibernica: The History and Topography of Ireland by Gerald of Wales, (ed) O'Meara, J.J., (Harmondsworth, 1982). Expugnatio Hibernica, op.cit., p.xii-xxxiii.

these early castles.<sup>103</sup> In <sup>the</sup> light of the lack of comparable contemporary documentary evidence, Giraldus's account remains of vital importance for the historical interpretation of the period. With particular reference to this present study this is mainly due to his catalogue of sites and odd "gems" of militaristic wisdom, which through unwitting testimony provide the reader with a rare insight into the evolution of the initial incastellation process.

The castle at Ferrycarrig, Co.Wexford, the first castle site Giraldus mentions in Expugnatio Hibernica, would appear by description to be that of a ringwork castle rather than a motte.<sup>104</sup> In his next reference to Anglo-Norman castles in Ireland there are a number of points which may be inferred from his comment; "Ruaidri king of Connacht crossed the Shannon and overran Meath with a strong force. Finding all the castles were abandoned and deserted, he burned them down and raised them to the ground right up to the borders of Dublin".<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Although the general dates supplied by Giraldus are noted to be vague at the best of times they may be corroborated by use of other sources, especially with reference to the Song; Expugnatio Hibernica, p.xix.

<sup>104</sup> Barry, T.B., "Anglo-Norman ringwork castles: Some evidence", in Reeves-Smyth, T. & Hammond, F., (ed) Landscape Archaeology in Ireland, B.A.R. 116 (Oxford, 1983) p.303. also Bennett, I., "Preliminary archaeological excavations at Ferrycarrig ringwork, Newtown Townland, Co.Wexford", Jnl. Wexford Hist. Soc., 10 (1984-85), p.23-43. Expugnatio Hibernica, op.cit., p.53.

<sup>105</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, op.cit., p.139.

It may be argued that because these castles were found abandoned and deserted the implication is that they were not of significant strategic importance to merit defence. Furthermore it may be contended that these castles were built as temporary consolidation points as the army advanced into new territories. That these castles were easily destroyed by fire suggests their wooden construction or that of their superstructures. It is unlikely however that if they were motte castles that the complete earthen mounds were levelled to prevent their further use.<sup>106</sup>

Giraldus's account gives the impression that these fortifications were reconstructed with the same ease as they were apparently destroyed. "Everything in those parts which had been in disorder was now put right, and the castles of Meath...were now repaired and restored to their former condition".<sup>107</sup> He speaks later of Hugh de Lacy's role in the construction of a large number of castles throughout Meath and Leinster. Giraldus recorded the location and recipient castellan or lord of some of these castles but only referred to by intimation the "many others which it would be tedious to enumerate

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<sup>106</sup> It should be noted that to level the mound completely would have been a major task and that it was most probably the superstructure of the motte top and its outer defenses which were levelled.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. p.195.

individually".<sup>108</sup> Although the student of Anglo-Norman castles in Ireland may well find this last comment infuriating, the record of castle sites which Giraldus does provide has proved invaluable in their location and study. Listed among these are four sites located in modern Co.Kildare, those being the castles of Castledermot, Ardree, Narraghmore and Collacht.<sup>109</sup>

The text of Expugnatio Hibernica reveals little about methods of castle construction, materials used, labour required and the time involved in the construction of these fortresses. Hugh de Lacy is attributed with the erection of numerous castles, however no indication is given with regard to the manner in which he carried out this feat. During the summer of 1181 De Lacy conducted a campaign or programme of castle building in Leinster in his capacity as governor of Ireland together with his newly appointed replacements, John de Lacy and Richard de Pec. "For hitherto very many castles had been built in Meath, but few in Leinster".<sup>110</sup> De Lacy may previously have used his offices to advance the incastellation of his own fief of Meath. A developed supposition may presuppose the existence of a department responsible for

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid. p.195.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. p.195. See also Orpen, G.H., "Notes and Norman castles", E.H.R. 22 (1907), pp. 248-250. The inclusion of "Collacht" shall be discussed below, Chapter 4, p.195-6.

<sup>110</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.195.



an incastellation programme under the direct control of the "custos" in the early Dublin government, however such an unsubstantiated hypothesis is difficult to prove. Nonetheless, Meath as newly conquered swordland in the early years of the invasion may have necessitated an immediate incastellation programme, whereas the subjugation of Kildare was achieved initially as part of McMurrough's re-acquisition of his lost kingdom of Leinster. The subsequent military subinfeudation of Kildare established a firm foothold and framework within which de Lacy's castles were added to in the early 1180's.<sup>111</sup>

De Lacy was undoubtedly involved in a supervisory role. The circumstance of his murder in 1186 as he inspected the completion of the castle of Darrow, would appear to suggest that the Irishman who struck the fatal blow was employed as part of the labour force involved in its construction.<sup>112</sup> This may indicate the existence of an integrated castle building team, the local Irish incorporated in the laborious construction process.<sup>113</sup> Giraldus's text adds little further to our knowledge in the investigation of construction techniques but is more helpful on the question of the use of the castle in the

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<sup>111</sup> De Lacy is associated with the construction of castles in the southern half of Co.Kildare.

<sup>112</sup> A.F.M., Vol.III, 1186 AD, pp.71-77.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid. p.77. The assassin was noted to have escaped "from the English and Irish".

course of the conquest.

Giraldus viewed the castle as vital to the conquest of Ireland because it formed an integral part of the Anglo-Norman military strategy. He later acknowledged that the conquest of Ireland could have been achieved and Ireland "easily reduced to an ordered and settled condition by the construction of castles everywhere in suitable places from coast to coast".<sup>114</sup> The proposed programme of incastellation advanced by Giraldus stressed the need for a better system of communications, with an emphasis on the gradual deployment of a network of castles as opposed to a haphazard policy of construction in haste at too great a distance from each other. Giraldus's pointers on the do's and don'ts of castle building within the process of conquest and colonization contribute towards a better understanding of Anglo-Norman military strategy.<sup>115</sup>

Unfortunately the castles of Castledermot, Ardree and Narraghmore no longer survive to bear witness to Giraldus as a prime source for the documentation of the early earthwork castles of Kildare.<sup>116</sup> However, as is often the case, the sites which lack documentary evidence are those very sites which survive in the present landscape.

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<sup>114</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, op.cit., p.231.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p.231-251.

<sup>116</sup> The exact location of these sites shall be discussed at greater length in Chapter 4.

Kildare town has been alluded to as probably the principal manor of Strongbow's fief, yet documentary evidence with reference to the site of Kildare castle is scarce.<sup>117</sup> Within the text of his Topographia Hibernica Giraldus relates the tale of a domesticated falcon in Kildare which "used to the bidding of the townspeople or the soldiers of the castle".<sup>118</sup> This unlikely source would appear to give the first substantial reference to a castle at Kildare and given the date of the document, it would probably be safe to assume that this early Kildare castle was of earthen construction. This source also gives reference to the castle of Naas, "castro Nasensi".<sup>119</sup> The references mentioned add weight to the thesis that the earthen castles which existed in those towns were in fact of Anglo-Norman origin or were at least their strongholds during the course of the invasion.

A source which complements Giraldus's works is the Anglo-French poem, titled by Orpen as The Song of Dermot and the Earl, and assumed to have been penned by Maurice Regan, the secretary-come-interpreter of Dermot

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<sup>117</sup> Orpen, G.H., Ireland under the Normans, 4 Vols. (Oxford, 1911-20), Vol. I p. 382.

<sup>118</sup> O'Meara, J.J., (1982), op.cit., p. 66. Giraldi Cambrensis Opera, (ed) Brewer, J.S., Dimock, J.F. & Warner, G.F., 8 Vols. (London, 1861-91), Vol. V., p. 121.

<sup>119</sup> O'Meara, Ibid., p. 52. Brewer et al., ibid., Vol. V, p. 100.

McMurrough.<sup>120</sup> Maurice supplied the context of the narrative which was then formularized in French verse by the composer of the Song. An important source in its own right, it not alone validates information supplied by Giraldus but adds to the latter through its documentation of further castle construction and detailed account of the subinfeudation of the basic land grants.<sup>121</sup> Orpen in his edited version recognised the importance of the source in its account of the initial subinfeudation of Leinster and Meath.<sup>122</sup> Of specific reference to Kildare, lines 3070 to 3125 detail grants of land which include Carbury, Naas, Ardree and Norragh, all of which were sites of early Anglo-Norman castles.<sup>123</sup>

The Song, as mentioned previously, has also given information which would lead to the assumption that Kildare town was in fact the caput of Strongbow's Leinster holding;

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<sup>120</sup> The Song of Dermot and the Earl (ed) Orpen, G.H., (Oxford, 1892). Long, J., "Dermot and the Earl: who wrote 'the Song'?", P.R.I.A., Vol. 75C (1975).

<sup>121</sup> "Karebri donat al bon Meiler". Song, l. 3084. Carbury he gave to the good Meiler (FitzHenry).

<sup>122</sup> Song, l. 3064-3177. Song, p. 302, Orpen notes that contained within these lines "this passage is the only connected account of the subinfeudation of Leinster and Meath by the Earl Richard FitzGilbert and Hugh de Laci, respectively, that has come down to us."

<sup>123</sup> There are still motte-and-bailey castles at Carbury and Naas. Ardree was included in Armitage's Book of Mottes, however a positive identification for the castle at Norragh has yet to be resolved.

"In Ireland remained  
the noble earl with his friends  
At Kildare he stayed  
with all the forces he had."<sup>124</sup>

The contemporaneous works of Giraldus and the Song confine themselves to the years of the initial conquest and thus only deal with the initial phase of subinfeudation and castle construction. The history of secondary settlement and the introduction and development of moated sites as a settlement form in the late thirteenth century is dependent on gleanings from a scattered array of disparate documentary sources in the absence of manorial records.

Primary sources which have been employed elsewhere to chart the chronological development of early Anglo-Norman castles in other parts of Ireland unfortunately do not yield the same information for Kildare. The Pipe Roll of 14 John, only mentions Carbury and Oldconnell in the returns for 1211-1212, but does not approach the wealth of information afforded for the castles of Meath and those of Ulster.<sup>125</sup> Subsequent pipe roll returns printed in the series of Deputy Keeper Reports, Vols. 35 to 54, supply some direct evidence with regard to the settlement forms under investigation, and are also of assistance in the recreation of the topographical and

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<sup>124</sup> Song, 1.2769-2772.

<sup>125</sup> "The Irish Pipe Roll of 14 John, 1211-1212", (ed) Davies, O. & Quinn, D.B., U.J.A. Vol. iv supplement (1941). Meath p.21-47, Ulster p.53-69.

socio-economic landscape of late thirteenth/early fourteenth century Kildare.

The ownership of lands is recorded in many instances, as is the documentation of those accountable and the register of fees in times of royal service.<sup>126</sup> The state of the county may be discerned at different levels, such as the escalation of troubles in the Dublin/Wicklow mountains and the account of measures taken to defend and provision the garrison at Ballymore, the building works carried out at the castles of Kildare and Leixlip, and matters at a local level, evidenced by the allowances made for loss of rent in times of disturbance.<sup>127</sup> In spite of the fact that the historical data contained in these rolls takes on a more complete nature from the 1270's onwards these documents seem reluctant to impart detailed information. They provide only a slight overview of manorial Kildare and its trappings, while they occasionally acknowledge the continuity of settlement. Thus the complexities of the settlement development of medieval Kildare are dependant on yet further documentary comparison.

To date, no documentary source material has been uncovered to rival the information supplied in the

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<sup>126</sup> D.K.R., 39th, p.67. D.K.R., 47th, p.52.

<sup>127</sup> D.K.R., 39th, p.45,69 (Rent loss); D.K.R., 36th, p.36-7 (Ballymore); D.K.R., 38th p.48,86 (Works at Kildare and Leixlip).

manorial accounts for the manor of Old Ross, which details the construction of a moated site.<sup>128</sup> The very nature of the available source material for Kildare thus necessitates site location as the first step, through cartographic means or otherwise, and secondly, to endeavour to enhance and develop these sites by occasional historical reference from a collection of disparate sources.

Of major importance to this procedure are the published volumes of the Calendar of Justiciary Rolls, which, together with some unprinted volumes in the P.R.O., Dublin, provide a wealth of information especially with regard to the socio-economic condition of the county at the beginning of the fourteenth century.<sup>129</sup> Evidence of the lifestyles of the people is abundant throughout these court rolls, which frequently detail crops, animals and victuals for household consumption, often appended by the valuation of these goods.<sup>130</sup> The portrayal of the state of lawlessness within the county also gives an insight into the scale of unrest, whether at a local level or that of a concerted campaign by neighbouring Irish septs which resulted in government intervention. These records detail

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<sup>128</sup> S.C. 6/1237-9, Minister's Accounts P.R.O. London.

<sup>129</sup> K.B./2 P.R.O.I. C.J.R., 1295-1307, 2 Vols., (ed) Mills, J., (Dublin, 1905-14), C.J.R., 1308-14, (ed) Wood, H. & Langman, A.E., revised by Griffith, M.C., (Dublin, 1956).

<sup>130</sup> C.J.R., 1297, p.181, valuation of goods following a robbery.

land ownership, the size of herds and flocks and countless aspects of daily life. However, it is in relation to placename evidence and the confirmation of the continuity and spatial distribution of Anglo-Norman settlement in Kildare at this juncture, that this source is of importance to the present study. Used in conjunction with other sources such as the Archbishop Alen's Register, a complete picture of settlement in medieval Kildare may be attempted.<sup>131</sup>

Evidence of a socio-economic nature may also be found among the Memoranda Rolls, a source which Connolly rightly noted had received little detailed inspection in the pursuit of such information.<sup>132</sup> This source reveals little in the nature of specific documentation with regard to the period of moated site construction and habitation in Kildare, although it does provide evidence of the social and environmental framework of late thirteenth/early fourteenth century Kildare, especially with regard to the northern half of the county. The effects which the war in Offaly had on the lands within Kildare are also given some attention and the defensive concerns of the inhabitants within the "Marchia de

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<sup>131</sup> Calendar of Archbishop Alen's Register, c.1172-1534, (ed) McNeill, C., J.R.S.A.I., Extra Vol. for 1949, (1950). See below, Chapter 6, figs. 20 and 21.

<sup>132</sup> P.R.O.I. E.X.2., R.C.8. Lydon, J.F., "Survey of the Memoranda Rolls of the Irish Exchequer, 1294-1509", Analecta Hibernica 23 (1966). Connolly, P., "The Irish memoranda rolls, some unexplored aspects." Irish Economic and Social History Jn., Vol.III (1976).



Okethy" are highlighted.<sup>133</sup> These records also witness a growth in the size of established settlements with reference to continued house construction,<sup>134</sup> while intensified crop production attempted to cope with the needs of the apparent expansion in settler population and the requirements of the crown purveyors for the Scottish campaigns.<sup>135</sup>

The Red Book of Ormond, a cartulary compiled in the fourteenth century of rentals and deeds relating to the property in Ireland of the Butler-Ormond family, contains with special interest to Kildare extents of the manor of Cloncurry, an extent of the lands in the Barony of Kilkea, and a rental account of lands in Castledermot.<sup>136</sup> The Cloncurry extent has previously received much attention due to the comprehensive account given of the manor in 1304.<sup>137</sup> The reference to the motte at Cloncurry is important in the context of the present study, however the extent also provides information relevant to the distribution of the manor's population. Most of the placenames mentioned may be equated with their modern

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<sup>133</sup> P.R.O.I. R.C. 8/4 Mem. Roll 3-4 Ed.II, p.781.

<sup>134</sup> P.R.O.I. EX 2/2 mem. 24d. p.319, entry no.637.

<sup>135</sup> Craig,D., (1984), op.cit., Vol.II, p.244.

<sup>136</sup> The Red Book of Ormond, (ed) White,N.B., (Dublin,1932), p.27, 12, 21.

<sup>137</sup> O'Loan,J. "The manor of Cloncurry, County Kildare and the feudal system of land tenure in Ireland", Department of Agriculture Journal, Vol. LVII (1970-1). Lyons,M.C., (1984), op.cit., Vol.I, p.325.

counterparts and the land holdings plotted to recapture the essence of the manorial landscape and framework in 1304.<sup>138</sup> Hopefully, this aspect of the document will soon receive the attention it deserves and add a new dimension to Kildare's settlement history.

There is further abundant placename evidence to be found in The Red Book of the Earls of Kildare.<sup>139</sup> This important source contains the inquisition post mortem, in the year 1329, of lands held in chief by Thomas Fitz John, earl of Kildare,<sup>140</sup> and an inventory of the tenants and lands in the manor of Maynooth in the same year.<sup>141</sup> Two full feodaries were compiled on the death of Thomas Fitz John and that of his son Richard, three years later in 1331.<sup>142</sup> Both of these lists preserve a breakdown of the feudal obligations due from the military tenants of the earls of Kildare. They are central to the investigation of feudal descent, continuity of ownership and settlement development within the county. The feodary of 1329 is of specific interest to the present study as it singles out

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<sup>138</sup> These extents are also important in the determination of continuity of ownership when used in conjunction with sources such as A.J. Otway-Ruthven's "Knight's fees in Kildare, Leix and Offaly", J.R.S.A.I., Vol.XLI, (1961), p.163-181.

<sup>139</sup> The Red Book of the Earls of Kildare, (ed) MacNiocaill,G., (Dublin,1964).

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., no.126.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., nos. 119,121,134.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., nos. 125,131.

the motte of Kilbeg, which owed the service of one knight's fee.<sup>143</sup> This however is the only instance of direct evidence with regard to a known Kildare Anglo-Norman earthwork castle.

This apparent reluctance on behalf of the contemporary documentary material to yield constructive evidence for individual sites is characteristic of most of the sources consulted. The above mentioned documents provide the historic background and settlement framework for the earthworks under discussion. They also provide an insight into the socio-economic life and activities of the population of Kildare at the time. In an attempt to exhaust all available avenues of research numerous later documentary sources were also examined. The seventeenth century Civil Survey of county Kildare provided vital topographical evidence, in addition to a record of extant structural remains and sites of those by that date destroyed.<sup>144</sup> The latter Ormond Deeds<sup>145</sup> were used at times in conjunction with the fiants of Elizabeth I, printed in the Reports of the Deputy Keeper, to supply further evidence relevant to placename research and

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., no.125; "Item, mota de Kilbeg feodum unius militis unde servicium ut supra XLs.". This refers to the motte in Longtown Demesne in the parish of Kilbeggs.

<sup>144</sup> The Civil Survey: Vol. VIII, County of Co.Kildare, (ed) Simmington, R.C., (Dublin, 1952).

<sup>145</sup> Calendar of Ormond Deeds, 1172-1603, Vols. I-VI, (ed) Curtis, E., (Dublin, 1932-43).

identification.<sup>146</sup> These sources were invaluable in this regard as they record the transition of placenames whilst they contribute details of past and present ownership. The Register of the Abbey of St.Thomas, Dublin produced detailed evidence of individual land holdings in the medieval period.<sup>147</sup> In certain instances the boundaries of landed properties were traceable to such an extent as to exhibit the full utilization, or at least ownership, of lands in certain areas of northern Kildare.<sup>148</sup>

Fortunately, this manuscript research was eventually rewarded by a rare reference to the construction of a moated site with breteche at "Granvarnak" in southern Kildare.<sup>149</sup> Prior to this the detailed account of the moated site at Ballyconnor, Co.Wexford, represented the only known medieval documentary reference to a moated site in Ireland.<sup>150</sup> The positive identification of "Granvarnak" as that of the moated site in Grangeford townland provides the incentive for a possible future research excavation despite the fact that the site was

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<sup>146</sup> D.K.R., Vols 8-17.

<sup>147</sup> Register of the Abbey of St.Thomas the Martyr, Dublin, (ed) Gilbert, J.T., (London, 1889).

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. p.81-83, The information supplied facilitates an overview of a complex of holdings near the village of Kill.

<sup>149</sup> P.R.O., E.101/230/13.

<sup>150</sup> P.R.O., S.C.6, 1247-9.

destroyed in the early 1950's.<sup>151</sup>

## 2. SECONDARY SOURCES

Molyneux in writing his discourse concerning the Danish mounts, forts and towers in Ireland in 1725 had this to say of mottes; "They are made in the form of a cone, lessening gradually as it rises from a large basis, till it terminates at the top, not in a point but a flat surface. They are commonly situated, especially the largest of them upon rising grounds, near the public road, to be conspicuous at a distance, and taken notice of by travellers as they pass that way".<sup>152</sup>

Although neither representative nor indicative of the secondary source material for Kildare's medieval past, the writings of antiquarians of the last century and the early part of the present embody a unique source of informed thought, discussion and detailed information. Housed among the manuscripts in the National Library of Ireland are the letters of Lord Walter FitzGerald, a noted Kildare antiquarian and founder member of the Kildare Archaeological Society.<sup>153</sup> Although most of his

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<sup>151</sup> See below, Chapter 5, p.249-251.

<sup>152</sup> Molyneux, T., A Discourse concerning the Danish mounts, forts and towers in Ireland, (London, 1725), p.192.

<sup>153</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 16,153-162; Ms. 18,859.

work is now preserved in printed form in the volumes of the above mentioned society's journal, either under his own name or pseudonym of "Omurethi", his correspondence and notes are extremely informative. Of particular interest with regard to motte castles in Kildare are his personal communications with Orpen, exchanged while the latter compiled information for his article on "motes" in Ireland in 1907.<sup>154</sup>

In a letter dated 19 Sept. 1906, FitzGerald related to Orpen, "that the mote was not a fort but a sepulchral mound . . . . another form of cairn . . . . Another proof is that a churchyard is, almost without exception, found close to a mote."<sup>155</sup> Orpen had by this stage formulated his own conclusions in respect of the origins and functions of mottes in Ireland and applied the same to the information on mottes in southern Kildare duly forwarded to him by FitzGerald. Orpen used Giraldus as a source to trace the mottes within the county and thus FitzGerald was asked to supply information on the mottes of Castledermot, Ardree and Narraghmore.<sup>156</sup> Although FitzGerald was somewhat confused when it came to distinguish between sepulchral mounds and Anglo-Norman motte castles, his record of Kildare's antiquities with

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<sup>154</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 17,783; Orpen, G.H., "Motes and Norman Castles in Ireland", E.H.R., Vol.22, (1907), p.228-54.

<sup>155</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 17,783 folder (3).

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

appended, well researched, historical references represents a goldmine for students of the county's past history. Among his papers are also notes made by him from the Red Book of Kildare,<sup>157</sup> descriptions of his various antiquarian activities,<sup>158</sup> details of his family history and copious notes on the antiquities of Kildare and surrounds.<sup>159</sup>

While Orpen conducted his research in Ireland Armitage amassed information for her book, The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles.<sup>160</sup> Among a collection of her notebooks held at the library of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Leeds, is one entitled "The Book of Mottes" in which are recorded some ninety sites.<sup>161</sup> Armitage recorded by use of plan and section ten motte castles in Co. Kildare of which Ardree and Ballymore Eustace have since been totally destroyed. Also noted in her sketchbook is "Bades Moat" in the townland of Rathsillagh Upper, a small motte-and-bailey which had been previously unrecorded.<sup>162</sup> The sketchbook contains

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<sup>157</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 16,167.

<sup>158</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 16,176.

<sup>159</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 18,883.

<sup>160</sup> Armitage, E., The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles, (London, 1912).

<sup>161</sup> YAS Ms. 521/C

<sup>162</sup> The other Kildare motte sites recorded are; Rathmore, Rheban, Naas, Ardscull, Donode, Castlewarden, and Carbury.

further plans of castle remains, moated sites and ringforts which provide additional and sometimes new evidence to the field archaeologist. The motte-and-bailey castles of Rathmore and Rheban were recorded at a time when they were utilised as gravel quarries and the detailed sketches assist in the determination of the original size of these sites. (Fig.9)

The Kildare Archaeological Society Journal, of which FitzGerald was a regular contributor, was of immense value in the research of the present study through its articles and miscellaneous notes.<sup>163</sup> This source was of particular relevance as it recorded many sites now since destroyed. The first volume of the Journal provided a list of "tumuli or moats" in the county.<sup>164</sup> The problem of interpretation of these monuments was very real at the end of the last century, and it is of interest to note that the appended comments stray little from the reshaped modern perspective of these same settlement types.<sup>165</sup> In another entry a description was given of a then recently destroyed moated site. The author of the piece recalled that "Maxwell, the Scotch vandal who levelled the

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<sup>163</sup> J.K.A.S., Vol.I, (1891) - .

<sup>164</sup> J.K.A.S., Vol.I, (1891), p.405.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p.405 n., " It is a remarkable circumstance that almost invariably a Christian burial ground is to be found within a few perch of a tumulus. It is at times difficult to distinguish a rath from a moat; but a moat never has a rampart at the top, though one often circumvents the base, whereas the rath has one, two, or more ramparts."



Coreally, did not live long to enjoy the fruits of his labour, as he died a few months afterwards; from which event the people about drew their own conclusions".<sup>166</sup> Unfortunately the destruction continued, despite such ominous warnings, and these sites are now only preserved by reference to them in the pages of this journal. Some examples include the destruction, and partial destruction, of mottes at Birtown,<sup>167</sup> Castle Rheban,<sup>168</sup> and Knockshee,<sup>169</sup> and the levelling of another moated site near Ardsnull, c.1890.<sup>170</sup>

Apart from the many articles and notes which deal with the subject of Kildare motte castles found in the Kildare journal this same topic has received little attention elsewhere. The distribution map of mottes in Ireland appended to the second volume of Orpen's Ireland Under the Normans initiated the distributional analysis of these earthwork castles.<sup>171</sup> Orpen who had identified some twenty four early castle sites in Leinster by 1907,<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> J.K.A.S., Vol.III, p.191.

<sup>167</sup> J.K.A.S., Vol.V, p.293.

<sup>168</sup> J.K.A.S., Vol.II, p.168.

<sup>169</sup> J.K.A.S., Vol.III, p.356.

<sup>170</sup> J.K.A.S., Vol.II, P.193.

<sup>171</sup> Normans, Vol.II, facing p.343. The Kildare motte castles marked on this distribution map were; "Cloncurry, Carbury, Mainham, Clane, Naas, Old Connell, Morrystown Biller, Ballyshannon, Reban, Ardsnull, Ardree, Kilkea."

<sup>172</sup> Orpen, G.H., (1907) op.cit., p.254.

noted that his later distribution map "must be regarded as only a tentative survey. For want of space and because they are of minor importance, I have not inserted all the true mottes known to me in Leinster and Meath".<sup>173</sup> This last comment somewhat echoes Giraldus's own words, of the early castles being too "tedious to enumerate individually".<sup>174</sup>

Leask's classic, Irish Castles and Castellated Houses produced no new additions to Orpen's earlier index of sites.<sup>175</sup> It was Leask himself who listed and plotted the motte castles for the map which accompanied Otway-Ruthven's "The Medieval County of Kildare".<sup>176</sup> Shortly after Glasscock's article "Mottes in Ireland" was printed,<sup>177</sup> he had inquired of Otway-Ruthven if she could provide further information with regard to additional earthwork castle sites within the county of Kildare.<sup>178</sup> The mottes listed in this Glasscock article were the same as those noted in an earlier draft list of mottes in

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<sup>173</sup> Normans, Vol.II, p.343.

<sup>174</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.195.

<sup>175</sup> Leask, H.G., Irish Castles and Castellated Houses (Dundalk, 1941).

<sup>176</sup> Otway-Ruthven, A.J., (1959b), op.cit., facing p.196.

<sup>177</sup> Glasscock, R.E., "Mottes in Ireland", Chateau-Gaillard VII, (1975), p.95-110.

<sup>178</sup> Personal communication between Glasscock and Otway-Ruthven found amongst off-prints in her library, Medieval History Dept., T.C.D.

Ireland which he compiled with the help of McNeill.<sup>179</sup> The above mentioned lists, unwittingly or not, were still dependent on Orpen's pioneering original work, which, in printed form, has yet to be surpassed.<sup>180</sup>

The study of moated sites in Kildare has received little or no attention. De Burgh had noted at the end of the nineteenth century that in the north-east of the county "some few raths are square, like the one at Tipper".<sup>181</sup> This however represents the limited discussion dedicated to this site type.

The aforementioned article on the medieval county of Kildare comprehensively deals with the administration of the county. Otway-Ruthven delivers a concise and simplified account of the initial subinfeudation of Kildare whereas a more detailed account may be found in Orpen's Ireland under the Normans.<sup>182</sup> To these important and basic works, Otway-Ruthven's "Knights fees in Kildare, Leix and Offaly" provides a useful compilation of references to knights' service in Kildare. Ownership is outlined and the reader is referred to the existence

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<sup>179</sup> Glasscock, R.E. & McNeill, T., "Mottes in Ireland: A draft list", G.H.I.H.S. Bull., 3, (1972), p.27-51.

<sup>180</sup> A countrywide index of all site types is currently being compiled by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland.

<sup>181</sup> De Burgh, T.J., "Ancient Naas: outposts and longstones", J.K.A.S., Vol.II, (1896-99), p.318.

<sup>182</sup> Normans, Vol. I, p.377-386.

of motte castles where relevant to particular fees.<sup>183</sup> A later interdisciplinary approach to the investigation of medieval agriculture and settlement in the region of Oughterard and Castlewarden, in north-east Kildare, traced the medieval development of the area and is of interest to the present study in its conclusions with regard to the "moated site" at Castlewarden.<sup>184</sup>

### 3. CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Due to the dearth of documentary evidence this thesis is markedly reliant on cartographic sources. The collated information gathered from the map evidence forms the basis for the distributional representations of Anglo-Norman earthworks within Kildare. The wide range of published and manuscript cartographic sources relevant to the needs of the Irish landscape archaeologist has already been noted elsewhere.<sup>185</sup> This section relates to some aspects of the individual sources available for

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<sup>183</sup> Otway-Ruthven, A.J., "Knights fees in Kildare, Leix and Offaly", J.R.S.A.I., Vol. XCI, (1961), p.163-181.

<sup>184</sup> Hall, D.N., Hennessy, M. & O'Keefe, T., "Medieval agriculture and settlement in Oughterard and Castlewarden, Co. Kildare", Ir. Geog., 18, (1985), p.16-25.

<sup>185</sup> Reeves-Smyth, T.J.C., "Landscapes in Paper: Cartographic Sources for Irish Archaeology", Reeves-Smyth, T. & Hamond, F., (ed) Landscape Archaeology in Ireland, (Oxford, 1983), p.119-154.

Kildare. In the 1717 map there is no reference to mottes or castles as the later maps in the appended description. Kildare is fortunate as it has a wide coverage of pre-Ordnance Survey maps. The collection of estate maps for the county in the National Library of Ireland represents a unique corpus of detailed topographical records. Estate surveys carried out in Kildare by John Rocque, the Anglo-French cartographer of international repute, are regarded as some of the most remarkable estate surveys ever made in Ireland.<sup>186</sup> Rocque created what amounts to a realistic aerial view of the local landscape.<sup>187</sup> A survey of the town of Kildare executed by Rocque in 1757 furnishes the one and only cartographic representation of the motte of Kildare.<sup>188</sup> The sharp and highly localised hachures to the east of the still extant tower house indicate a hill or mound of artificial construction. This no doubt was the earthwork motte castle of the first phase of Anglo-Norman occupation in the town. Similar surveys of the town carried out in 1798 and 1817 by Sherrard and Sherrard, Brassington and Greene respectively, reveal that the mound had been destroyed since Rocque's earlier

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<sup>186</sup> Andrews, J.H., "The French school of Dublin land surveyors", Ir. Geog., 5 (1967).

<sup>187</sup> Horner, A., "New maps of Co. Kildare interest in the N.L.I.", J.K.A.S., Vol. XV, (1975-6), p.474.

<sup>188</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 22004(5) "A Survey of the Town of Kildare belongg to his Excellncy Jas Er of Kildare by Jno. Rocque 1757". (sic).

map.<sup>189</sup> Like the 1757 map there is no reference to motte or castle on the later maps in the appended description of plots. However, the site of the motte castle is preserved in the curvilinear boundary clearly depicted on both the 1798 and 1817 surveys.

In a survey of the lands which belonged to the manor of Athy in 1756 Rocque's attention to detail is again to the fore.<sup>190</sup> The manuscript plotted many now non-existent earthworks, some of which were overlooked in the following century by the Ordnance Survey surveyors. In a survey of Clagorrah, part of the manor of Athy, an "old Danish fort", square in plan, was recorded in plot 13.<sup>191</sup> Rocque annotated that the field name was "Core Alley".<sup>192</sup> This was the same site which was recorded destroyed over a hundred years later in the pages of the Journal of the Kildare Archaeological Society.<sup>193</sup> This moated site was recorded on the 1837 edition of the Ordnance Survey 6 inch maps, but no trace of remains are evident on the

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<sup>189</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 22004 (6), A Survey of the Town of Kildare The Estate of His Grace the Duke of Leinster by Thomas Sherrard, 1798. N.L.I. Ms. 22004 (7), Survey of the Town of Kildare The Estate of His Grace Augustus Frederick Duke of Leinster by Sherrard, Brassington and Greene, 1817.

<sup>190</sup> T.C.D. Ms. 4278, "A Survey of the Manor of Athy John Rocque 1756".

<sup>191</sup> Modern Td. Clogorow. O.S. 6 inch Sh. 31,35.

<sup>192</sup> T.C.D. Ms.4278(15) "A Survey of Clagorrah being part of the Manor of Athy John Rocque 1756".

<sup>193</sup> Darby, M., "Coreally", J.K.A.S., Vol.III, p.191.

1939 edition. Rocque's accuracy in his depiction of this roughly square moated site may best be appreciated by comparison with an aerial photograph of the site taken by St. Joseph in 1970.<sup>194</sup> It is of interest that the adjoining plot, plot 14, was called the "moat field", yet the map showed no sign of earthworks and there are no traces of earthworks to be found on the first edition 6 inch O.S. map or relevant aerial photographs. This may be explained by its proximity to the "Core Alley", however another map in the same manuscript also has a field named the "moat field", in which a large ringfort stood until its destruction less than twenty years ago.<sup>195</sup> Thus the questionable reliance of field names in the ascertainment of site type should be noted and treated with due caution.

The annotation "Danish fort" is regularly applied to moated sites in the context of these estate maps. Scale however used the term to describe a ringfort on one map,<sup>196</sup> while in the same year applied the words "Danes Fort" to a moated site.<sup>197</sup> The latter corruption of the term owes itself not to any particular marked differentiation on

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<sup>194</sup> St. Joseph BDH 67: 1970.

<sup>195</sup> T.C.D. Ms. 4278(3) "A Survey of Shanraha being part of the Manor of Athy, John Rocque 1756", plot 5.

<sup>196</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 21.F.10 (p.39) "Grange Beg", B.Scale.

<sup>197</sup> N.L.I. 21.F.11 A Survey of the Manor of Fontstown, Co.Kildare B. Scale 1773. This moated site is located in Fontstown Lower Td.

Scale's behalf but to the blank space within the mapped enclosure which restricted the annotation to the word "Danes" instead of "Danish". A degree of caution is thus advocated before conclusions are drawn on the basis of plot descriptions or field names alone.

A great number of moated sites were located by the use of the estate maps alone, as the mapped representations clearly indicated site type. It was more difficult however to positively identify motte castles and to differentiate between these sites and hachured hillocks, unless of course a description was appended. The "moat" depicted in the townland of Osberstown was named as such,<sup>198</sup> whereas a similar cartographic representation in Leixlip Demesne was investigated due to the fact that the field fence skirted that particular topographical feature.<sup>199</sup> The estate maps which carried appended plot descriptions provide further useful information in the classification of the type of land in which the earthworks were located. In a number of examples the utilization of the land inside the enclosure as well as without was noted.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 21.F.35(43). Osberstown (O.S. Sheet 19, Grid Ref. 16. 871 200). This site is now destroyed.

<sup>199</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 21.F.37(157).

<sup>200</sup> N.L.I. 21.F.29, "A Survey of Kilpatrick", B.Scale (1773). The platform area of the moated site at Kilpatrick Td., is depicted under tillage.



Taylor's Kildare map of 1783 illustrated a number of sites which were not recorded on the later Ordnance Survey sheets, for example Rathturtle and Glending, both south of Ballymore Eustace.<sup>201</sup> Taylor's maps were extremely useful in the location of motte castles once recognition of the representative key was applied. The degree of accuracy is remarkable when it is considered that he undertook to map the whole of the county.

The advent of the Ordnance Survey adds the greatest dimension to the usage of cartographic sources. The first edition Ordnance Survey maps, which date from 1837, form the basic starting point in the locational record of sites of archaeological interest. Established in 1824, the Ordnance Survey was primarily interested in the delimitation of townland boundaries however the topographical features inside these boundaries were also plotted.<sup>202</sup> The information collected by the surveyors was drawn onto parish maps to the scale of 6 inches to the mile (these were called the Fair Plans) and later redrawn at headquarters. Antiquities marked on the plans were occasionally altered or omitted from the published sheets. The conventionalization of symbols which denote mapped features was an immediate problem. Interpretation is an acquired skill in itself as it soon became obvious

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<sup>201</sup> A Map of the County of Kildare by Alex Taylor 1783, (ed) Andrews, J.H., (R.I.A. Dublin, 1983).

<sup>202</sup> Reeves-Smyth, T.J.C., (1983) op.cit., p.126.

that what appeared on the maps did not always reflect the field remains.

When the first edition is used in conjunction with the later revised editions it is possible to highlight some of the discrepancies in these manuscripts. However, to be fair to the surveyors, they were not expected to be field archaeologists. Most of the earthworks were plotted by use of form lines or hachures. In addition, some sites were marked by use of Old English writing. Actual descriptions applied to sites, especially the use of the word "Moat", generally assumed to refer to mottes, caused some initial problems. Sheet 14 of the Co.Kildare 6 inch series displayed two earthworks, "Kavanaghs Moat" and "Loughanure Moat", which on field examination were determined to be raised raths. Since the same term "moat" is also applied to Ardscull, a site of massive proportions in comparison to these raised raths, some of the problems may be appreciated. Despite a few such minor interpretive problems the Ordnance Survey 6 inch maps proved to be the single most valuable cartographic compilation as the majority of sites in the field resembled their paper representation.

During the compilation of the Ordnance Survey maps, documentation associated with their finalized form was also found relevant to this research. Specifically these were the Ordnance Survey Memoirs and the Name Books,

housed in the Royal Irish Academy and the Ordnance Survey, Phoenix Park, respectively. The Memoirs or letters comprise the correspondence between the surveyors in the field and the survey director. Some contain useful references to antiquities, while others were filled with large abstracts from Archdall's Monasticon Hibernicum designed to inflate the reports with material copied down at the writer's quarters at the expense of data obtainable from local enquiry.<sup>203</sup> The following communication to base is one which most field surveyors will associate with; "The Barony of Carbury proved a most inconvenient one as having within its precincts no Post Town and the weather was very severely cold and wet. We have frost this morning. I hope it may continue; I hate rain".<sup>204</sup>

The letters do give some additional information and a few sites not depicted on the maps are referred to in these documents.<sup>205</sup> The field name books were introduced to complement the 6 inch maps and their essential purpose was to record the various ways in which townland names

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<sup>203</sup> Archdall, M., Monasticon Hibernicum, (Dublin, 1786)

<sup>204</sup> Dowling, M.G., (ed) O.S. Letters for Co. Kildare J.K.A.S. Vol. XIII No. 1 p. 57.

<sup>205</sup> O.S. Letters J.K.A.S. Vol. XIII No. 4 (1953). Grangenolven Parish: "There are three raths on these lands, one in Grangenolvan Upper, nearly destroyed, two in Grangenolvan Lower, one of is nearly destroyed. The most remarkable of these was the one in the south extremity of Grangenolvan Lower (Rathnoyle called Ranoyle).

were spelt. These documents also contain some descriptions of archaeological features.

Other manuscript maps such as those of the Down Survey contributed to the study mainly in the area of placename research. Kildare unfortunately was not one of the counties which possess a composite map, in which the Down Survey was superimposed onto the first edition Ordnance Survey maps by the Irish Manuscripts Commission in 1966. Among the recently published maps utilized both the Soil Map and Soil Suitability Map for Kildare were used to develop conclusions on site location and soil preference.<sup>206</sup>

The location of Anglo-Norman earthworks in the county was thus researched through an examination of all available estate surveys and Ordnance Survey maps for the county. Mis-identification of a late sixteenth century map of Leix and Offaly as that of Kildare in the possession of the British Library led to short lived hopes of a cartographic goldmine.<sup>207</sup> However the continued policy of map acquisition by the National Library of

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<sup>206</sup> Conry, M.J., Hammond, R.F. & O'Shea, T., Soils of Co. Kildare (Dublin, 1970) map case.

<sup>207</sup> Gowen, M., "A bibliography of contemporary plans of late sixteenth and seventeenth century artillery fortifications in Ireland", Irish Sword, Vol. XIV, (1980-81), p.230-236. The error committed as "Co. of Kildare" is written in bold above the scale on the blank background beneath the map of Leix/Offaly, BL Augustus I, ii, 40.

Ireland will hopefully ensure that future research will benefit from access to a complete corpus of cartographic material.

In the location of sites identified by documentary evidence alone a number of helpful sources were incorporated to aid placename research. Close's index of the Townlands in County Kildare was invaluable in this regard, as it lists in alphabetical order each townland and provides the appropriate 6" sheet and plan.<sup>208</sup> This county list facilitated speed and ease of identification in comparison with the countrywide coverage provided by other Irish townland indexes.<sup>209</sup> Joyce's work on the origin of Irish place names was used as an important tool in the complicated process of attributing the documented place with a cartographic destination.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Close, C.F., List of Townlands in Co. Kildare, (Dublin, 1911).

<sup>209</sup> Goblet, Y.M., (ed.) A Topographical Index of the Parishes and Townlands of Ireland, (Dublin, 1932); General Alphabetical Index to the Townlands and Towns, Parishes and Baronies of Ireland, (Baltimore, Maryland, 1984).

<sup>210</sup> Joyce, P.W., The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places, 2 Vols., (Dublin, 1891).

#### 4. PHOTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

The study of aerial photographs and their interpretation adds yet another discipline to the widened avenue of investigation of the archaeologist/historian. Aerial photography gives an added dimension to the location of sites, the confirmation of known sites and the discovery of previously unrecorded examples. The aerial photograph has an overall advantage as it presents a view of a selected part of the landscape in its proper perspective. As a complement to the available cartographic sources, they also depict all that is visibly present on the landscape. Map evidence, as noted, leaves some features unaccounted for.

The types of photographic survey come under the headings of vertical and oblique photographs. Between 1973 and 1979 the Geological Survey of Ireland organised the first complete aerial photographic survey of the Republic of Ireland.<sup>211</sup> The vertical photographs, taken at a height of 15,000 ft., were commissioned by the Geological Survey primarily for photo-geological interpretation but have a wide range of uses. With the scale of 1:30,000, which is c.2 inches to 1 mile, "what you can see depends very much on the objects size, how sharply the object is defined

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<sup>211</sup> Prior to this the Irish Air Corps had conducted a periodic vertical coverage from 1934 onwards. Raftery, J., "Air photography and archaeology" J.R.S.A.I., Vol., LXXXIV, (1944), p.119-23.

and to a certain extent, on your ability to know what you are looking for".<sup>212</sup> Through the use of overlapping photographs and with the help of a stereoscope, the relief features are greatly exaggerated to give a three-dimensional view of the landscape. Although distorted, the heights remain relatively correct. The photographs are indexed on seventeen map sheets, one sheet for each on-shore zone of the National Grid. On all the index sheets the outline to every second photo-frame is shown against the background of the relevant Ordnance Survey 1/2 inch map. The index system is uncomplicated and subjects are easily located once equipped with the relevant national grid reference.

Familiarity with the ground location was found to be a great asset during the use of these photographs. The photographs were of primary use to the present study in the location of new features at known archaeological sites. As a relatively inexperienced interpreter without initial access to a stereoscopic viewer of the calibre of the Wild Apt 1 Photo-Interpretation system progress was slow and positive results minimal. The above mentioned equipment, currently used for site identification purposes by the Sites and Monuments Records section of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, facilitates a magnification of up to fourteen times that of the

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<sup>212</sup> The Geological Survey of Ireland (1983) Information Circular 81/1 Aerial Photography p.5.

original photographic image, and a built-in camera allows a record of this magnified image.

Use of these photographs to identify new sites, almost exclusively the discovery of rectilinear earthworks, was carried out in conjunction with field survey to determine the accuracy of the process. Soil marks were usually indiscernible due to the time lapse and crop-marks were difficult to assess at ground level. Mindful to avoid the pitfalls of modified field fences and drainage systems, the sites located were then visited in a fieldwork survey to assess the site in an attempt to appraise the plausibility of location in each particular case. The majority of sites visited through use of the G.S.I. photographs proved difficult to identify on the ground. The transient surface features, whether augmented by a coefficient such as low rates of soil moisture deficiency, are best dealt with by complimentary techniques such as a soil resistivity or phosphate survey. Archaeological investigation of a number of these sites is obviously the ultimate solution.

In addition to the vertical coverage there are several thousand low level oblique photographs taken by St. Joseph on behalf of the Cambridge Committee of Aerial Photography. Oblique aerial photographs reveal much more of the complexities of the morphology of sites. Taken at low altitude they are of value in the illustration of a



site in relation to its surroundings. Low relief sites which are difficult to see can be accentuated by the low angle of sun, drifting snow and differential frost/snow melt.<sup>213</sup> They are easier to interpret in comparison with the vertical shots because the height and scale of the foreground object is apparent. The St. Joseph obliques for Co. Kildare are mostly of well known sites. However, on some of these sites, earthworks or cropmarks may be discerned from the aerial photographs. A fine example of a moated site at Gortenvacan in south Kildare was identified by St. Joseph in 1969.<sup>214</sup> Field inspection in 1987 recorded a large rectangular moated site, the wide fosse on the western side in accordance with that indicated from the aerial photograph.

The nature of the oblique photographs enhance initial site interpretation. Oblique photographs however give a distorted perspective, a prime example illustrated by the two separate photographs taken at different angles in different years by St. Joseph at Clogorow.<sup>215</sup> The now destroyed moated site which was roughly square in plan, is depicted as square in one photograph while when viewed from a different angle it appears as rectilinear in plan.

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<sup>213</sup> Hartwell, B., "Aerial photography in archaeological survey". Paper read at I.A.P.A. Workshop on field methodology in archaeological survey, T.C.D. 1986.

<sup>214</sup> St. Joseph AYL 48: 1969.

<sup>215</sup> St. Joseph BDH 67: 1970, depicts a square moated site whilst St. Joseph BGH 57: 1971, depicts a rectangular moated site.

A low level oblique photograph of earthworks at Osberstown townland was discovered on field inspection to be a series of rectilinear depressions rather than that of raised platforms as originally interpreted.<sup>216</sup>

Comparable to the G.S.I. photographs, oblique photographs add new features to known sites, such as the house platform shown at the moated site in Parsonstown.<sup>217</sup> Use of the vertical photographs for the same area located a number of randomly scattered small square enclosures to the north of the moated site.<sup>218</sup> However it appears that these are the remains of a nineteenth century abandonment of a farmhouse and related outbuildings.

Thus it is important to remember that all detected features are not necessarily of an archaeological nature or of medieval date for that matter. In the interpretation of most of the small earthwork sites located by use of the G.S.I. photographs other types of remote sensing would have to be employed to countenance a positive identification. Aerial photography is an important tool, nevertheless it should be used in conjunction with the other available sources.

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<sup>216</sup> St. Joseph BDU 31: 1970. Osberstown Td., Sh.19, 16.875221.

<sup>217</sup> St. Joseph AVT 86

<sup>218</sup> G.S.I. N 476-7

# 1. INTRODUCTION: ANGLO-NORMAN EARTHWORKS

## A. Motte-and-Bailey Castles

Originally defined a motte-and-bailey castle as "a flat topped earthed mound which originally carried a wooden tower, surrounded by a ditch on which is an

### CHAPTER 3

eccentric space, the bailey, enclosed by a bank and a ditch." The relationship between these forms will be examined.

## ANGLO-NORMAN EARTHWORKS

### 1. Introduction: Anglo-Norman Earthworks

- A. Motte-and-Bailey Castles
- B. Ringwork Castles
- C. Moated Sites
- D. Other Earthwork Types

### 2. Anglo-Norman Earthworks: European Context

- A. Motte-and-Bailey Castles
- B. Ringwork Castles
- C. Moated Sites

### 3. Anglo-Norman Earthworks: Irish Context

- A. Motte-and-Bailey Castles
- B. Ringwork Castles
- C. Moated Sites

## 1. INTRODUCTION: ANGLO-NORMAN EARTHWORKS

### A. Motte-and-Bailey Castles

O'Riordain defined a motte-and-bailey castle as "a flat topped earthen mound which originally carried a wooden tower, surrounded by a fosse, attached to which is an eccentric space, the bailey, enclosed by a bank and a fosse".<sup>219</sup> The motte could also exist without the bailey. The relationship between these forms will be examined later in an attempt at some conclusions in respect of their function within the field area. It is the contention of the present author that the motte-and-bailey castle was introduced to Ireland with the Anglo-Norman invasion in 1169-70.

The origins and development of the motte-and-bailey castle in medieval Europe are as yet unclear. The Norman introduction of the fully developed earthwork castle into England is still a disputed fact, with the hypothesis put forward by Davidson that the origin of the motte is to be sought in the peculiar circumstances of the Norman conquest of England.<sup>220</sup> It is argued that the conquest and the ensuing rapid castle building programme brought to fruition the archetypal motte-and-bailey.

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<sup>219</sup> O'Riordain, S.P., (1942) op.cit., p.18.

<sup>220</sup> Davison, B.K., "Early earthwork castles: a new model", Chateau Gaillard, III, (1969), p.46.

Excavations have shown that castle earthworks, and motte-and-bailey castles in particular, were frequently composite structures whose final form might be achieved only as a culmination of a long process of alteration and addition. It has been suggested that mottes may have originated as timber towers set up within ringwork enclosures which had their lower portions protected by covering them with banked-up turf or earth, and that the motte castle was the natural development of this.<sup>221</sup> However, at some stage between the emergence of low dwelling mounds in tenth century lowland Central Europe and the classic motte-and-bailey of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries the tactical advantage of the high mound was appreciated and utilised for military purposes.

The Anglo-Normans used the motte to assert their dominance. Like a "clenched fist" stamped on the landscape, these castles were the instruments through which they dominated the lands they acquired through military power. They served as administrative centres and foci for settlement. The mottes were erected early in considerable numbers at strategic points in and around the conquered area. They were surmounted with bretesches, towers of wood, which were at times pre-fabricated to enable speedy construction. Henry II brought several breteschs to Ireland in 1171, with materials to make

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<sup>221</sup> Wood, E.S., Collins Field Guide to Archaeology in Britain, (London, 1979), p.171.

more.<sup>222</sup> Although towers [turris] are mentioned in the Irish Pipe Roll of 1211-12, the motte castles of Lismahon, Co.Down and Lurgankeel, Co.Cavan, are the only excavated summits to exhibit such features.<sup>223</sup>

The Bayeux Tapestry depicts that at Dol, Rennes and Dinan all the fortresses were situated upon a substantial natural or artificial motte and access was by means of a wooden bridge or ladder thrown across the surrounding fosse. In Ireland no bridge structures have to date been excavated though new bridges are recorded for Antrim, Dundonald, Dromore and Moycove in 1211-12.<sup>224</sup>

The great advantage of the motte castle as a campaign stronghold was that it could be built quickly, from raw materials which were readily available, and the palisaded circular summit could be defended by a small number of men against a larger attacking force. The motte was

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<sup>222</sup> C.D.I., Vol.1, No.3 , No.34.

No.3...."for work done on two wooden towers [castella lignea], to be sent to Ireland.."

No.34..."for 1,000 shovels sent into Ireland...60,000 nails.....iron for 2,000 spades.."

<sup>223</sup> Waterman,D.M., "Excavations at Lismahon, Co.Down", Med. Arch., 3 (1959), p.139-76.

O'h-Eochaidhe,M., "Lurgankeel Mote-and-Bailey", Oibre 2 (1965), p.22.

<sup>224</sup> Davies,O. & Quinn,D.B., (ed) "The Irish Pipe Roll of 14 John, 1211-12", U.J.A., Vol.4 supplement (1941). p.55, "...for the repair of a bridge and a paling at Antrim."; p.57, "...for a new bridge and a new hall and 4 bretesches and other buildings at Dromore...for a new bridge at Moycove and for the repair of the paling and for a new palisade.."

largely composed of the spoil from the surrounding ditch, however construction often involved the conversion of a pre-existing earthwork or the scarping of a natural feature. The size and shape of the motte-and-bailey itself was largely dictated by the needs of the garrison and the nature of the available site. The examples of the square mottes of Aghaboe, Co.Laois, and that of Cabal Tump in Herefordshire, merely reflect a local alternative to the more standardised form.<sup>225</sup>

Construction methods show a degree of variance in applied technique. Those built in Ireland under the direction of Hugh de Lacy probably adhere to the same building programme, however in the first generation of earth and timber castles, with the overriding necessity for speedy fortification, digging-in and working with a coerced unskilled labour force, traditional methods of construction may not always have been followed.

Topography frequently dictated the defensive form of these earthen castles. Nonetheless, building styles also reflect functional and economic factors. The motte castle was also a symbol of the owner's individual power and social standing, personal aggrandizement was a factor which no doubt influenced the shape and size of the

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<sup>225</sup> Cunningham, G., The Anglo-Norman advance into the south-west midlands of Ireland, 1185-1221, (Roscrea, 1987), p.160-1. King, D.J.C., The Castle in England and Wales, (London, 1988), p.43.

motte. In Ireland large motte-and-bailey castles can clearly be linked to the principal land grants and seignorial manors.<sup>226</sup>

The bailey was largely the residential area of the castle, whereas the motte top offered a place of last resort in times of attack. However some motte summits were capable of supporting numerous buildings as exemplified by the description of the motte of Ardres in France during the twelfth century.<sup>227</sup> The advent of the stone castle diminished the strategic importance of its earth and timber precursor. However the cost of building in stone negated the immediate obsolescence of the motte-and-bailey, and in parts of Europe, such as Denmark and Wales, motte construction was to continue well into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Graham, B.J., "The mottes of the Norman liberty of Meath", in Murtagh, H., (ed) Irish Midland Studies, (Athlone, 1980), p.39-56.

<sup>227</sup> The detailed description by Lambert of Ardres of the living quarters in the two three-storied structures at Ardres in 1117 are discussed by Brown, R.A., English Medieval Castles, (London, 1954), p.31-34; and Bur, M., "The social influence of the motte-and-bailey castle", Scientific American, May, (1983), p.115.

<sup>228</sup> Leibgott, N.K., "An outline of Danish castle studies", Chateau Gaillard, II, (1983), p.193-206. King, D.J.C., (1988), op.cit.



## B. Ringwork Castles

The Anglo-Norman ringwork castle was "a class of embanked works generally fairly strong, but of decidedly small area, especially in relation to the disproportionately powerful bank", and was an essentially military earthwork.<sup>229</sup> It was not as visually impressive as a large motte-and-bailey castle, a factor which may account for its exclusion from the Bayeux Tapestry. Nonetheless, its use as an initial Norman military stronghold in the conquest of England reflects its early origins.

The first recorded Anglo-Norman earthwork castle built on Irish soil was of the ringwork type.<sup>230</sup> Excavated mottes have revealed by their method of construction the repeated procedure of first building a ringwork and then infilling the enclosed area until the desired height was reached. In the numerous instances where a ringwork was utilized as the first stage of motte construction, the ringbank afforded the dual elements of initial protection to the builders, while at the same time forming a retaining wall for the build up of spoil.

The ringwork was simply a small area enclosed by a bank and a ditch. It was the size of the ditch and bank which

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<sup>229</sup> King, D.J.C. & Alcock, L., "Ringworks of England and Wales", Chateau Gaillard III (1969), p.93.

<sup>230</sup> Ferrycarrig, Co.Wexford.

contributed to its military nature. Relatively easy to construct, the spoil from the ditch was upcast to form the bank, the main elements of defence were the interior enclosing palisade and the strong gate tower. This is well illustrated in the conjectural reconstruction of the ringwork at Penmaen, Glamorganshire, Wales.<sup>231</sup> Despite the research of Twohig and later by Barry Irish ringwork castles remain an under-researched dimension of Anglo-Norman earthwork studies.<sup>232</sup> It is only through documentary evidence, extensive fieldwork using comparative morphology, and further excavation, that ringworks may be distinguished from the 30,000 or more Irish ringforts.<sup>233</sup>

#### C. Moated Sites

In the notes which accompanied his "Distribution map of mottes in Ireland" Orpen spoke of rectangular earthworks, sometimes raised, surrounded by ditches and ramparts, rectangular in plan.<sup>234</sup> The moated sites of which he spoke, were the defended farmsteads of the Anglo-Norman

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<sup>231</sup> Sorrell, M., (ed) Reconstructing The Past, (London, 1981), p.113.

<sup>232</sup> Twohig, D.C., "Norman Ringwork Castles", G.S.I.H.S. Bull., 5, (1978), p.7-9. Barry, T.B., (1983), *op.cit.*, p.295-314.

<sup>233</sup> O'Riordain, S.P., (1942), *op. cit.*, p.1.

<sup>234</sup> Normans, Vol.II p.343.

agricultural community in Ireland, which roughly date to the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Moated sites are the occupation sites of Anglo-Norman secondary settlement in both Britain and Ireland.<sup>235</sup> They are usually a feature of lowland fertile areas and show a marked preference for areas of heavy clay soils. "A moated site can best be described as an area of land usually occupied by a dwelling house or associated structures, bounded or partly surrounded by a ditch, which in antiquity was usually though not invariably filled with water. The central area is generally sub-rectangular in shape and may or may not be raised above the level of the surrounding land."<sup>236</sup>

The moat, earthen bank and wooden palisade served purely defensive purposes. The presence of larger moats around some manor houses may reflect a degree of owner ostentation as opposed to defensive necessity. There is

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<sup>235</sup> Although period 1 of Husterknupp in the tenth century could by definition be described as a moated site Alcock termed this as a "crannog-like substructure" rather than a precursor of later moated site development.. Alcock, L. "Der Husterknupp", Med. Arch., Vol. III, (1959), p.332-4. "In period I, a sub-rectangular area measuring some 40 by 40 m., within a bend in the river Erft was cut off by a wet ditch and further defended by a palisade. The interior was raised about 75cm."

<sup>236</sup> Barry, T.B., "The medieval moated sites of County Wexford", Jn. Old Wexford Soc., 6 (1976-77), p.5. This definition is modelled on that of Le Patourel, H.E.J., The Moated Sites of Yorkshire, Soc. Med. Arch. Monograph 5 (1973), p.1; "One or more islands surrounded by ditches which in antiquity were generally, though not invariably, filled with water".

at present no documentary or excavation evidence to suggest that moated sites possessed military capabilities.

The majority were habitation sites, varying in size from under 500 sq.m. to over 4,000 sq.m.<sup>237</sup> In England excavation of the interior platform usually reveals the manor house or hall. Their presence in areas of forest, with reference to Domesday, suggests that many may have acted as hunting lodges. The English sources reveal also that moats were dug for chapels, lodges, an icehouse, a windmill, even a haystack, orchard and garden.<sup>238</sup> Size was dependant on the particular capacity and needs of the owner or inhabitant and should not be used as an indicator of function. All small moated sites were not mere cattle pens. The Kildare field evidence concurs with these findings, likewise supported by the documentary record of the construction of a moated orchard at Turvy, Co.Dublin.<sup>239</sup> Whatever the moats' ancillary uses, it was basically a provider of security to those on the platform. The predominant function of the moated sites in Co.Kildare was that of defended farmsteads.

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<sup>237</sup> Barry, T.B., "The Moated sites of County Waterford", Decies, 10 (1979), p.33.

<sup>238</sup> Wilson, D., Moated Sites, (London, 1985), p.44.

<sup>239</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.II, No.380, p.272; "The manor of Torvy....for which they shall ditch (fossabunt) the said orchard and clear it and make a palisaded fence (frethenam) at there own costs and charges".

#### D. Other Earthwork Types

A number of Anglo-Norman earthwork types are not discussed in the text of this thesis. The late medieval linear earthwork of the Pale boundary, which runs through north eastern Kildare, falls outside the chronological scope of the text and was thus excluded. There was no further evidence within the field area of linear earthworks similar to the "flimsy fortification of branches and sods" constructed by Raymond le Gros and his retinue at Dundunolf in 1170.<sup>240</sup> Of less permanent earthworks, such as those utilised in military campaigns, the documentary evidence was insufficient to pinpoint exact locations and there was no archaeological record of temporary military encampments within the county.<sup>241</sup> The earthworks associated with deserted medieval villages and possible unenclosed cluster settlements are discussed only when of relevance to the main focus of the thesis.

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<sup>240</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.57. Orpen, G.H., "Site of Raymond's Fort, Dundunolf (Baginbun), A.D. 1170", J.R.S.A.I., 27 (1898), P.155-60. This promontory fort at Baginbun Head, Co.Wexford, which was probably refortified, is defended by a large fosse circa 12m wide and c.213m in length with both an internal and external bank.

<sup>241</sup> There is some evidence for the Irish practice of the obstruction of armies on the move by blockading and cutting up the ground in those passes. Song, l.1014-1017;

"A trench he then bade them to throw up  
High and wide: steep and deep  
And then at the back to strengthen it with stakes  
And in front with hurdles".

Large town defences, which necessitated the construction of massive earthen entrenchments encircling or protecting vulnerable sections of the towns perimeter are likewise excluded from discussion. In 1458 statutory licence enabled the inhabitants of towns and villages to "bar, trench, and enclose" their towns without fear of economic injury.<sup>242</sup> Kildare towns such as Castledermot and Athy made use of such fortifications; "The building within 7 years...a strong and defensible wall about the town of Athy, which shall be the same compass as the trench with gates suitable thereto, which wall will be a good work for the civilization and strengthening of these parts".<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> "Provided that there be...a sufficient road left...through or near the said towns...so that neither the people be interrupted in their passage and carriage from market to market, nor that the roads be made longer or further around beyond forty perches", Statutes of Ireland, Henry VI, (ed) Berry, H.F., (Dublin, 1910), p. 501-503.

<sup>243</sup> Calendar of Patent Rolls, (London, 1891-), 19 James I, p. 519-20.

## 2. ANGLO-NORMAN EARTHWORKS: EUROPEAN CONTEXT

### A. Motte-and-Bailey Castles

Research has shown that the earthen motte was central in the defensive make up of some of the early tenth century French castles. A study of the castles of Fulk Nerra, Count of Anjou (987-1040), based upon both the documentary and archaeological evidence, found the "motte" as one of their characteristics.<sup>244</sup> Jones' research notes how many of the earliest Breton defences were associated with inaccessible marshy areas and river valleys.<sup>245</sup> The tendency of raising dwelling mounds is a recognised feature of some riverine sites in the Rhineland.<sup>246</sup>

The results of excavations in England have shown that it is dangerous to assume without direct evidence that the motte-and-bailey castle necessarily date from the earliest recorded military occupation of the site. At Aldingham in Lancashire excavation revealed three phases

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<sup>244</sup> Deyres, M., "Les cheateaux de Foulque Nerra", Bulletin Monumental, Tome 132 - I, (1974), 7-28.

<sup>245</sup> Jones, M., "The defence of medieval Brittany: a survey of the establishment of fortified towns, castles and fortresses from the Gallo-Roman period to the end of the Middle Ages", Arch. Jn. 138 (1981), p.158.

<sup>246</sup> Herrnbrodt, A., "Stand der Fruhmittelalterlichen Mottenforschung in Rheinland", Chateau Gaillard, I, (1964), p.77-101. Alcock, L., (1959) op. cit., p.322-4.

of site development.<sup>247</sup> The initial phase involved the construction of a ringwork, the ringwork was then infilled to form a low mound and finally the motte was erected on the site partially revetted in timber. However, these three phases were spread over a considerable period of time and did not represent constructional design but a preference for the motte rather than the ringwork. At Castle Neroche the motte was the final addition to the Norman ringwork which was built within the re-utilised pre-existing defences of an Iron-Age earthwork, the earlier enclosure functioned as a bailey.<sup>248</sup>

A similar addition of a motte to an earlier Norman ringwork castle is noted at Winchester and also the re-modelling of the post-conquest defences at Northampton.<sup>249</sup> As mentioned Norman re-use of pre-existing features was widespread. Mottes were often constructed over burial cairns as in the re-use of the sepulchral mound at Rathmore in Co.Kildare.<sup>250</sup> As a result of similar

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<sup>247</sup> Davison, B.K., "Aldingham", Current Arch., 12 (1969), p.23-4. Davison, B.K., "Aldingham", Med. Arch., 13 (1969), p.258.

<sup>248</sup> Davison, B.K., "Castle Neroche: an abandoned Norman fortress in south Somerset", Proc. Somerset Arch. & Nat. Hist. Soc., 116 (1972), p.16-58

<sup>249</sup> Biddle, M., "Excavations at Winchester, 1971: tenth and final report", Antiq. Jn., 55 (1975), p.104-9. "Northampton", Med. Arch., 8 (1964), p.257.

<sup>250</sup> Mayo, The Earl of, "Rathmore", J.K.A.S., Vol.2 (1897), p.112-4.



excavations knowledge regarding construction techniques has been greatly enhanced.

The depiction of the motte at Hastings on the Bayeux Tapestry as a horizontally stripped mound, which may have inferred inverted stratigraphy, was disproved by excavations there which found the motte to be totally constructed of hard packed sand, without any visible clay bonding or timber lacing, thus giving it a very unstable nature. However, such a construction of horizontal lines was uncovered at the Baile Hill motte, with the construction of the motte at Hen Domen being broadly similar.<sup>251</sup>

Excavations at Abinger in Surrey in 1949 by Hope-Taylor revealed clear traces of a timber tower on top of the motte, dated to the mid-twelfth century, contemporary with the palisade.<sup>252</sup> The conjectural reconstruction showed the summit area contained a tower raised on four posts. This logical use of the motte top gives more space to the confined fighting area. Evidence taken from the Bayeux Tapestry together with the Westminster Hall capitol, reaffirmed such usage. As previously mentioned Wood suggested that mottes may have originated from their

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<sup>251</sup> Addyman, P., "Baile Hill, York", Current Arch., 12 (1969), p.25-6. Barker, P.A. & Higham, H., Hen Domen, Montgomery. A Timber Castle on the English-Welsh Border I. Royal Arch. Inst. Monograph. (1982).

<sup>252</sup> Hope-Taylor, B., "The excavation of a motte at Abinger, Surrey", Arch. Jn., 107 (1950), p.15-43.

protection of primary timber towers by banking up earth around their bases. At South Mimms in Herefordshire the timber tower began at ground level (motte dated c.1140).<sup>253</sup> Zippelius in his notes on the wooden buildings at Husterknupp argues that stilts which Hope-Taylor excavated at Abinger were really part of the construction of stave built walls. He supports this argument by use of the example of the motte at Haverburg which boasts not a stilted tower but in fact the corner posts for stave walls.<sup>254</sup>

Figures given in 1976 for the construction of castles in England between 1066 and c.1215 AD estimated that 741 castles were equipped with mottes as compared to 205 ringworks.<sup>255</sup> King's application of a remodelled version of Muller-Wille classification table of mottes according to height grouped the English and Welsh mottes into three different groups, Class I (10m and over), Class II (5m - 10m) and Class III (below 5m).<sup>256</sup> It was found that 7% of the mottes belonged to Class I but none of these were to be found in Wales, the marcher circumstances of which are most frequently compared to those of Ireland. Most of

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<sup>253</sup> Davison, B.K., "The origins of the castle", Current Arch., 5 (1967), p.130.

<sup>254</sup> Alcock, L., (1959), op.cit., p.332-4.

<sup>255</sup> Brown, R.A., English Castles, (London, 1976), p.54.

<sup>256</sup> King, D.J.C., "The field archaeology of mottes in England and Wales", Chateau Gaillard, V (1972), p.102.

this grouping were attributed to the earlier years of the invasion. The final construction dates for English mottes was put at c.1154, while in Wales there is some evidence for later construction, possibly until 1242. Stiesdal's research in Denmark found that none of his mottes belonged to Class I.<sup>257</sup> Construction dates are also much later for Denmark, which begin with a group of royal foundations in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, to which were added a number of rather smaller examples built by the nobles in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

As mentioned previously the earliest dates for motte construction belong to the riverine sites of the Rhineland and to the Low Countries. These were in actual fact raised habitation sites. The motte at Gravensteen in Ghent, Belgium was yet another example of a mound built up in stages from a flat settlement. Square mottes, such as that at Cabal Tump, Herefordshire, England, are seen as regional variations but in Denmark the sophisticated square mottes are given a later date.<sup>258</sup> Renn suggested that the most apparent concentrations of motte castles on distribution maps are chains of intervisible sites, over a mile apart, which line the passes through the hills.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Stiesdal, H., "Die Motten in Danemark: eine kurze Ubersicht", Chateau Gaillard, II, (1967), p.94-99.

<sup>258</sup> King, D.J.C., (1972), op.cit., p.105.

<sup>259</sup> Renn, D.F., "Mottes: a classification", Antiquity, XXXIII (1959), p.109.

Bur's recognition of the social significance of the motte-and-bailey castle notes how at first French mottes had sought isolation, sites chosen with defensive locations in mind with disregard to local population centres the motte settlement soon attracted other settlers. Churches and market places developed around them and towns started to grow. However "villages without central chateaux remained more numerous than villages with them".<sup>260</sup> With the Norman conquest of 1066, the motte was superimposed on many Saxon towns. Recorded in Domesday are many examples of houses being thrown down to make way for the construction of a castle in the immediate post-conquest period. The towns of Exeter, Lincoln, Canterbury, Shrewsbury and Cambridge were all subjected to such treatment.<sup>261</sup>

Accommodation on the motte summit varied as indicated by the contemporary description by Lambert of Ardres of the "great and lofty house" which Arnold, lord of Ardres, built in his castle there about the year 1117.<sup>262</sup> Also in

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<sup>260</sup> Bur, M., (1983), op.cit., p.115.

<sup>261</sup> Platt, C., Medieval England: A social history and archaeology from the Conquest to 1600 AD, (London, 1978), p.5.

<sup>262</sup> Bur, M., (1983), op. cit., p.115; "At Ardres the seigneur, his family, their table attendants and other servants all lived in the dwelling tower. Their cooks lived in the adjacent building and perhaps so did the chaplain and the guards of the watch". The rest, knights of the garrison, the administrators of the seigneurial domain, blacksmiths, stable boys etc., occupied buildings within the adjacent palisaded bailey, which housed stables, barns, ovens, and workshops.

France Sanquer noted the different class structure in the motte-and-bailey settlement by a consideration of the related archaeological finds and their location.<sup>263</sup> Finds associated with the motte top included arms, spurs, money, horses bits and even gaming pieces and dice, which indicated an aristocratic lifestyle, whilst in the bailey pottery, hearths, mill stones and animal bones inform one of the activities of the servants around their lords. In some cases stone towers replaced their wooden predecessors on the motte summit, however caution should be stressed as in the example of Lyford in Devon, where a late thirteenth century motte castle was thrown up around a tower.<sup>264</sup> This may have given an added social significance to the tower, as protection from undermining seems an unlikely explanation in these particular circumstances.

#### B. Ringwork Castles

The research work conducted by Alcock and King resulted in a re-modelled definition to enable recognition of ringworks alone. The exclusion of all earthworks which did not appear to have been intended for serious defence,

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<sup>263</sup> Sanquer, R., "Les mottes feodales du Finistere", Bull. Soc. Arch. Finistere, 105, (1977), p.99-126.

<sup>264</sup> Saunders, A.D., "Lyford Castle, Devon", Med. Arch., XXIV, (1980), p.123-187.

i.e. an enclosure whose bank is less than 2m. above the level outside the defences, still netted a wide range of annular banked enclosures. Their admission that some of the earthworks which they classed as ringworks may in fact be Celtic homesteads casts some doubt on their eventual estimated figures.<sup>265</sup> However, the overall model is fairly convincing and substantiated by the results of just over 12% of their original 198 sites which have been excavated by 1969.<sup>266</sup> Problems of site identification within the set confines of established fieldwork and research are highlighted by the following contrasting statements. Wainwright remarked, during a preliminary report on Walesland Rath in Pembrokeshire, on the problem of attempting to distinguish Welsh raths from medieval ringworks,<sup>267</sup> whereas the Co.Down Survey warned, "It should be emphasised that there are in Britain and Europe many earthworks which if found in Ireland would be classed unhesitatingly as raths".<sup>268</sup> These inherent problems remain.

Apart from its absence from the Bayeux Tapestry, the Norman ringwork castle is now a recognised part of early

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<sup>265</sup> King, D.J.C. & Alcock, L., (1969), op.cit., p.97, n.8.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid., p.90.

<sup>267</sup> Wainwright, G., "Walesland Rath: a preliminary report", Current Arch., 2, (1967), p.34.

<sup>268</sup> Jope, E.M., An Archaeological Survey of County Down, (Belfast, 1966), p.113 n.78.

Norman fortification. Davison has noted that some of the earliest castles in Britain, Pevensey, Exeter and the Tower of London were sub-rectilinear ringworks set into one corner of earlier Roman defences.<sup>269</sup> Many ringworks are to be found near the early centres of the conquest. Aldingham in Lancashire and Burton-in-Lonsdale in Yorkshire, are both examples of the conversion of ringworks into castles.<sup>270</sup> Where ringworks and mottes exist in close proximity the ringwork usually pre-dates the motte. The evidence supplied by the collated distribution maps of King and Alcock however did not solve the problem of location or choice. "We are left with little more than the accident of personal preference to account for any choice of ringwork against motte, or vice versa".<sup>271</sup> English examples, however, appeared in localized groups. Of the 198 ringworks in England and Wales at least 62% stand close to a church, and a further 31 in or immediately alongside a village or town. Less than 20 were located in really remote sites. Altogether King and Alcock noted that for every 3.7 mottes in England there was one ringwork. In Glamorganshire and Pembrokeshire in Wales however the ratio was as high as 1:1.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> Davison, B.K., "Three eleventh-century earthworks in England: their excavation and implications", Chateau Gaillard, II (1967), p.40-2.

<sup>270</sup> Platt, C., (1978), op. cit., p.10.

<sup>271</sup> King, D.J.C. & Alcock, L., (1969), op.cit., p.106.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid., p.104.

Some of the ringworks have outer enclosures or baileys. Those which contain an area of 60 sq.m. and upwards may be considered as baileys without a motte. Davison pointed out using the results of Kent's excavation at South Mimms that the motte was designed purely to bolster or prop the great timber tower.<sup>273</sup> Nonetheless ringworks should not be viewed purely as enclosed towers with or without adjacent baileys. Alcock's excavations at Penmaen, which was situated on a naturally defended ridge, revealed the post holes of a timber tower which straddled the entrance. Sorell's artistic reconstruction depicted the gate tower as the single most important feature of the ringwork.<sup>274</sup> At Sulgrave the pre-conquest defences and buildings were remodelled to enable entry to the ringwork through a gatehouse set in the ramparts, the gatehouse in this instance was a composite structure of a wooden tower set on a pre-existing stone base.<sup>275</sup>

The true function of ringwork castles has yet to be resolved. The research conducted by King and Alcock led them to interpret ringworks as campaign or siege castles, however this is somewhat contradicted by the fact that ringworks are rare in regions held by native rulers in

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<sup>273</sup> Davison, B.K., (1967a), op.cit., p.130.

<sup>274</sup> Alcock, L., "Castle Tower, Penmaen: An Anglo-Norman ringwork in Glamorgan", Antiq. Jn., 46 (1966), p.178-210.

<sup>275</sup> Davison, B.K., "Excavations at Sulgrave, Northamptonshire, 1960-76", Arch. Jn., 134, (1977), p.105-114.



Wales, but conversely are a more common feature of the Scottish border, where stability is cited as a factor for their presence. Their application as an Anglo-Norman castle will have to be reviewed in comparison with their use in Ireland, or re-use in basic function.

### C. Moated Sites

In Britain the number of moated sites has been estimated to be around 5,500.<sup>276</sup> The majority date from the mid-twelfth century to about 1500 AD, with a considerable peak evidenced in the thirteenth century.<sup>277</sup> Most sites so far excavated in England have proved to be farmsteads, although some of the larger examples served such specialized functions as monastic granges or hunting lodges. Roberts' analysis of the colonization of the Forest of Arden, Warwickshire, before 1350, revealed that most moated sites were secondary settlements related to the use of marginal land.<sup>278</sup> High numbers of moated sites occurred in places that were assarted, that is colonized from a woodland state, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The moated site in England diffused from

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<sup>276</sup> Wilson, D., (1985), op.cit., p.8.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., p.8-9.

<sup>278</sup> Roberts, B.K., "Moats and mottes", Med. Arch., 8, (1964), p.218-222.

Normandy, the settlement type originated in the Low Countries, and the Rhineland site at Husterknupp may perhaps provide a ninth century example.<sup>279</sup> Of the 130 or so moated sites in Wales, six are circular.<sup>280</sup> The limited excavation evidence suggests that these round moats were among the earliest to have been constructed.

Examination of the constructional history of the two moated sites at Wexham Court (Berkshire) and Eaton Bray (Bedfordshire), revealed that both were examples of circular moats re-cut to form rectangular moated sites.<sup>281</sup> This points either to a re-use of pre-existing sites or modification of an earlier model. This change to the rectangular format may have been influenced by the rectilinear ground plan of the contemporary stone castles. The lack of a military nature has been viewed as a reflection of the stability of the period in England. Moated sites are occasionally referred to as the lower aristocracies' answer to the castles of the upper classes. The majority of the moated sites so far excavated in England have indicated use as homesteads and farmsteads. English documentary and resultant archaeological evidence has revealed that some moated sites possessed diverse functions. Some of the larger

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<sup>279</sup> Emery, F.V., "Moated settlements in England", Geography, 47, (1962), p.384.

<sup>280</sup> Wilson, D., (1985), op.cit., p.9.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid., p.12.

examples served as monastic granges, others as hunting lodges. Other moated buildings in the medieval period include hospitals, chapels and windmills.

Research of double moated sites in England has indicated that the subsidiary enclosure usually lacked sufficient evidence for buildings but suggests that they were constructed to enclose gardens or to keep stock within a safe perimeter and away from the living quarters in the main enclosure.<sup>282</sup> Rathz has noted that additional outbuildings may have been located outside the moat.<sup>283</sup> However the concentration of attention on the internal platform during most excavations leaves this very much open to question. In England some of the ancillary enclosures associated with larger moated sites were discovered to be fish ponds. English documentary evidence reveals that fish were often stocked in the moat (together with the household rubbish!).<sup>284</sup>

"Moated sites occupy the borderline between a defensive and a defensible structure".<sup>285</sup> It diffused from the

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<sup>282</sup> Le Patourel, H.E.J., (1973), op.cit.

<sup>283</sup> Rahtz, P., Excavations at King John's Hunting Lodge, Writtle, Essex, 1955-57, Soc. Med. Arch. Monograph 3 (1969).

<sup>284</sup> Wilson, D., (1985), op.cit., p.21.

<sup>285</sup> Le Patourel, H.E.J. & Roberts, B.K., "The significance of moated sites", in Aberg, F.A., Medieval Moated Sites, C.B.A. Research Report 17, (London, 1978), p.47.

aristocratic to the lower classes. In England construction expanded most rapidly in the thirteenth century, a period of seigniorial prosperity which was based securely on the profits of demesne farming. The moated site succeeded as the lower aristocracies' answer to the castle and there are a number of documented examples of some licences obtained to fortify them by means of crenellation.

In England moated sites are located both in former woodland areas and village settlements. Socially such sites range from small farmsteads of sub-tenants to the manor houses of the great lords.<sup>286</sup> The peripheral nature was thus not solely the case, despite the utilisation of marginal land as evidenced by their location in former areas of woodland, as recorded in Domesday. In Warwickshire, in the majority of cases examined in detail, moated sites form the capital messuages of manors, or of freehold estates of sufficient size and complexity to be called sub-manors.<sup>287</sup> There is similar evidence within Co.Kildare to suggest that certain moated sites may have housed the elite of the Anglo-Norman farming community.<sup>288</sup> The functional aspect of these sites thus has to account for a wide span of social ownership.

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<sup>286</sup> Roberts, B.K., (1964), op.cit., p.219.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid. p.212.

<sup>288</sup> See below, Chapter 5, p.257,259.

Prosperity and population pressure thus culminated in a form of medieval ruralization. The morphology of later moated sites display fewer defensive characteristics. The raised platform became less common place and most sites were only slightly raised.<sup>289</sup> The construction of the surrounding moat was relegated to local defence, mainly geared towards the protection of the inhabitants and their movable stock from the fear of marauders, wild animals and fire. The moat also facilitated the drainage of the platform. However although thirteenth and fourteenth century Europe experienced a period of extreme climatic variation moat building cannot be attributed to this alone. Excavation results reveal that some moats were lined with clay to prevent seepage, as at Weoley Castle, Birmingham.<sup>290</sup> At Wharram Percy, North Yorkshire, the manor moat moved to another location as the village grew.<sup>291</sup> The appearance of two sites in the village may thus be due to similar shifts in the location of the chief messuage within the manor complex.

Moated sites are to be found in most parts of North Western Europe. The most heavily moated area being the

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<sup>289</sup> Wilson, D., (1985), op. cit., p14.

<sup>290</sup> Oswald, A., "Excavation of a thirteenth century building at Weoley Castle, Birmingham, 1960-61. (An interim report)", Med. Arch., 67, 1962-3, (1964), p.109-34.

<sup>291</sup> Beresford, M.W. & Hurst, J.G., "Wharram Percy: a case study in microtopography", in Sawyer, P.H., (ed) English Medieval Settlement, (London, 1976), p.52-85.

Low Countries, especially Flanders where no village has fewer than ten moated sites per square km.<sup>292</sup> They do not penetrate far into Denmark, only along its border with Germany where they are mostly of late medieval date. In Poland moated sites belonged to the poorer knight and the lower aristocracy. These were mainly sited in villages in poor uncultivated land, low lying forests or river valleys. Several of these were rapidly constructed in times of disorder in the period between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, and comparisons may be drawn here with Ireland's similar circumstances at this time.

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<sup>292</sup> Le Patourel, J.E.H. & Roberts, B.K., (1978), *op.cit.*, p.52.

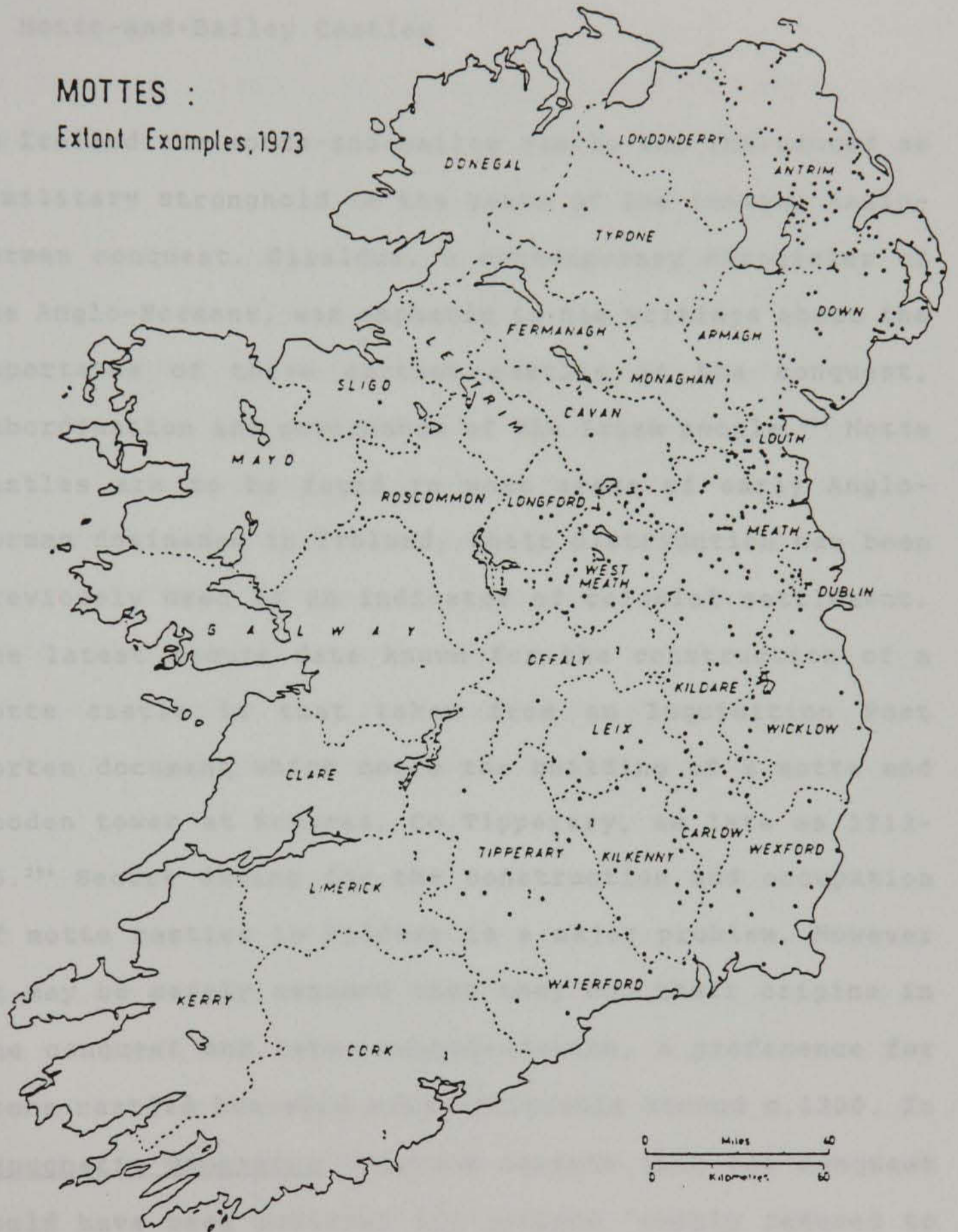


Figure 5. Motte castles in Ireland

### 3. ANGLO-NORMAN EARTHWORKS: IRISH CONTEXT

#### A. Motte-and-Bailey Castles

In Ireland the motte-and-bailey castle was introduced as a military stronghold in the years of the initial Anglo-Norman conquest. Giraldus, a contemporary chronicler of the Anglo-Normans, was emphatic in his writings about the importance of these earthen castles in the conquest, subordination and governance of the Irish people.<sup>293</sup> Motte castles are to be found in most areas of early Anglo-Norman dominance in Ireland, their distribution has been previously used as an indicator of colonial settlement. The latest secure date known for the construction of a motte castle is that taken from an Inquisition Post Mortem document which notes the building of a motte and wooden tower at Roscrea, Co.Tipperary, as late as 1213-15.<sup>294</sup> Secure dating for the construction and occupation of motte castles in Kildare is a major problem. However it may be safely assumed that they had their origins in the conquest and later subinfeudation, a preference for stone castles becoming more noticeable around c.1200. In Expugnatio Hibernica Giraldus laments that the conquest could have been achieved and Ireland "easily reduced to an ordered and settled condition by the construction of

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<sup>293</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.249.

<sup>294</sup> I.P.M., 1245 AD.  
C.D.I., I, no.2760, p.411-2.



castles everywhere in suitable places from coast to coast."<sup>295</sup>

In his programme for incastellation Giraldus also stressed the need for better communications and a network of castles to be built up gradually and not erected in haste, at too great a distance from each other. Graham in his study of motte castles in the Liberty of Meath suggested that the Anglo-Norman colonization of the area was partially planned, and that the westward progression of the "hypothetical" Anglo-Norman frontier can thus be charted by reference to four approximately north-south chains of mottes.<sup>296</sup> Apart from Graham's treatment of the motte castles in Meath, McNeill's work in Ulster represents the only other systematic analytical survey of Anglo-Norman motte castles in Ireland published to date.

On the basis of their individual research both Graham and McNeill agree that mottes with baileys were military strongholds constructed to house garrisons for at least short periods. In Ulster where baileys occur they were generally found in the areas of military activity on the borders of the Earldom, a feature also characteristic of

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<sup>295</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.231.

<sup>296</sup> Graham, B.J., (1980b), op.cit., p.52, fig.4. Renn has also discussed the merits of these "chain" theories with reference to the respective work of Marshall and Chitty on mottes in the Golden Valley and Vale of Glamorgan; Renn, D.F., (1959), op.cit., p107.

the Liberty of Meath.<sup>297</sup> These were used as a protective screen for initial subdivisions. Graham has suggested that single mottes (those without baileys) were constructed with the limited role of protecting local manorial settlements. Motte-and-baileys are more prevalent in Westmeath, the need for protection necessitated by lower density settlement in outlying areas and the particular difficulties of the march. In Ireland large motte-and-bailey castles may be linked to the principal land grants. Of at least seven major land grants in Meath motte castles can be linked to each of these at the caput.

Archaeological evidence for mottes in Ireland is extremely limited. The majority of excavations have taken place in Co.Down to coincide with the survey there.<sup>298</sup> Exposed sections of the mottes at Lorrha, Co.Tipperary and Old Ross, Co.Wexford, have extended our knowledge with regard to building techniques.<sup>299</sup> That of Old Ross was found on examination to have a reversed stratigraphy,

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<sup>297</sup> In England 88% of mottes have baileys in comparison with 23% in Ulster and a recorded 39% in Meath. The numerous mottes of the Welsh marches are also noted for their lack of baileys. Graham, B.J., (1980b), *op. cit.*, p.47. McNeill, T.E., Anglo-Norman Ulster, (Edinburgh, 1980), p.165.

<sup>298</sup> Jope, E.M., (1966), *op.cit.*

<sup>299</sup> Talbot, E.J., "Lorrha motte, County Tipperary", North Munster Antiqu. Jn., 15 (1972), p.8-12.  
Culleton, E. & Colfer, W., "The Norman motte at Old Ross: Method of construction", Jn. Old Wexford Soc., 5 (1974-5), p.22-25.

similar to the representation of the construction of the motte at Hastings on the Bayeux Tapestry.<sup>300</sup> In contrast, Lorrha motte was built by the initial construction of an earthen ring-bank similar to that constructed at Dunsilly and this was then infilled to create a mound.<sup>301</sup> Examination of the exposed section of the motte at Kells, Co.Kilkenny, revealed that it had an inverted soil profile.<sup>302</sup> This motte castle has unfortunately become one of the latest victims of uneducated destruction as the site was demolished in December 1988.<sup>303</sup>

The excavation of what remained of a largely destroyed motte is the only excavation of its kind in the Republic. Under the direction of O'h-Eochaidhe, Lurgankeel motte-and-bailey in Co.Cavan was excavated in the summer of 1964.<sup>304</sup> The motte c.3m high and with a summit diameter of c.8m contained the remains of a wooden tower surrounded by a palisade and breastwork of timber posts and earth.

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<sup>300</sup> The depiction of the motte at Hastings was however misleading as excavation proved it to be composed almost entirely of sand. Barker, P.A. & Barton, K.J., "Excavations at Hastings Castle, 1968", Arch. Jn., 134 (1977), p.80-100.

<sup>301</sup> McNeill, T.E., "Dunsilly, Co.Antrim", in Delaney, T.G., (ed) Excavations, 1975-6, (Belfast, 1976), p.6-7. McNeill, T.E., (1980), op.cit., p.84-5.

<sup>302</sup> Barry, T.B., Culleton, E. & Empey, C.A., "The motte at Kells, Co.Kilkenny", P.R.I.A., 84 C (1984), p.157-170.

<sup>303</sup> Kells motte, Co.Kilkenny, was fortunately among those mottes recorded by Armitage in her Book of Mottes, Yorkshire Arch. Soc. YAS Ms 521/C, p.5.

<sup>304</sup> O'h-Eochaidhe, M., (1965), op.cit., p.22.

The finds, mainly from the ditch fill of both motte and the bailey, which included two iron arrowheads and an iron rowel spur, indicate continuous occupation from the thirteenth century to the early fourteenth. However the absence of a detailed published report leaves the question of the motte's construction unknown.

Only a few motte-and-bailey castles have been excavated of the 350 identified extant examples in 1973.<sup>305</sup> (Fig.5) This absence of archaeological investigation has left the question of occupational chronology mainly unanswered, despite a consensus on construction dates from 1170-1230. Recently it has been suggested that some motte castles were built in Leinster in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>306</sup> This evidence is however historically uncorroborated and loosely based on comparative dates for late construction in Denmark, Scotland and Wales.<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> Glasscock, R.E., (1975), op.cit., p.95-110.

<sup>306</sup> O'Connor, K., "The later construction and use of motte and bailey castles in Ireland: New evidence from Leinster", J.K.A.S., Vol.17, (1990), p13-29.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., p.13-14.

## B. Ringwork Castles

Twohig, the instigator of ringwork studies in Ireland, added a new dimension to the study of Anglo-Norman military earthworks and paved the way for Barry's seminal article, "Anglo-Norman ringwork castles; some evidence".<sup>308</sup> In addition to the twenty possible ringwork sites forwarded in this later work, most of which were identified through morphology alone, another twenty five sites were listed by the same author four years later.<sup>309</sup>

Archaeological surveys such as that of the Barony of Ikerrin, Co.Tipperary, Colfer's work in Wexford and Cunningham's research into the settlement of the South-West Midlands have all contributed to the identification of these sites.<sup>310</sup> Increased interest in ringwork castle studies has further extended the list of possible sites. Graham has recently argued that in those areas of western Ireland colonised after 1200 the "ringwork...dominates as the garrisoned fortification, synonymous in function and

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<sup>308</sup> Twohig, D.C., (1978), op.cit., p.7-9. Barry, T.B., (1983), op.cit., p.259-314.

<sup>309</sup> Barry, T.B., (1987), op.cit., p.53, p.52, fig.14.

<sup>310</sup> Stout, G., Archaeological Survey of the Barony of Ikerrin, (Roscrea, 1984). Colfer, W., "Anglo-Norman settlement in medieval Shelburne, 1169-1307", unpublished M.Litt. thesis, T.C.D. (1986). Cunningham, G., (1987), op.cit.

status with the motte".<sup>311</sup> However, Graham's hypothesis suffers from a lack of supportive hard archaeological evidence and an apparent disregard for the intrinsic importance of the gatetower to the ringwork castle.

The ringwork castle did form part and parcel of the Anglo-Norman "military package" for Ireland, however the study of this earthwork type is hampered by its morphological similarity to the multitudinous ringfort. Application of King and Alcock's morphological definition as an identification index presents countless problems when applied to a systematic field survey. Their published findings had noted that Irish ringforts would be classified as ringworks if they occurred in England.<sup>312</sup> Fieldwork carried out by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland in Co.Louth identified not one single earthwork of this type, while the only two ringworks cited in the Co.Meath Sites and Monuments Record refer to Trim and Clonard, both of which are now destroyed. The earthwork at Clonard presents its own peculiar difficulties.<sup>313</sup> Sweetman's use of the term "ringwork" would appear to be a misnomer. Excavation of the embanked enclosures

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<sup>311</sup> Graham, B.J., "Medieval timber and earthwork fortifications in western Ireland", Med. Arch., 32 (1988), p.126.

<sup>312</sup> King, D.J.C. & Alcock, L., (1969), *op.cit.*, p.97, n.8.

<sup>313</sup> Sweetman, P.D., "Excavation of medieval "field boundaries" at Clonard, County Meath", J.R.S.A.I., 108 (1978), p.10-22.

produced a sherd of fourteenth century pottery sealed beneath one of the banks, evidence which would exclude the site on a chronological technicality. However, strategic locational concerns, a factor common to ringworks, would also suggest that by the very nature of the terrain this was not a ringwork castle. Documentary evidence of Hugh de Lacy's defenses at Trim intimates that the initial construction was that of a ringwork castle.<sup>314</sup> This evidence was substantiated by the results of later archaeological investigation which confirmed this site as that of an early Anglo-Norman ringwork castle.<sup>315</sup>

Giraldus's first recorded account of the construction of an Anglo-Norman castle was to that of Ferrycarrig, Co. Wexford. His description of a fortress built "on a steep crag...and improved by artificial means a place naturally protected", described a ringwork castle.<sup>316</sup> The excavation of a trial cutting through the bank and fosse at Ferrycarrig in 1984 added little to the historical

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<sup>314</sup> Song, l. 3222-5.

"Then Hugh de Lacy  
Fortified a house at Trim  
And threw a trench [fosse] around it,  
And then enclosed it with a stockade  
[hireson]."

<sup>315</sup> Sweetman, P.D., "Archaeological excavations at Trim Castle, County Meath, 1971-4", P.R.I.A., 78 C (1978), p.127-98.

<sup>316</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.53.

background of the site.<sup>317</sup> The limitation of the excavation to a single cutting compounded by the paucity of finds, unfortunately neither proves nor disproves the historical documentation.

Fanning's excavation at Pollardstown, Co.Kildare, revealed a purpose built ringwork castle. Due to gravel working only a third of the site remained prior to excavation, the site at this stage appeared to be that of a "typical ringfort".<sup>318</sup> However the excavator later indicated that the site possessed superficial peculiarities which distinguished it from the ordinary ringfort.<sup>319</sup> The site was located on the summit of a gravel ridge, 400ft. OD. and consisted of a double-bank with intervening fosse which enclosed a roughly oval shaped area c.25m in diameter. The diameter of the entire site was c.80m, the emphasis on the outer defences in relation to the small internal area giving it the attributes of a classic ringwork. (Fig.14)

The assemblage of finds which included an arrowhead, stirrups, horse-shoe nails and harness buckle, indicated a military encampment of Anglo-Norman date. The

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<sup>317</sup> Bennett, I., "Preliminary archaeological excavations at Ferrycarrig ringwork, Newtown Townland, Co.Wexford", Jn. Wex. Hist. Soc., 10 (1984-5), p.23-43.

<sup>318</sup> Fanning, T., "Excavation of a ringfort at Pollardstown, Co.Kildare", J.K.A.S., 15 (1973-4), p.251.

<sup>319</sup> Lynn, C.J., (1975), *op.cit.*, p.30, Fanning lecture quoted.



stratigraphical evidence indicated that the construction of the fort and the habitation deposits were broadly contemporary, with an occupation date from the twelfth to the fourteenth century. Fanning on the basis of his findings suggested that the site may have been a ringwork. Its location, however, close to the motte-and-bailey castles of Oldconnell and Morrystownbiller, questions somewhat the theory that ringworks may fill the gap in the motte distribution pattern. The type of castle built was dictated by the constraints or strategic advantages of the terrain.

Re-interpretation of excavation reports has added more sites to the list of possible ringworks. O'Kelly remarked with regard to his excavation at Beal Boru, Co.Clare, that the secondary phase was an incomplete attempt by the Normans to transform the ringfort into a motte.<sup>320</sup> It has been suggested that structural reinforcement of the primary bank would have converted the ringfort into the intended ringwork. Re-use of ringforts was surely practised, however it is questionable whether the Anglo-Normans used them without modification. Complex banking systems, and stone revetments to strengthen earthen banks are not uncommon in ringforts.<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> O'Kelly, M.J., "Beal Boru, Co.Clare", J.C.H.A.S., 67 (1962), p.1-27.

<sup>321</sup> Barrett, G.F., "A field survey and morphological study of ring-forts in southern Co.Donegal", U.J.A., 43 (1980), p.42.

It is the contention of the present author that the Anglo-Normans did construct ringwork castles in Ireland. However the evidence collated to date, apart from the above mentioned documented or excavated certainties, hangs on the word "possible". If only it were possible to excavate more sites, knowledge of this earthwork type might be furthered. Until then, thorough fieldwork and use of the documentary sources remains the only solution to solving the enigma of the ringwork castle in Ireland.

#### C. Moated Sites

The dearth of documentary evidence has led to speculation in relation to the chronology and function of moated sites in Ireland. Dependence on theories extrapolated from analysis of survey and distribution presents its own limitations, however recent research and excavation has led to a better knowledge of this site type. In 1970 Glasscock identified 750 moated sites in Ireland through map evidence.<sup>322</sup> (Fig.6)

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<sup>322</sup> Glasscock, R.E., "Moated sites and deserted boroughs and villages: two neglected aspects of Anglo-Norman Settlement in Ireland", in Stephens, N. & Glasscock, R.E., (ed) Irish Geographical Studies, (Belfast, 1970), p.162-177.

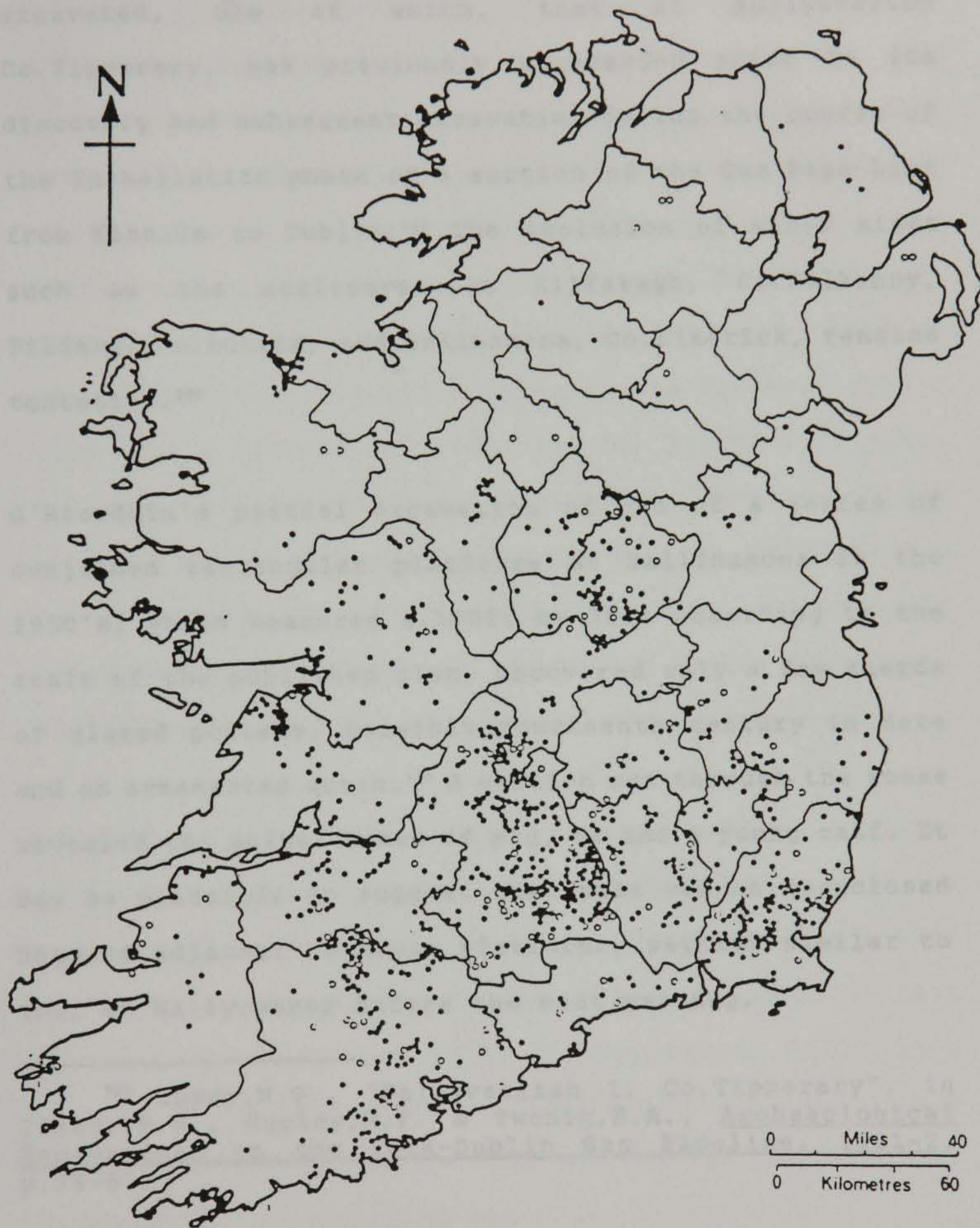


Figure 6. Moated sites in Ireland

To date only three moated sites have been fully excavated, one of which, that at Ballyveelish Co.Tipperary, was previously unrecorded prior to its discovery and subsequent excavation during the course of the installation phase of a section of the Gas Pipe Line from Kinsale to Dublin.<sup>323</sup> The inclusion of other sites such as the enclosures at Kilferagh, Co.Kilkenny, Tildarg, Co.Antrim, and Balinamona, Co.Limerick, remains tentative.<sup>324</sup>

O'Riordain's partial excavation of one of a series of conjoined rectangular platforms at Ballinamona in the 1930's, which measured c.180ft by 70ft according to the scale of the published plan, uncovered only a few sherds of glazed pottery, possibly fourteenth century in date and an ornamented quern.<sup>325</sup> A section cut through the fosse revealed the animal bones of pig, ox and a young calf. It may be plausible to suggest that this was an unenclosed haggard adjacent to house platforms, perhaps similar to that at Ballyconnor before the moat was dug.

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<sup>323</sup> Doody, M.G., "Ballyveelish 1, Co.Tipperary", in Cleary, R.M., Hurley, M.F. & Twohig, E.A., Archaeological Excavations on the Cork-Dublin Gas Pipeline, 1981-2, p.74-87.

<sup>324</sup> Hurley, M.F., "Kilferagh, Co.Kilkenny", *ibid.*, p.88-97. Brannon, N.F., "A small excavation in Tildarg townland, near Ballyclare, County Antrim", U.J.A., 47 (1984), p.163-70. O'Riordain, S.P., "Excavations at Lissard, County Limerick, and other sites in the vicinity", J.R.S.A.I., LXVI, (1936), p.173-85.

<sup>325</sup> O'Riordain, S.P., *ibid.*, p.182. Plan p.181.

Kilmagoura, Co.Cork, excavated by Glasscock consisted of a raised platform c.40m by 40m surrounded by a water filled moat 4m wide.<sup>326</sup> The site occupied the north-east corner of a much larger enclosure which had been previously levelled. Paucity of finds gave no firm dating evidence to the three-phased occupation. A late thirteenth to fourteenth century date was suggested with the conclusion that the site was not occupied for long after completion. Timbers recovered from the moat gave a radio carbon date of A.D. 1225 +/- 70. Recorded in situ, they were the foundation timbers for the entrance, which may have formed a possible drawbridge. No palisade was found along the top of the inner bank but a ditch on the inside slope of the same bank suggests that a fence went all the way around the platform on the inside.

Rigsdale, Co.Cork, revealed remains of a probable gatehouse of stone foundation, however there were no remnants of a causeway.<sup>327</sup> Sweetman closely dated the site on the basis of strategraphical evidence, and noted that the site was abandoned prior to completion. Sited in a peripheral area the stone foundation of the gatehouse may suggest defensive capacity although similar to Kilmagoura no evidence of palisading was found on the bank.

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<sup>326</sup> Glasscock, R.E., "Kilmagoura, Co.Cork", Med. Arch., XII (1968), p.196-7.

<sup>327</sup> Sweetman, P.D., "Excavations of a medieval moated site at Rigsdale, County Cork, 1977-8", P.R.I.A., 81 C (1981), p.193-205.

The third site, Ballyveelish, Co. Tipperary, revealed a moated site of thirteenth to fourteenth century date and measured c.40 by 40m, with a surrounding moat 3m wide and 2m deep. The enclosure contained the remains of two partially stone built houses and two other wooden structures.<sup>328</sup> Prior to excavation this site was not visible from ground level. Similar circumstances also led to the discovery of the enclosure at Kilferagh which comprised a house and yard enclosed by a bank and ditch. A grain drying kiln was also exposed. The results of these excavations confirm the rough chronology of usage of this site type in Ireland, but adds little of further information with regard to the function of moated sites or the social standing of the occupants, due to the lack of finds.

Hadden, in his description of the earthworks of Co. Wexford in 1964 divided the "square forts" into two groups.<sup>329</sup> These were 1) heavily ramparted strongholds of the invasion years, and 2) the palisaded grange.<sup>330</sup> Of the latter category he noted the documentary evidence for the moated site at Ballyconnor, mentioned in the Old Ross

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<sup>328</sup> Doody, M.G., "Ballyveelish, Co. Tipperary", Med. Arch., XXVII, (1983), p.215.

<sup>329</sup> Hadden, G., "Some earthworks in Co. Wexford", J.C.H.A.S. 69 (1964), p.119.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid., p.120. In support of the first category he cites the square fort at Ballyraine near Arklow, which Liam Price had noted was built by Theobald Walter shortly after 1185. Sited on a high hill Hadden remarked that this was unique for such earthworks.

account rolls between the years 1282-1284. This important reference recorded that "66.8 perches" of moat were dug around the haggard, and at a later stage livestock were kept within the moat for safe keeping. Labour, materials, cost and man hours were all recorded in this important source, which until the discovery of Grangeford, Co.Kildare, was the only detailed account of the construction of an Irish moated site as yet recovered from the sources.<sup>331</sup> The destroyed site at Grangeford however represents a unique opportunity for archaeological research and investigation as the exact location of Ballyconnor has yet to be identified.

Barry's work on the moated sites in the south-east of Ireland is to date the most comprehensive study of this earthwork type.<sup>332</sup> The results, based firmly on field survey and analysis of distribution, concluded that moated sites were the defended farmsteads of the Anglo-Norman colonists in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century. The field survey encountered sites which varied in size of central platform from under 500m sq to some over 4000m sq in area, "with the majority being under 2000m sq in internal area".<sup>333</sup> Irish moated sites do not appear to have held any specific military function.

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<sup>331</sup> See Chapter 5, p.249-251.

<sup>332</sup> Barry, T.B., (1977), op.cit.

<sup>333</sup> Barry, T.B., (1979), op.cit., p.33.

In comparison with their English counterparts Irish moated sites do however possess a more defensive nature, which may reflect the increased pressures of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. They also differ from English examples in that they have smaller internal areas and usually comprise of only one enclosure.<sup>334</sup> A factor which may have been determined by economic constraints. Clustered on the edges of the Anglo-Norman colony they were a form of secondary settlement which concentrated on marginal land though most in the south-east were located on fertile soils, especially river valleys below 100ft O.D. Barry's study also highlighted the high levels of destruction of this site type and revealed that in the south-east of Ireland over 50% of the sites surveyed had been destroyed since the 1st edition 6 inch Ordnance Survey maps.<sup>335</sup>

Comprehensive survey, as presently conducted by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, has led to the discovery of increased numbers of moated sites in Ireland, however the concentrations as exemplified in the original distribution map of Glasscock's 750 examples remains constant. (Fig.6) Most of the Irish moated sites are confined to Leinster and Munster and these are

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<sup>334</sup> Barry, T.B., "Moated sites in Ireland", in Aberg, F.A., (ed) Medieval Moated Sites, C.B.A. Res. Rep. 17 (London, 1978), p.58. Of Barry's 322 sites only 4.5% had more than one enclosure.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid., p.57.



located mainly in clustered groupings in areas peripheral to initial settlement and on the borders of the colony.

The motte-and-bailey castles, ringwork castles and moated sites of Anglo-Norman Kildare shall now be examined and discussed with reference to the historical documentation and research evidence outlined above.

THE EARLY-MIDDLE MILITARY SETTLEMENTS OF EARLY KILDARE

1. Motte-and-bailey Castles
  - a. Distribution and Analysis
  - b. Excavation and Classification
  - c. Function and Chronology
2. Ringwork Castles
3. Other Military Structures
4. Excavation
5. Excavation

## CHAPTER 4

## THE ANGLO-NORMAN MILITARY EARTHWORKS OF COUNTY KILDARE

1. Motte-and-Bailey Castles
  - A. Distribution and Analysis
  - B. Examination and Classification
  - C. Function and Chronology
2. Ringwork Castles
3. Other Military Earthworks
4. Problems
5. Conclusions

Fig.7	Townland	Grid Ref.
Ref.		
1.	CLONCURRY	16.803411
2.	CARBURY	16.687350
3.	HORTLAND	16.813367
4.	MAYNOOTH	16.937737
5.	LEIXLIP	16.033345
6.	MAINHAM	16.868301
7.	LADYCASTLE LOWER	16.919292
8.	CARRIGEEN	16.877268
9.	LONGTOWN DEMESNE	16.856259
10.	KILLHILL	16.943226
11.	NAAS	16.892195
12.	RATHMORE EAST	16.957196
13.	MORRISTOWN BILLER	16.783148
14.	OLDCONNELL	16.810160
15.	LACKAGH MORE	16.675127
16.	KILDARE	16.727127
17.	DONODE BIG	16.918130
18.	BALLYMORE EUSTACE	16.929102
19.	BROADLEAS COMMONS	16.934080
20.	CASTLEWARDEN NORTH	16.968250
21.	BALLYSAX GREAT	16.796081
22.	BALLYSHANNON DEMESNE	16.787046
23.	BARONSLAND	16.836033
24.	RATHSILLAGH UPPER	16.755012
25.	NORRAGH	16.780989
26.	CASTLEREBAN SOUTH	16.649974
27.	ARDSCULL	16.728976
28.	BURTOWN BIG	16.755946
29.	ARDREE	16.690922
30.	KILKEA DEMESNE	16.748887

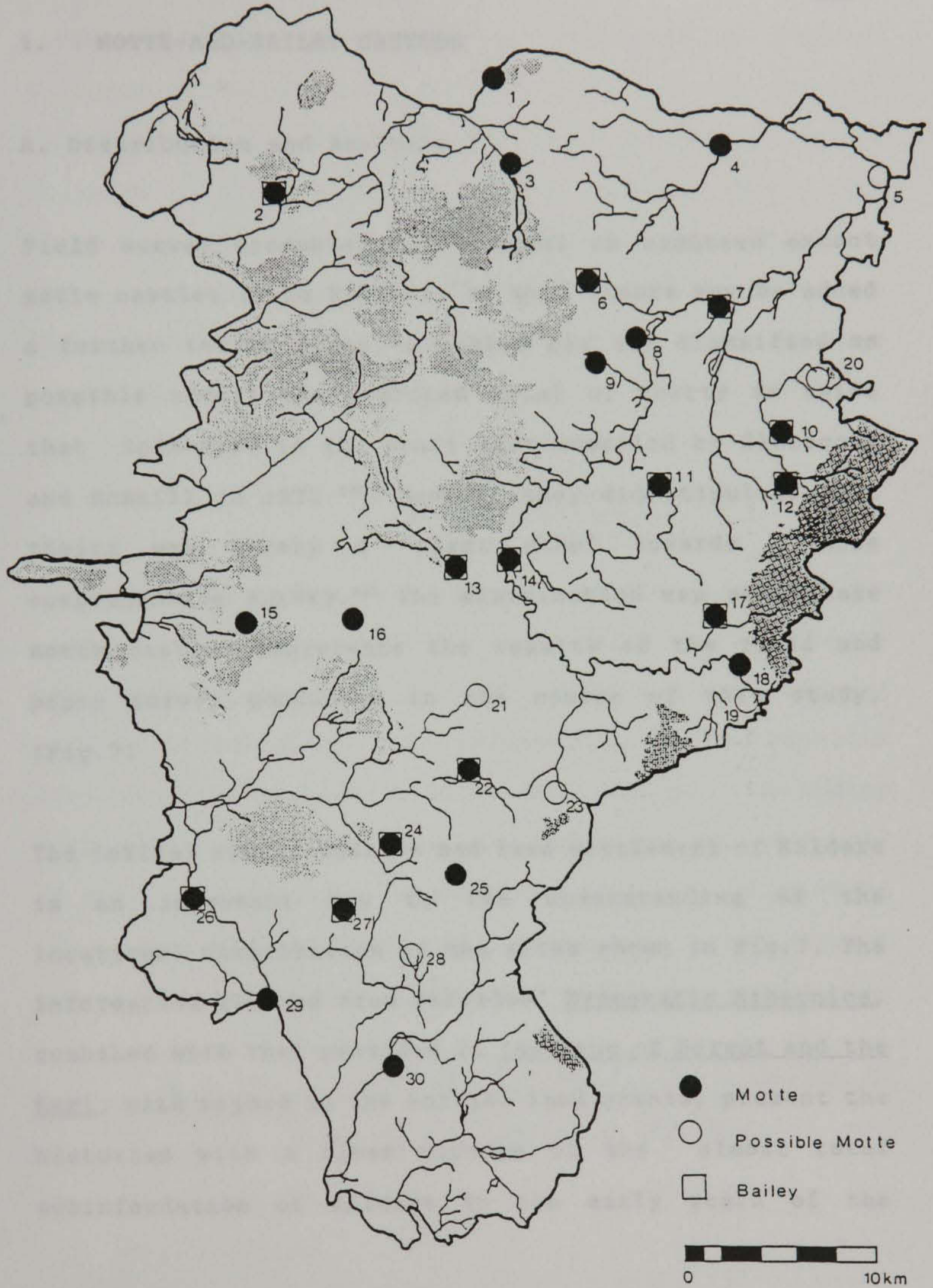


Figure 7. Distribution of Kildare motte castles

## 1. MOTTE-AND-BAILEY CASTLES

### A. Distribution and Analysis

Field survey accounted for a total of eighteen extant motte castles in Co.Kildare. To this figure may be added a further twelve sites, of which six are classified as possible sites. The combined total of thirty is twice that indicated in the draft list compiled by Glasscock and McNeill in 1972.<sup>336</sup> However they did stipulate that theirs was merely a "first step" towards a more comprehensive survey.<sup>337</sup> The distribution map of Kildare motte castles represents the results of the field and paper survey conducted in the course of this study. (Fig.7)

The initial subinfeudation and land settlement of Kildare is an important key to the understanding of the locational distribution of the sites shown in Fig.7. The information gleaned from Giraldus' Expugnatio Hibernica, combined with that provided in The Song of Dermot and the Earl, with regard to the initial land grants, present the historian with a clear picture of the almost total subinfeudation of Kildare in the early years of the

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<sup>336</sup> Glasscock, R.E. & McNeill, T.E., (1972), op.cit., p.41.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid. p.27.

conquest.<sup>338</sup> Orpen's collation of this material remains the most comprehensive and detailed guide to the subinfeudatory process.<sup>339</sup> The simplified tripartite tribal division of Kildare at the time of the invasion, with Offelan to the north, Omurethy to the south and Offaly in the centre, was the model employed by the Anglo-Norman lords when it came to the allocation and issue of land grants.<sup>340</sup>

"Adam de Erford ensement  
Donat riche feffement."<sup>341</sup>

Of the three cantreds of Offelan, Adam de Hereford was granted the one nearest to Dublin, which he shared with his brothers John and Richard. Adam himself retained Leixlip, Cloncurry and Oughterard, John received Celbridge, Clonshanbo, Kill and Mainham, including Rathcoffey, and Richard was given Downings in the barony of Otymy, now Clane.<sup>342</sup> The cantred was parcelled out among the de Hereford brothers and the resultant establishment of a settlement infrastructure would appear

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<sup>338</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis (ed) Scott, A.B. & Martin, F.X., (Dublin, 1978); The Song of Dermot and the Earl (ed. and trans.) Orpen, G.H., (Oxford, 1892).

<sup>339</sup> Normans, Vol.1, p.377-386.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid. p.377.

<sup>341</sup> Song op.cit., l.3106-7. "To Adam de Hereford likewise, He gave a rich fief."

<sup>342</sup> Normans, Vol.1, p.379; Register of the Abbey of St. Thomas the Martyr, Dublin, (ed) Gilbert, G.T., (London, 1889), p.102-4; Ormond Deeds, Vol.1., Nos. 29, 37, 39.

characteristic of the Anglo-Norman approach to the infeudation of Kildare in general. The construction of motte castles went hand-in-hand with the implementation of the manorial system. Adam's retained lands of Leixlip and Cloncurry were both sites of early Anglo-Norman castles. Oughterard, an early ecclesiastical centre, was later the location of a burgage settlement close to the adjoining manor of Castlewarden.<sup>343</sup> The part of the cantred which was granted to John de Hereford witnessed the construction of motte-and-bailey castles at both Kill and Mainham. His brother Richard likewise was responsible for the motte built adjacent to the river Liffey at Clane.<sup>344</sup> Flanagan has suggested that the three cantreds of Ui Faelain corresponded to the deaneries of Cloncurry, Naas, and Kildare.<sup>345</sup> However, it may also be suggested that reference to the baronial map of Co. Kildare provides a more accurate identification of the three cantreds, as the boundary which defined each barony corresponded to immovable geographical determinants.

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<sup>343</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.1, No.195.

<sup>344</sup> Brooks traces De Hereford interest in this region of Kildare from the initial land acquisitions to the start of the fourteenth century, Knights' Fees in Counties Wexford, Carlow and Kilkenny, (ed) Brooks, E., St. J., (Dublin, 1950), p.202-210.

<sup>345</sup> Flanagan, M. T., "Henry II and the kingdom of Ui Faelain", in Bradley, J., (1988), op.cit., p.229-239.

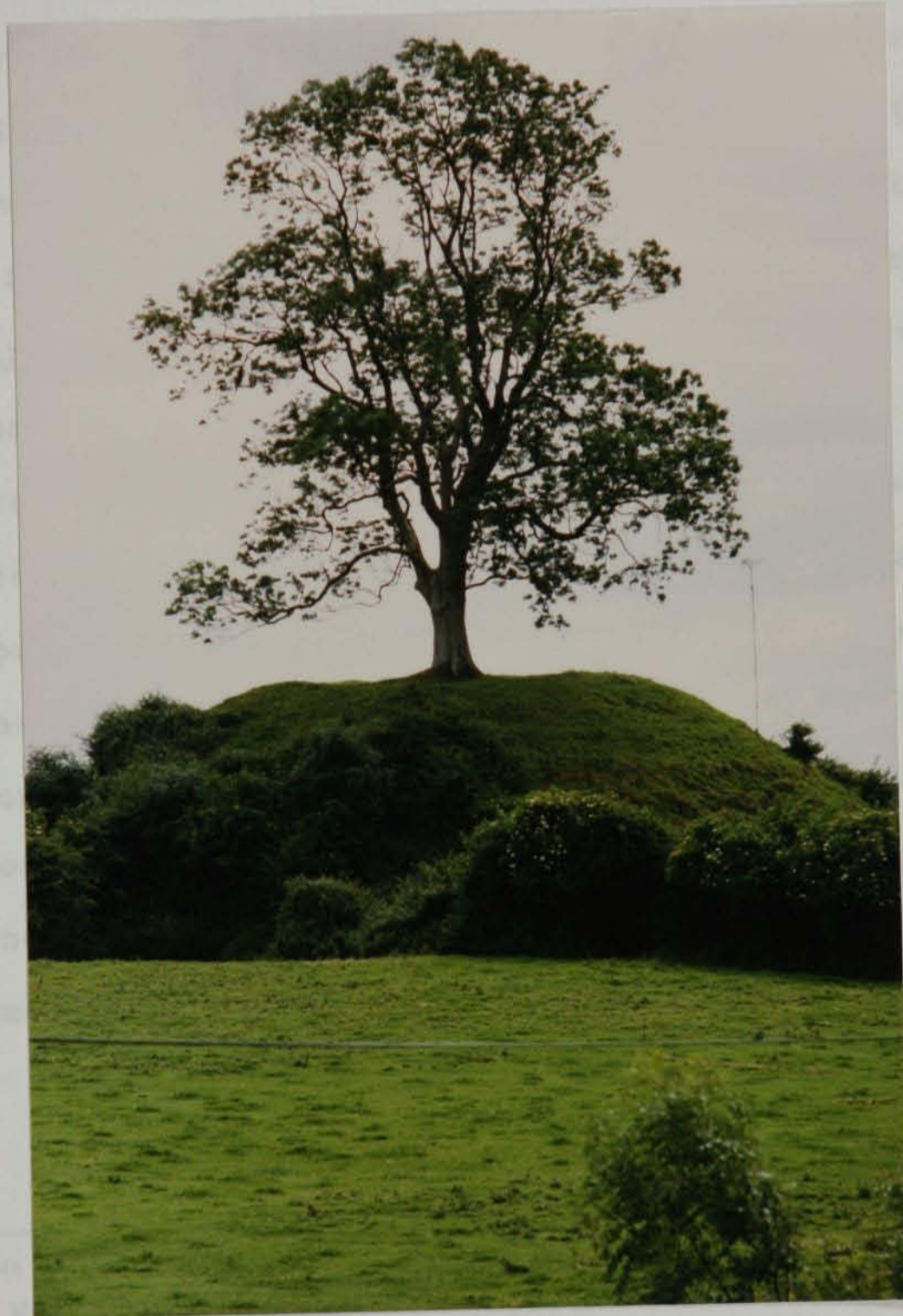


Plate I - Motte castle at Cloncurry



In the case of the de Hereford grant the pre-existing settlement pattern was utilized to its full advantage. This is most noticeable in their adoption and development of centres with strong ecclesiastical traditions, a factor which may indicate the existence of "proto-urban" communities and population nuclei. Contained among the Calendar of Ormond Deeds the fortunate survival of confirmatory grants from William Marshall to Adam de Hereford of his half cantred of Offelan, offer a more detailed insight into the initial infeudation and later development of the area.<sup>346</sup> Included in Adam's grant was "the castle that Machenlodher first founded, which is in the commote of Owaltan".<sup>347</sup> Unfortunately the exact location of this castle is as yet uncertain. The existence of a Leinster family, "Sil Maeluidir", is confirmed in the Book of Leinster, but this is the

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<sup>346</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.1 No.29, p.13-4 and No.37, p.19-20. No.37 ; "Grant by William Marshall..to Adam de Hereford...half a cantred of land in Offelan near Dublin, he to have the commote (comodum) of the same called Oliuran; the vill of Wethtrad [Oughterard], the vill of Tachgumini [Stacumney], and all the fishery at Saltus Salmonum, and all the appurtances of the said commote and of the vills; and the castle that Machenlodher first founded, which is in the commote of Owaltan; and a knights fee in the neighbourhood within the commote of Owaltan; the commote called Weterhunn; and the vill called Cloneconeri [Cloncurry] in the same commote; the half commote of Oguirc; so that in his part he shall have Conefi [Confey];.....half the vill of Achebo [Aghaboe,Queens' Co.], and the half cantred of land in which the vill lies, as Dermod O Kelli held it in Ossory, by free service of five knights."

<sup>347</sup> Ibid. Vol.1, No.37, p.19.

present extent of the known information.<sup>348</sup> In a later inquisition with regard to the right of advowsons in relation to Confey church the jurors refer to "Thatheig, patrem Gillecondi Maclother".<sup>349</sup> This surname again appears among the cottiers named in the extent taken at Cloncurry in 1304 where not only are "Cristin McLothyr" and "Comdino McLothyr" mentioned but also "Gilko de Balymaclothyr".<sup>350</sup> These references are of little assistance in the identification of Balymaclothyr or the location of Macenlodher's castle, as the original deed specifies that Confey was within the commote of Oguirc and Cloncurry in the commote of Weterhunn, whereas the castle was said to lie within the commote of Owaltan.<sup>351</sup>

In 1378 an inspection of a grant by Stephen de Hereford to Geoffrey de Hereford in 1250 listed among the lands granted "Hachmocobar".<sup>352</sup> It is possible that this was a corrupted version of Balymaclothyr. Placename inference may suggest that the present townland of Gragadder, in

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<sup>348</sup> The Book of Leinster Vol.4, (ed) O'Sullivan, A.O., (Dublin, 1983), p.1362. See also, Nicholls, K.W., "Three Topographical Notes", Peritia 5 (1986), p.414-5.

<sup>349</sup> Register of the Abbey of St. Thomas, Dublin (ed) Gilbert, J.T., (London, 1889), p.328.

<sup>350</sup> Red Book of Ormond, p.33.

<sup>351</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.1., p.37.

<sup>352</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.I, no.853, p.359-360, "Stephen de H. gives and grants to Geof. de H. ....all the land which Adam de H., grantor's father, gave to Roger de H., his nephew, ....viz; Mayn and Balymccolough and Clonhomery and Hachmacobar and Derneganhach and Feybocullen".

the parish of Kilcock, is a derivative of the original Balymaclothy referred to in the Cloncurry extent. This townland was known at the time of the Civil survey as Graggodder (Graygodder; Graigodder) and as "Craig-heder" on Taylors map of 1783.<sup>353</sup> An inquisition taken at Naas in 1335 may provide conclusive proof to this question as it recorded that Simmon de Sutton held tenements in "Balymacloghir and Treuedyneston".<sup>354</sup> The modern townland of Treadstown lies immediately south-east of Graggodder. A note of caution should however be stressed as the inquisition pertains mainly to lands in the south of the county.<sup>355</sup> There are ruins of a castle in the modern townland but the connection with the castle of Machenlodher is pure supposition. Nonetheless, the concept of Irish castle ownership referred to in a document which dates from the first decade of the thirteenth century is in itself significant.

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<sup>353</sup> Civil Survey, p.214-5. Taylor, A., A Map of the County of Kildare, 1783, (ed) Andrews, J.H., (R.I.A. Dublin, 1983).

<sup>354</sup> Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous, Vol.II, (London, 1916), p.339, no.1387.

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.*; "Valuation of the lands, which belonged to Thomas de Sutton, deceased, in Monmehonnoke, and Walter le Veel, deceased, in Norragh".



Plate II - Motte-and-bailey castle at Carbury  
(Stone castle occupies the bailey)



Plate III - Motte-and-bailey castle at Naas West

The remaining motte castles in the lands owned by the de Herefords may all be related to primary and secondary land grants. These castles which symbolised power and status were associated more with the occupation and administration of land than the conquest of it. The other two cantreds of Offelan were granted to Meiler FitzHenry and Maurice FitzGerald, holding the cantred farthest from Dublin, i.e. Carbury, and the middle cantred of Naas, respectively. The existence of motte-and-bailey castles at both Carbury (Plate II) and Naas (Plate III) identify these locations as their baronial caputae. Meiler FitzHenry also held Offaly up until 1181, where he had used Kildare town in the dual function of caput and early stronghold. Omurethy in the south went mostly to Walter de Ridelsford, who held Kilkea and Castledermot. Recipients of other major land grants in this area were Robert FitzRichard who held Norragh, Thomas le Fleming received Ardree, and Rheban was granted to Robert de St. Michael.<sup>356</sup>

Each of the above mentioned lands and baronies have or had at one time early Anglo-Norman castles associated with them, most of which were centrally located within the boundaried region. These castles were linked to the initial land grants and in many cases acted as the necessary precursor to later subinfeudation and development. However, although distribution of castles

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<sup>356</sup> Normans, Vol.1, p.377-386.

may be explained within the context of the occupation of land by a baronial lord who was ready to subinfeudate, plan and develop his grant, there were many considered factors which determined the motte's final location within the designated area.

The predominant locational characteristics suggest the importance of the major routeways and arteries of communication, together with the re-use of pre-existing settlement sites. A comparison between the motte castle distribution and the ancient routeways as advanced in Smyth's Celtic Leinster reveal a remarkable degree of correlation.<sup>357</sup> The historical continuity of overland routeways in the county is further evidenced by the fact that just over 50% of Kildare's motte castles are located adjacent to modern trunk roads. From the ford of Athy, through Ardscull, Ballyshannon, Naas, Kill and on to Dublin, the routeway is silently monitored by the remnants of former lordly castles. Similarly the road between Clane and Cloncurry passes the de Hereford motte castle at Hortland on route.<sup>358</sup> (Plate VII).

In an agreement between John, Archbishop of Dublin, and William, Lord of Naas, around the year 1200 A.D., pertinent to the boundary of the lands of Ballymore, the

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<sup>357</sup> Smyth, A.P., (1982), op.cit., p.153, pl.XII.

<sup>358</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.I, No.337, "Rogerus de Hereforde,....dominus de Baliscologe....villa de Balyscoloc". (c.1210).

partition used was "the public street which came from Radmor near the castle of Du'naud to the river Auenlife".<sup>359</sup> Today there are two large motte-and-bailey castles at Rathmore and Donode, and the "public street" referred to is still in use, now demoted to the status of a third class road. The mottes were constructed at these roadside locations to keep open lines of communication, although some roads may no doubt have been developed to link these new Anglo-Norman settlement and administrative centres together.

The natural barrier of the Bog of Allen in western Kildare is highlighted by the near total absence of motte castle sites in that part of the county. (Fig.3) It may be suggested that a quasi-frontier line stretched from Lackagh, through Kildare, Morrinstownbiller, Oldconnell, Carragh, Downings and Hortland. This hypothesis compares favourably with the lines of defence drawn up by John de Saunford during his campaigns on the western boundaries of Kildare in the late thirteenth century.<sup>360</sup> However to advance a similar conclusion with regard to late twelfth century Kildare would be to define the original purpose

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<sup>359</sup> Alen's Reg., p.28, 18b (86).

<sup>360</sup> C.D.I., Vol.III, no.559, p.265-272; "The seneschal of Kildare should guard the marches of Offely, Totemoy, Rathangan, and Kildare, as far as Kilross; the seneschal of Wexford the marches of Kilross by le Ryban to Moyrath; the seneschal of Carlow, from Moyrath to Calcet of Leye; and the seneschal of Kilkenny, from Calcet of Leye to Dunselach and that so long as the service should last they should remain in those parts, which were then very hostile".

of the castles in this area. Any solution to the problem of the functions of motte-and-bailey castles must take cognisance of constructional inception rather than evolved status. The initial capacity of the motte of Kildare town was that of caput of the Barony of Offaly, not that of a frontier outpost.

In the majority of locations the castle builders utilised the advantages of the surrounding landscape. Most sites made best use of the natural height, and in some cases re-used existing features or structures, such as ringforts and tumuli to facilitate the construction process. The motte-and-bailey castle at Rathmore East was built over a burial mound. The original cist was uncovered whilst the site was quarried for road materials in the last decade of the nineteenth century.<sup>361</sup> A multiple of factors generally determined the final location. Often it is difficult to arrive at a singular primary reason behind the choice of final site but usually the location exhibits one or more of the following characteristics; (1) Pre-existing settlement centre, (2) Proximity to main artery of communication, road and/or river, (3) Strategic advantages, such as defensive capacity or the security of fords and passes, (4) Availability of a water source.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>361</sup> Mayo, the Earl of, "Rathmore (The Big Rath)", J.K.A.S., Vol.2, (1897), p.112.

<sup>362</sup> See Appendix 1.



The physical imposition of the Anglo-Normans onto pre-existing settlement centres facilitated a number of primary objectives. This achieved instant visual domination as the native population witnessed the introduction of a new overlordship directly at the heart of their society.<sup>363</sup> This frequently expressed itself in the seizure and re-development of church lands. The deployment of earthwork castles adjacent to church sites was a standard tactic as these churches acted as focal nuclei for the indigenous people.<sup>364</sup> The earthwork castle built at Kildare was constructed on church land without the permission of the occupants. In later years there is abundant evidence in the documentary sources of the attempts of the bishop of Kildare to exact rent from the Earls of Kildare for the site of the castle.<sup>365</sup> The widespread use of this procedure is manifested in the circumstances of Hugh de Lacy's involvement in the

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<sup>363</sup> There are no Irish documentary references to the demolition of population centres to make way for Anglo-Norman settlement as evidenced in post-conquest England. This however may owe as much to insufficient source material as to lack of nucleated settlements.

<sup>364</sup> The motte at Foughart, Co.Louth, was constructed at the eastern boundary of the ecclestial termon. This thesis has been propounded elsewhere by Swan, D.L. in his article "Enclosed ecclestial sites and their relevance to the settlement patterns of the first millennium AD", in Reeves-Smyth, T. & Hamond, F., (1983), op.cit., p.269-94.

<sup>365</sup> D.K.R., 54th, p.35. D.K.R., 44th, p.28; "£2 9s 3 1/4 d. rent payable to the Bishop of Kildare....for the site of the castle of Kildare"; Documents on the Affairs of Ireland before the Kings Council, (ed) O'Sayles, G.O., (Dublin, 1979), p.57, no.71.

construction of the first earthwork castle at Trim, Co.Meath, where the pre-existing church buildings were thrown down in order to make way for the Anglo-Norman ringwork castle.<sup>366</sup> The Annals of Ulster later recorded the hazards of the implementation of such a policy when it reported the murder of de Lacy as he inspected the newly completed castle at Durrrow; "Hugh de Lacy, destroyer and dissolver of the churches and sanctuaries of Ireland, was killed...while building a castle in his [i.e. Colmcille's] church".<sup>367</sup>

Other noted centres of pre-conquest Kildare population, such as Naas, Clane and Old Kilcullen, all of which were also locations of early ecclesiastical activity, were prime targets in the initial development of Anglo-Norman settlement. Most of these locations were in areas of prime agricultural land and the surrounding community provided a labour force which could be readily tapped. In twelfth century Ireland the governance of people was as important as that of land, and the establishment of an administration at the core of native society in the various tribal cantreds seemed the best method of achieving both.

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<sup>366</sup> Sweetman, P.D., (1978), op.cit., p.127-98.

<sup>367</sup> Annals of Ulster, (ed) Hennessy, W.H. & MacCarthy, B., 4 Vols., (Dublin, 1887-1901), 1186 AD. In a similar fashion the Annals of Tigernach relate how St. Brigid "killed" Strongbow; "and he himself used to see her in front of him, killing him", Annals of Tigernach, (ed) Stokes, W., Revue Celtique, XVIII, (1897), p.294.

Navigable rivers and their crossing points play a significant part in the distributional analysis of motte castles in Co.Kildare.<sup>368</sup> The river Liffey had along its banks early Anglo-Norman castles at Leixlip, Straffan, Clane, Oldconnell, and Ballymore Eustace. The river Barrow which forms the south western border of Co.Kildare was overlooked by the motte of Ardree, close to the important ford of Athy, and that of Castle Rheban further north on the same river.<sup>369</sup> Other motte castles were built along Kildare's lesser rivers and their tributaries. The motte at Kilkea was built on the river Greese and the motte of Hortland close to a tributary of the river Blackwater. Most motte castles were located near a river or water source. In a pipe roll for the 32nd year of Edward I, note is made of monies for construction works at Kildare castle which included "installing a well".<sup>370</sup> There is no direct evidence as yet of a motte castle in Co.Kildare in possession of its own well, although the existence of a spring well in the fosse which surrounds the motte at Clane was recorded in a survey conducted in

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<sup>368</sup> Very few stone bridges were built in Ireland or England before the fourteenth century. [Stalley, R.A., "William of Prene and the royal works in Ireland", Jn. of the British Archaeological Assoc., Vol. XXXI, (1978), p.45.] Pre-fabricated wooden bridges were constructed in England for use in Ireland. [C.D.I., Vol. I, No. 413, 1211 AD.].

<sup>369</sup> There is no evidence at present to suggest that an earthwork castle was built at Athy. However it would not be unreasonable to postulate the construction of one due to importance of Athy's strategic and economic location.

<sup>370</sup> D.K.R., 38th, p.47.

the 1940s.<sup>371</sup> As the top of the motte was used frequently as the last resort in times of attack, sufficient food and water would have been stored in the event of a siege.<sup>372</sup> The immediate availability of water was also of the utmost importance as would-be attackers used fire as an effective strategy in their siege tactics. Fire was also a daily hazard due to the wooden construction of the structures which occupied the motte platform.

Strategic concerns were an important factor in the determination of the final location of a motte castle. The distribution map illustrates this propensity, especially with regard to the area of Kildare adjacent to the Leinster mountains. The key location of Ballymore Eustace was quickly realised as it provided a bridging point on the river Liffey and secured an important pass to the foothills of the Leinster mountains. This aspect of the distribution shall be examined later with regard

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<sup>371</sup> "Clane", Topographical Files, N.M.I.

<sup>372</sup> Evidence of the siege mentality may be borrowed from the preparations made at the monastery at Maigne, Co.Limerick, in 1228; "they stored thirty head of cattle, slaughtered and salted down, under the dormitory; they strongly fortified the dormitories of the monks and lay-brothers with great stones, stakes, palings, and weapons, according to the custom of their people. They stored large amounts of grain, hay, flour and other necessities in the church and they placed vessels and containers adequate to hold water in the cloister;...finally they brought thirty head of cattle on the hoof into the cloister, grazing them on the grass there and on the hay stored in the church", Letters from Ireland, (ed) O'Dwyer, B.W., (Kalamazoo, 1982), p.188. The evidence from the excavations at Hen Domen revealed that an area at the centre of the bailey was permanently cobbled, Barker.P.A., "Hen Domen", Current Arch., No.5, (1967), p.134.

to function.

The distribution of motte castles in Co.Kildare was overwhelmingly determined by the initial subinfeudation and baronial structure. Most of the primary land grants can be associated with a motte castle at their caputi. Some of the other mottes can be attributed to further subinfeudation of these primary grants by lesser lords. The individual location of mottes within this structure was then dependant on topographical circumstances, strategic concerns and the pre-existing communications network. When the soil groups on which the mottes were situated were considered, it would appear that although they were located on the best quality land such considerations had already been made by the Irish which they superceeded. Of the twenty five sites for which location could be definitely confirmed, fourteen were placed on the Grey Brown Podzolic great soil group, which in itself accounts for 43.93% of the total acreage of Kildare, eight were located on mineral complexes, while the remaining three, Ladycastle Lower, Clane, and Oldconnell, belonged to the Liffey regosols series.<sup>373</sup>

The choice of land on the basis of soil suitability was the concern of later subinfeudation and exploitation of the available agricultural area at the height of

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<sup>373</sup> Conry, M.J., Hammond, R.F. & O'Shea, T., (1970), op.cit., appended Soil Map of Co.Kildare.

expansion within the county during the course of the thirteenth century.<sup>374</sup> The general area of location was defined by the superimposition and substitution of an Anglo-Norman feudal hierarchy onto an existing Irish one, the case for a specific siting had then to be made. Personal preference of the owner or builder may have played a significant part in this decision. Instances of re-use of pre-existing features, natural or manmade, are as numerous in the placement of mottes throughout Ireland as in Kildare. Construction techniques were such that re-use of ringforts may be more widespread than previously considered. The obvious advantages of this method have been revealed only by infrequent excavations and the examination of exposed sections, such as that of the partially destroyed monument at Castletown Kilberry, Co.Meath.<sup>375</sup>

The use of gravel ridges to facilitate easy construction is frequently witnessed by the recorded destruction of mottes by the extraction of that material. In the last decade of the nineteenth century road construction contributed to the partial destruction of the motte-and-bailey castle at Rathmore during the excavation of gravel

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<sup>374</sup> See below, Chapter 5, p.233-235, on the distributon of moated sites.

<sup>375</sup> The motte of Castletown Kilberry, Co.Meath. "Section cut through the mound in March 1986 indicates that it was once a ringfort with a souterrain", Moore, M., (ed) Archaeological Inventory of Co.Meath, (Dublin, 1987), p.157.

from its base.<sup>376</sup> The builders of the motte-and-bailey at Naas however choose to ignore the gravel ridge at the southern extent of the modern town in favour of other locational attributes. Accordingly, the deployment of each site within Kildare exhibited certain shared criteria to which personal choice dictated the final location.

The initial Anglo-Norman land grants in Kildare provided the framework into which the network of motte castles was devised. As the historical sources reveal, there was little evidence of any real resistance to the consolidation of Anglo-Norman power within Kildare, and as such most of the motte castles in Kildare were settlement rather than campaign related.

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<sup>376</sup> Mayo, *The Earl of*, (1897), op.cit., p.112. Kildare County Council had to take action in 1955 to prevent further sand-digging at this site, O.P.W. Files, 1955.



Plate IV - Motte-and-bailey castle at Rathmore East



Plate V - Northern outer bank, Rathmore East



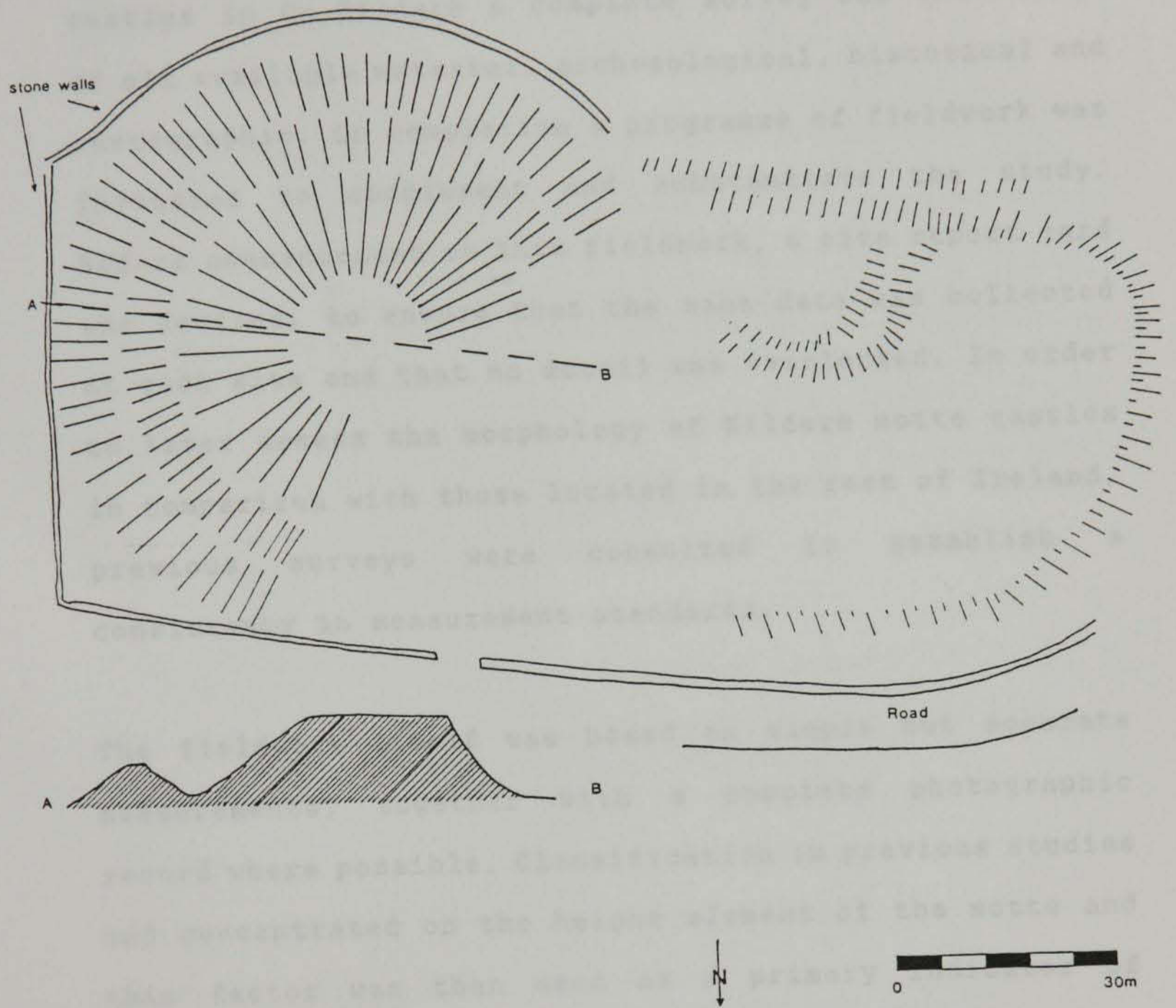


Figure 23. Motte castle at Rathmore (after Armitage).

## B. EXAMINATION AND CLASSIFICATION

In the preparation of the distribution map of motte castles in Co.Kildare a complete survey was undertaken of all available material, archaeological, historical and cartographic. On completion a programme of fieldwork was initiated to complement and substantiate the study. Before commencement on this fieldwork, a site report card was devised, to ensure that the same data was collected at each site and that no detail was overlooked. In order to later assess the morphology of Kildare motte castles in comparison with those located in the rest of Ireland, previous surveys were consulted to establish a consistency in measurement standards.

The fieldwork itself was based on simple but accurate measurements, together with a complete photographic record where possible. Classification in previous studies had concentrated on the height element of the motte and this factor was then used as a primary indicator of function. The sites below are arranged in the classification system devised by Muller-Wille and applied by King in his fieldwork on mottes in England and Wales.<sup>377</sup> The argument for adherence to this system of classification, in which height is recorded as the height above the surrounding ground level, as opposed to the system implemented by Graham, where height was measured

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<sup>377</sup> King, D.J.C., (1972), op.cit., p.101-13.

from the bottom of the surrounding fosse, has already been expressed by Cunningham.<sup>378</sup> The present author's views mirror those of the latter. The morphological statistics of seventeen of Kildare's motte castles were codified under the Muller-Wille system.

CLASS	HEIGHT	MOTTE&B.	MOTTES	TOTAL
1	> 10m	2	1	3
2	5-10m	9	4	13
3	< 5m	0	1	1

CLASS 1 ( >10M )

CLONCURRY  
 OLDCONNELL  
 RATHMORE EAST

CLASS 2 ( 5-10M )

BALLYSHANNON DEMESNE  
 CARBURY  
 CARRIGEEN  
 CASTLEREBAN SOUTH  
 DONODE BIG  
 HORTLAND  
 KILKEA DEMESNE  
 KILLHILL  
 LADYCASTLE LOWER  
 LONGTOWN DEMESNE  
 MAINHAM  
 MORRISTOWNBILLER  
 NAAS WEST

CLASS 3 ( <5M )

LACKAGH MORE

Figure 8. Classification table of Kildare motte castles

<sup>378</sup> Graham, B.J., (1980b), op.cit. Cunningham, G., (1987), op.cit., p.97-8.



Plate VI - Outer fosse of motte-and-bailey castle at  
Castle Reban South



Plate VII - Motte castle at Hortland

Of the classified group 64.7 % possessed baileys. The relevance of bailey association and the deployment of motte-and-bailey castles within the overall distribution shall be discussed at greater length below when the problems associated with the interpretation of function in relation to morphology are considered.

Of the seventeen sites classified, all but one, Castlereban South (Plate VI), is immediately identifiable as an Anglo-Norman motte castle. The inclusion of this site was based on the results of past surveys, historical inference, and the sites' own unique morphological make-up. Westropp had at the start of this century included Reban in his list of the chief mottes in Ireland, when he described it as a "deep square entrenchment".<sup>379</sup> The site however had been partially destroyed during the previous century in the extraction of limestone gravel, as noted by O'Donovan in the Ordnance Survey Letters for Co.Kildare.<sup>380</sup> This destruction was to continue, as FitzGerald later added that nearly two-thirds of the site had been "carted away" by the 1890's.<sup>381</sup> The earthwork appears to have been a platform ringfort which was re-used by Richard de St.Michael as

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<sup>379</sup> Westropp, T.J., "On Irish Motes and Early Norman Castles", J.R.S.A.I. (1904), p.343.

<sup>380</sup> O'Donovan, J., Ordnance Survey Letters for Kildare, (ed) O'Flanagan, M., 2 Vols., (Bray, 1930), Vol.1, p.72.

<sup>381</sup> FitzGerald, W., "Castle Rheban", J.K.A.S., Vol.2, (1897), p.168.

his castle. Taylor's map of Kildare supported this supposition by an unusual additional comment to his work, by which the site is annotated as "A remarkable high Rath".<sup>382</sup> On the basis of the present extant remains of the earthwork, particularly with regard to the height element, the site was treated as a motte-and-bailey rather than a possible ringwork castle. This assumption was substantiated by Armitage's Book of Mottes where the plan and section of the earthwork depict a motte-and-bailey castle. (Fig.9) The extent of the destruction caused by gravel extraction is clearly shown and illustrated further by the inclusion of a man with shovel, ass and cart excavating gravel at the heart of the mound.<sup>383</sup>

Definition of the function of the remnant earthen mound created various problems. The scaled versions of some of the more complete mottes may somewhat assist in the appraisal of the Norman castle builder but add little to what is known of methods of construction. The nature of the buildings and fortifications which surmounted and surrounded these monuments of former lordly power and dominion remain unresolved.

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<sup>382</sup> A Map of the County of Kildare by Alexander Taylor, 1783, (ed) Andrews, J.H., (R.I.A. Dublin, 1983).

<sup>383</sup> YAS MS 521/C, Armitage, E., The Book of Mottes, p.39.

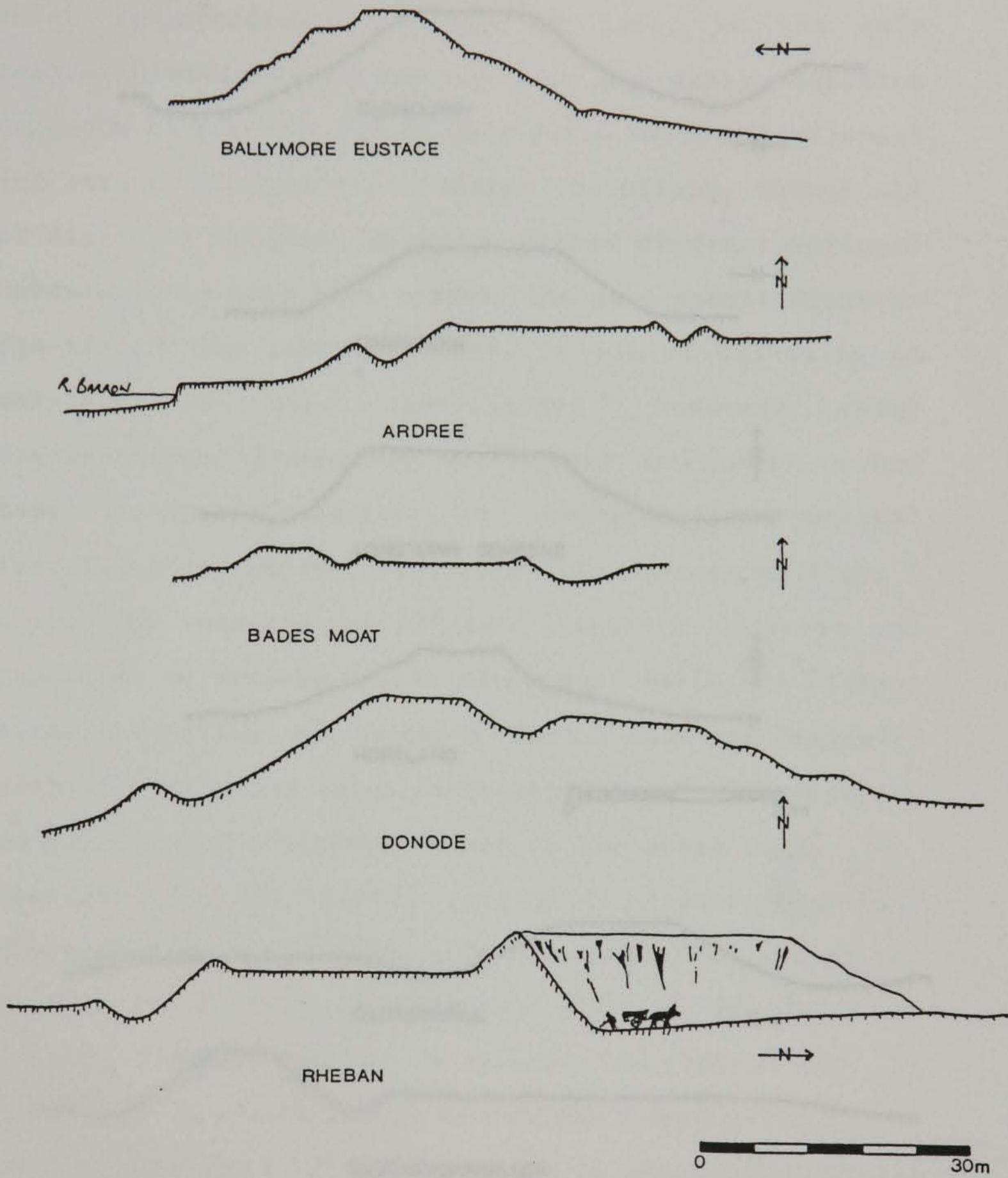


Figure 9. Kildare motte profiles (after Armitage)

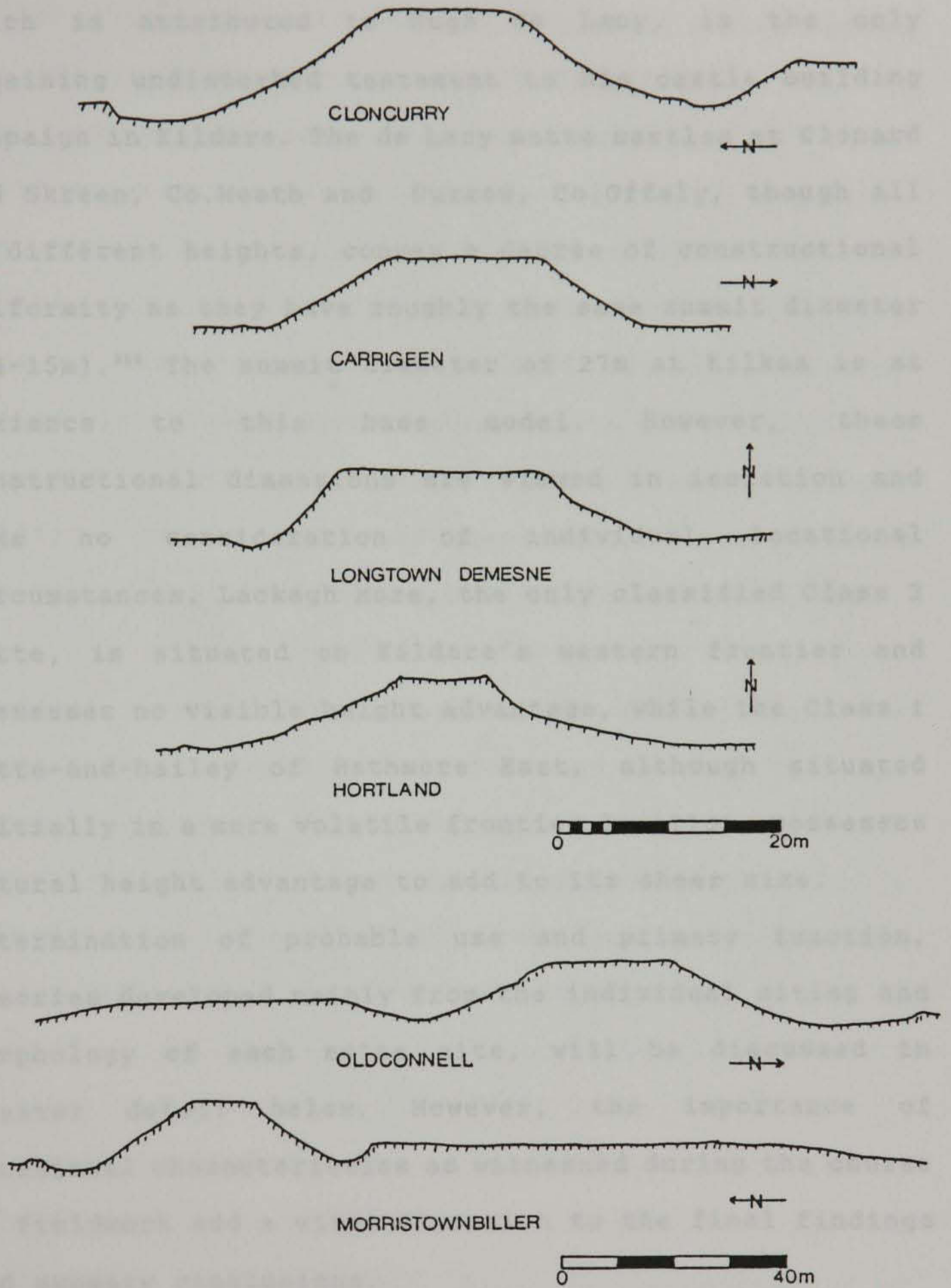


Figure 10. Kildare motte castle profiles

*Irish Castles*, p.135. 'There do they want to  
 Durrow-Castles, to build a castle'. The *Annals of the  
 B.C. (ed) Hennessy, v.2, 2 Vols. London, 1811, 116-18.*



The motte castle at Kilkea Demesne, the construction of which is attributed to Hugh de Lacy, is the only remaining undisturbed testament to his castle building campaign in Kildare. The de Lacy motte castles at Clonard and Skreen, Co.Meath and Durrow, Co.Offaly, though all of different heights, convey a degree of constructional uniformity as they have roughly the same summit diameter (14-15m).<sup>384</sup> The summit diameter of 27m at Kilkea is at variance to this base model. However, these constructional dimensions are viewed in isolation and take no consideration of individual locational circumstances. Lackagh More, the only classified Class 3 motte, is situated on Kildare's western frontier and possesses no visible height advantage, while the Class 1 motte-and-bailey of Rathmore East, although situated initially in a more volatile frontier location, possesses natural height advantage to add to its sheer size. Determination of probable use and primary function, theories developed mainly from the individual siting and morphology of each motte site, will be discussed in greater detail below. However, the importance of locational characteristics as witnessed during the course of fieldwork add a vital dimension to the final findings and summary conclusions.

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<sup>384</sup> "In Meath he [Hugh de Lacy] built the castle of Clonard,.....a castle for Adam de Futepoi [at Skreen]", Expugnatio Hibernica, p.195. "Hugh de Lacy went to Durrow-Colmcille, to build a castle", The Annals of Loch Ce, (ed) Hennessy, W.H., 2 Vols. (London, 1871), 1186 AD.

Each motte castle surveyed was quite unique. Although similar characteristics were displayed it would appear that the particular topographical location was not the only influential factor in the decision of final construction. Apart from the height difference, the sites also varied in the shape and size of their attached baileys, and the width of the surrounding fosses. The lapse of time, climatic and animal assisted erosion, coupled with manmade disturbance, add to the difficulties of interpretation. However, basic constructional variations may be noted and these become more apparent upon consideration of mottes built in close proximity.

The motte sites listed in Appendix 2, are the result of documentary and field survey. Included in this list are many sites, such as that of Narraghmore, which only have documentary evidence to support the existence of an early Anglo-Norman castle.<sup>385</sup> That these castles were motte castles rather than ringworks is another dilemma yet to be resolved.

Fieldwork involved the inspection of over ninety sites, most of which were the result of cartographic evidence. The frequent use of the word "moat" in the annotation of earthworks of different typology, on the various editions of the Kildare Ordnance Survey maps, accompanied by

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<sup>385</sup> Hugh de Lacy built "a castle for Robert FitzRichard at Norrach"; Expugnatio Hibernica, p.195.

representations of closely hatched mounds, was perhaps the greatest contributor of "bogus" sites. Sheet No.20 of the Ordnance Survey 6 inch map displays three such sites, in the townlands of Caureen, Rathgorragh, and Wolfestown. Likewise Sheet No.14 features "Kavanagh's Moat" (16.860267), "Loughanure Moat" (16.858278), and "Puddlehall Moat" (16.935276), the latter of which is a fine example of a moated site. Most of the "moat" sites were identified as either tumuli or raised raths. However, among these were the Anglo-Norman motte castle sites of the "Moat of Ardsull", "Knockashee Moat", and "Birtown Moat".<sup>386</sup> Many of the sites were found to be destroyed by the time they were surveyed, nonetheless the total fieldwork contributed to related areas of locational assessment and information gathered from local sources.

Early estate maps of Kildare, most of which are housed in the National Library of Ireland, were of immense value as a record of sites which were either overlooked or destroyed prior to the first mapping of Kildare by the Ordnance Survey.<sup>387</sup> The original site of the castle of Kildare is preserved in a survey of the town of Kildare

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<sup>386</sup> These are to be found in the respective townlands of Ardsull, Broadleas Commons, and Burtown Big.

<sup>387</sup> The mounds recorded at Leixlip Demesne (16.992341) [N.L.I. Ms. 21.F.37(157)] and Eadestown (16.948176) [N.L.I. Ms. 21.F.35(55)] were among many which were discovered and investigated through this avenue of research.

in 1757.<sup>388</sup> Later maps exhibit the outline of the area occupied by the motte castle after the mound had been destroyed as the site is retained by the property boundaries.<sup>389</sup> It is from this detailed map evidence that the historical documentation of an early Anglo-Norman earthwork castle at Kildare may be shown to be that of a motte castle.

In the course of fieldwork previous surveys were of great importance as they added perspective to initial field assessment and conclusions. The townland of Mountrice boasts a small flat topped mound with commanding views of the surrounding countryside. However, information gathered locally recalled the prior existence of an earthen ramp which adjoined the mound. This evidence was further attested by the O.P.W. files which suggested that this mound probably served as the platform for a summer house.<sup>390</sup> The ramp no longer exists and a sizeable portion of the mound has been removed by bulldozer to fill a nearby hole. A water tank was inserted into the top of the mound in the late 1960's but no finds were discovered.<sup>391</sup> Viewed in isolation this mound has all the appearance of a small motte which has suffered partial

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<sup>388</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 22004 (5).

<sup>389</sup> See below, Chapter 2, p.71-2.

<sup>390</sup> O.P.W. Files 1957-8.

<sup>391</sup> The landowner remarked that he would have previously levelled the mound had it not been for the water tank. 25 Aug. 1984.

destruction over the years. There are certain factors against a positive identification, such as the absence of any trace of a surrounding fosse, even through slight crop-mark evidence, and the close proximity of the motte castle at Lackagh More. Consideration of morphological features alone was thus greatly assisted with reference to earlier surveys.

Numerous natural features also bore an uncanny resemblance to mottes in shape and size. In some instances would be defenders would not even have to scarp the sides of a hillock to give the desired motte appearance.<sup>392</sup> Although tempted at times to boost the motte castle count by their possible inclusion, these sites did not fit in with the overall picture of Anglo-Norman Kildare as assembled from the historical record. In the absence of archaeological or historical information locational characteristics were used to substantiate the morphological appraisal. The list of motte castles presented in this study was thus reliant on a set of determinant factors. As such it may be argued that it represents the minimum number of motte castles in the county. However, where a raised rath was located in an area of known Anglo-Norman activity it was surveyed and deemed as such unless archaeological evidence to the contrary was brought to bear. The obvious lessons from

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<sup>392</sup> Moteenanow (16.808097) and the natural gravel mound at Clonard New, are two such examples.

the Pollardstown excavation warns against the use of too constrained a morphological classification.

### 3. FUNCTION AND CHRONOLOGY

In the absence of detailed historical information and much needed archaeological investigation the discussion of the functional role of motte castles has, apart from conclusions drawn from comparative studies, revolved largely around the analysis of morphology and distribution within the field area. Giraldus however had little doubt as to the functional role which these earthwork castles should play in the conquest and subsequent settlement of Ireland. "For it is far, far better to begin by gradually connecting up a system of castles built in suitable places and by proceeding cautiously with their construction, than to build large numbers of castles at great distances from each other, sited hap-hazardly in various locations, without their forming any system of mutual support or being able to relieve each other in times of crisis."<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.249.



Plate VIII - Motte-and-bailey castle at Donode Big



Plate IX - Motte-and-bailey castle at Morrystown  
Biller

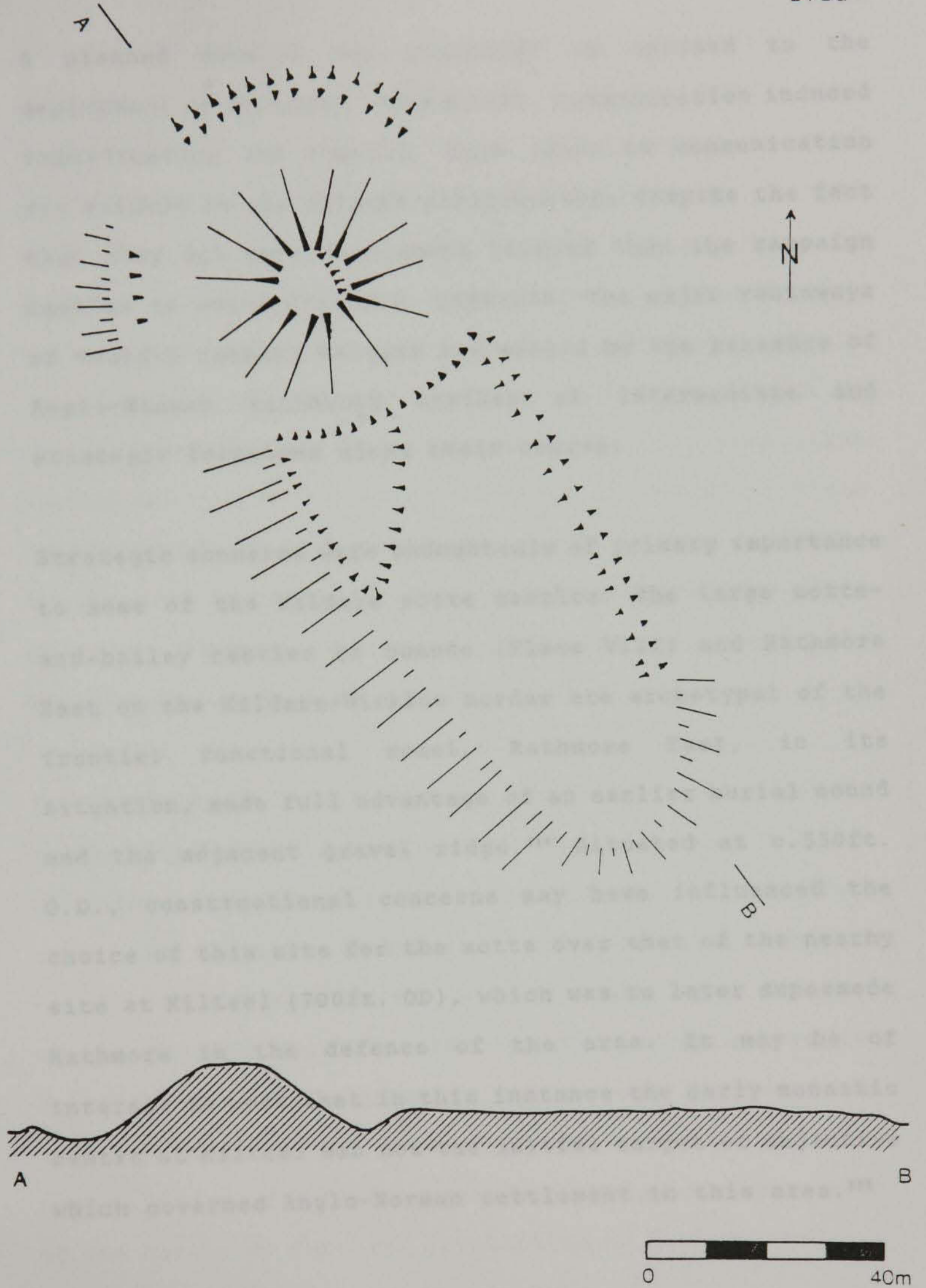


Figure 24. Motte-and-bailey castle at Morrystownbiller.

Morrystownbiller, A. & Wadcock, R. X., (ed) *Medieval Settlements in the British Isles* (London, 1970), p. 107.



A planned network was envisaged as opposed to the deployment of isolated strongholds. Communication induced stabilization and control. Such lines of communication are evident in the Kildare distribution, despite the fact that they are more settlement related than the campaign castles to which Giraldus referred. The major routeways of twelfth century Kildare are marked by the presence of Anglo-Norman earthwork castles at intermediate and strategic locations along their course.

Strategic concerns were undoubtedly of primary importance to some of the Kildare motte castles. The large motte-and-bailey castles of Donode (Plate VIII) and Rathmore East on the Kildare/Wicklow border are archetypal of the frontier functional model. Rathmore East, in its situation, made full advantage of an earlier burial mound and the adjacent gravel ridge.<sup>394</sup> Situated at c.550ft. O.D., constructional concerns may have influenced the choice of this site for the motte over that of the nearby site at Killeel (700ft. OD), which was to later supersede Rathmore in the defence of the area. It may be of interest to note that in this instance the early monastic centre at Killeel was not the initial target or objective which governed Anglo-Norman settlement in this area.<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>394</sup> J.K.A.S. Vol.3, p.381.

<sup>395</sup> Gwynn, A. & Hadcock, R.N., (ed) Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland (London, 1970), p.395.

The recognisable defensive line of early castles at Rathmore, Donode and Ballymore Eustace, was still very much in existence nearly two centuries later. In 1355 "Geoffrey FitzEustace and Richard de Penkestown, sheriff of Kildare, were directed to see that the garrisons of Kilterteel, Rathmore, Ballymore and Graney....were all up to their full strength so as to resist the incursions of the O'Tooles, O'Byrnes and MacMurroughs".<sup>396</sup> With regard to Rathmore and Donode the existence of a public road which linked the two motte sites is noted in c.1200.<sup>397</sup> These motte-and-bailey castles possessed the primary defensive function of the creation of a barrier against the Irish of the mountainous region between them and the Blessington to Saggart road.

The command of height was an important factor and the motte builders made best use of the landscape to avail of this strategic advantage. The location of the first castle at Carbury illustrates this strategem. Situated on a rock outcrop in the Bog of Allen, the isolated nature of this fortification appears precarious in the overall distribution pattern, nonetheless it remained an important Anglo-Norman stronghold throughout the medieval period. (Plate II) Carbury castle functioned as the caput of the barony of Carbury, established by Meiler FitzHenry and later held by the de Birmingham.

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<sup>396</sup> Tresham, p.56.

<sup>397</sup> Alen's Reg., op.cit., p.28 18b(86).

The majority of motte castles in county Kildare played a multi-functional role. Whether of primary strategic importance, such as those situated at important river crossing points, towns, villages, and small settlements soon grew up around these castles. The motte became an integral part of the embryonic medieval landscape. As noted above, most of the major land grants in the initial "shake-up" soon witnessed the construction of an earthen fortress. The location of these first castles was usually superimposed on a pre-existing settlement and these sites were often mentioned within the text of the original grant.

Although there is no longer a motte castle at Kildare, the presence of one is well documented in the early sources for the period.<sup>398</sup> Orpen suggested that Kildare was the principal manor of the lordship of north Leinster during the lifetime of Strongbow.<sup>399</sup> Kildare town in its early years of Anglo-Norman occupation was also used as a base for sorties.

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<sup>398</sup> Song, l.2771; Ormond Deeds, Vol.1, Deed No.4; Topographica Hibernica: The History and Topography of Ireland by Gerald of Wales, (ed) O'Meara, J.J., (Harmondsworth, 1982), p.52,66.

<sup>399</sup> Normans, Vol.1, p.382. Song, l.2695-8;  
 "At Dublin was King Henry  
 And at Kildare the noble earl.  
 There the earl abode  
 With as many men as he had."

"At Kildare he stayed,  
with all the forces he had.  
Often he entered Offaly  
in order to plunder O'Dempsey".<sup>400</sup>

However Kildare's role as a frontier campaign castle seems to have been short lived. The motte castle of Lackagh, west of Kildare, does not possess a bailey nor does it evidence great strategic importance. It functioned as caput of the manor of Lackagh and represented its administrative and focal centre. The time interval between the construction of these two castles may have witnessed the pacification of this eastern region of Offaly and thus an explanation for Lackagh's non-military appearance. It is becoming more apparent that motte construction in county Kildare in the early years of the invasion was carried out in an era of Anglo-Norman control and relative peace. The lines of frontier posts, such as those of Meath suggested by Graham, were only realistically devised and deployed on Kildare's eastern border. The true campaign castles of the western region lie outside the field area in the modern counties of Laois and Offaly. Some Kildare castles initially acted as campaign castles, and Kildare, Carbury, Rathmore, and Ballymore Eustace typify this group. The remainder of Kildare's motte castles were contemporaneous with initial subinfeudation and may be identified by their functional role as the means by which the stabilization and development of a manorial Kildare was achieved.

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<sup>400</sup> Song, 1.2771-4.

As already noted, 64.7% of the extant classified motte castles possess, or possessed at one stage, a bailey. Of these eleven sites, two belong to Class I and the remainder to Class II. Graham noted that the presence of a bailey most frequently indicated a seigneurial manor or that of a purpose built military stronghold on the periphery of the lordship of Meath.<sup>401</sup> In both Meath and Ulster, case studies have acknowledged the role of motte-and-bailey castles as frontier outposts and protectors of initial settlement development.<sup>402</sup> Graham's later definition of the functional role of motte-and-baileys as "defensive fortifications located either on seignorial manors or principal land grants or on the periphery of the liberty (or both)", reflects the problems of functional definition based on distributional evidence alone.<sup>403</sup>

The primary purpose of motte-and-bailey castles within Kildare eludes immediate evaluation due to the complexity of their inter-relationship within the distribution pattern. The average platform area of the extant baileys is 37m by 37m. The baileys in comparison with motte construction appear to have no schematic constraints. The difference in lay-out is epitomised by the varied choice

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<sup>401</sup> Graham, B.J., (1980b), op.cit.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid., p.47-8; McNeill, T.E., (1980), op.cit., p.165.

<sup>403</sup> Graham, B.J., (1980b), op.cit., p.50.

of orientation in relation to the adjacent motte. With such a small representative number the percentage directional preference of bailey to motte has a tendency to mislead and it would thus be more accurate to state that within the field area no baileys were situated to the north or north-east of mottes.<sup>404</sup> Orientation was governed by topographical constraints and presumably the constant of an owner's personal preference. Though baileys varied in length (width was invariably determined by the base dimensions of the motte), elongated like that at Morrinstown Biller or short like the terrace-like bailey at Naas, the bailey afforded the dweller a further protected area with numerous options for its use. A garrison for troops within the stockade has been mooted as a primary motive for bailey construction, however the hypothesis is difficult to account for in the light of the Kildare distribution.

Their use in border locations is aptly exemplified by consideration of the two fine motte-and-baileys of Rathmore and Donode on Kildare's eastern flank. Donode has more of the appearance of a large motte surface divided in two rather than a motte and bailey as the platform areas of both are at roughly the same height. Viewed in isolation, in the context of the modern county of Kildare, these two fortifications do not initially

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<sup>404</sup> Orientational preference of the baileys: East 4; East.S.E. 1; South 1; South.S.W. 2; West 2; North.W. 1.

represent a formidable settlement protective screen. However when the motte-and-bailey castles of Wicklow are included in this overview a defensive chain may easily be recognised.<sup>405</sup> Nonetheless the problems associated with the arrangement of site types into supposedly pre-planned patterns are manifold. The constraints of this technique encourage misconceptions with regard to the original purpose and function of these earthwork castles. The motte-and-bailey of Killhill, c.2 miles north-west of Rathmore, may perhaps be linked to the possible defensive line which monitored the Wicklow foothills. However it may also form part of another distinct deployment associated with those of Ardscull, Ballyshannon, and Naas, to keep communications open on the main overland route between Dublin and Athy and thus access to the Barrow valley.

The two motte-and-bailey castles of Mainham and Ladycastle Lower are situated in close proximity to the two mottes at Clane and Longtown Demesne. Ladycastle Lower, situated near Straffan, is located on the river Liffey and has an obvious strategic value. The motte-and-bailey at Mainham however presents no initial military advantage and it may be suggested that John de Hereford's objective was motivated more by ostentation than military concern. (Plate XI)

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<sup>405</sup> The three motte-and-baileys of Knockroe (16.940053), Castleruddery Lower (16.915944), and Boleylug (16.904884).



Plate X - Motte castle at Longtown Demesne



Plate XI - Motte-and-bailey castle at Mainham



The curious arrangement of motte castles in this area may thus be best explained within the context of the initial grants of land to the de Hereford brothers, the location of which directly coincides with the placenames specified in these grants. The association of the two large motte-and-bailey castles of Oldconnell (Plate XII) and Morrystownbiller (Plate IX) is made more curious by the location of Pollardstown ringwork castle in their immediate vicinity.

Similar instances of close proximity of motte and ringwork have generally been taken as an indication that the ringwork is the earlier site.<sup>406</sup> However, the continuity of settlement suggested by the dating evidence for Pollardstown, suggests that the three Anglo-Norman military earthworks were in use simultaneously in the early decades of the conquest, within a one mile radius of each other. Pollardstown is situated only 3/4 mile north-west of Morrystown Biller. The impressive motte-and-bailey at Oldconnell displays the classic attribute of a river side location. Although not in a commanding position with regard to the present modern river crossing, the placename evidence suggested by Newbridge may indicate that it overlooked an earlier bridging point.

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<sup>406</sup> King, D.J.C. & Alcock, L., (1969), *op.cit.*, p.90-127.



Plate XII - Motte-and-bailey castle at Oldconnell  
(1984)



Plate XIII - Motte-and-bailey castle at Oldconnell  
(1991)

The juxtaposition of these three sites has yet to be resolved. Non-contemporaneity of usage could be argued but is flawed by the fact that Pollardstown, on the basis of archaeological findings, reflects continued military deployment.<sup>407</sup> The three earthworks belong to three separate modern parishes and their respective townlands reflect large compact units within the Kildare context. The military control and administration of such, dispensed by the garrisoned castles of Pollardstown, Morristown Biller, and Oldconnell, may well reflect a tactical location of castles in this area. This strategic placement of castles afforded easy inter-communication and well protected administration centres from which different regions could be governed. Such an explanation could be applied to the close proximity of the motte castles at Clane, Mainham and Longtown Demesne. Such a hypothesis holds little weight without the support of documentary sources but is worthy of examination and further discussion.

The earthwork castle may be used as an index of military presence and thus an indication of the logistical situation in Kildare at the start of the invasion. As already stated, pre-existing settlement sites presented the Anglo-Normans with a form of ready-made organization and it was towards these areas that they focused their initial attention. The density of motte castle

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<sup>407</sup> Fanning, T., (1973-74), op.cit., p.251-261.

distribution in particular areas mirror the individual circumstances of each location at a certain period of time. Heavy resistance may have acted as a catalyst to castle construction. However, in the assessment of motte castle distribution in Kildare with specific reference to military deployment, location represents a primary consideration. While the communications network was made secure it was the choice of land and settlement advantages which were the decisive factors in site location. Once constructed the motte functioned as the seat of the lord, the focal point of the manor, centre of its administration, and garrison for its troops. The provision of security attracted settlers and assured the beginnings of a manorial settlement.

The average summit diameter of the mottes surveyed was c.16m. The Anglo-Normans made best use of the apparently small summit area through the construction of wooden towers . The extent taken at Cloncurry in 1304 records that a one roomed building with a wooden roof was situated on the motte top.<sup>408</sup> Historical documentation of structures on the motte summits at Ballyshannon and Ardsnull relate to a later period. Though these may be construed as cases of continuity of usage the structures, undoubtedly, are not the originals. To date, archaeological investigation has provided no further information with regard to the wooden structures which once crowned the mottes of

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<sup>408</sup> O'Loan, J., (1961), op.cit., p.14-36.

Kildare. None of the Kildare motte castles had their wooden superstructures replaced by later stone keeps. The later stone castle at Carbury was built within the bailey of the earlier earthwork castle. The era of military construction in stone, prevalent from the early years of the thirteenth century, may well reflect a subsequent decline in the use of the motte castle as caput and home of the lord. The exposed nature of motte summits did not represent the most comfortable form of lordly accommodation, even with consideration of the windbreak afforded by a strong palisade. In 1210 when King John stayed at Naas he preferred the use of a tent, "at Naas [apud Nassam]...10 marks paid to Robin de Camera, when the King lay in a tent."<sup>409</sup>

The results of archaeological enquiry shed no new light on the function of any one of the Kildare motte castles. The excavation directed by Campbell, to the immediate east of the North Motte at Naas, was disappointing in the paucity of finds.<sup>410</sup> It is unlikely that the medieval stone lined pits uncovered by the excavation were related to the initial motte settlement, as the pottery evidence suggested a late thirteenth/early fourteenth century date. The morphological evidence of the motte itself suggests that the bailey was located on its western side,

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<sup>409</sup> C.D.I., Vol.1, No.401, 24 June 1210.

<sup>410</sup> Campbell, K., "Archaeological excavation at Main Street North, Naas, Co.Kildare, 1979". Unpublished preliminary excavation report.

represented by a small lunnate terrace. The excavated area was therefore presumably outside the earthworks precincts.<sup>411</sup>

An investigation prior to reconstruction work on the site of the motte in Kildare town revealed that previous building projects had removed all archaeological deposits down to the level of the natural sands and gravel. No archaeological material was uncovered in the course of the investigation and further excavation of an archaeological nature was deemed unnecessary.<sup>412</sup> Both excavations were rescue projects and thus their form probably the two prime motte sites of Anglo-Norman Kildare add little to the historical record. Apart from stray finds found close to the sites of mottes in the field area, only one find to date has come from the summit area of a motte. This was at Kilkea Lower where a portion of a thirteenth/fourteenth century green glazed strap handle was found on the motte top.<sup>413</sup>

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<sup>411</sup> Further monitoring of re-development work close to the motte in 1990 provided no new archaeological evidence. O'Brien, E., "Moatville, Abbey Road, Naas", in Bennett, I., (ed) Excavations, 1990, (Dublin, 1991), p.38.

<sup>412</sup> Murtagh, B., A preliminary archaeological report concerning the reconstruction of "The Silken Thomas", Market Square, Kildare, (1986). See also O'Carroll, F., "Kildare, Castle", in Bennett, I., (ed), Excavations, 1989, (1990), p.32-3.

<sup>413</sup> N.M.I. Reg. No. 545 (1976). Pers. Comm., Con Manning (finder), 1987. Armitage also noted that "a piece of Norman red pottery with green glaze" was uncovered one foot below the ground surface at Ardree, Book of Mottes, op.cit., p.41.

Due to the lack of direct historical references and the fact that not one Kildare motte castle has been the subject of archaeological investigation for research purposes, the discussion of the function of these earthworks weighs heavily on comparison, inference and conjecture. The meagre historical sources do not reveal the military capacity of these motte castles as they provide no reference to native sieges or sporadic attacks.<sup>414</sup> It is not until the seventeenth century that historical evidence is forthcoming with regard to the re-use, in a military capacity, of these still impressive earthworks.

One such instance is the description of the siege and capture of Ballyshannon castle outlined in a letter from Col. Hewson, Governor of Dublin, sent to William Lenthall Esq., Speaker of the Parliament, dated "Bellisonan, March 3, 1649".<sup>415</sup> The description of the castles outer defences made reference to the motte as "a mount with a Fort upon it".<sup>416</sup> In the account of the siege preparations

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<sup>414</sup> Confrontations between the Anglo-Normans and the Gaelic-Irish may still have assumed the nature of pitched battles in open ground, such as that fought on the Curragh plains when William Marshall was killed; The Annals of Connacht, (ed) Freeman, A.M., (Dublin, 1944), p.49, 1234.3.

<sup>415</sup> The Tanner Letters, (ed) McNeill, C., (Dublin, 1943), p.326-7; Graves, J., "The surrender, in March, 1649-50, of Ballyshannon, in the County of Kildare, to the Parliamentary forces", Jn. Kilk. South-East Ire. Arch. Soc., Vol.I, 1856, (1858), p.110

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*, p.327.

the following was related; "we played our Guns and Mortar-piece at the Fort upon the Mount, intending before night to storme it, having ladders and all necessaries ready, but before any breach was made, the Governor.....treated with me about the surrender, which was concluded accordingly".<sup>417</sup>

The motte was still regarded at this stage as a formidable bastion, even with the advantage of artillery. The envisaged approach to sucessfully storm the motte details methods which may have been used as siege tactics in the late twelfth century. The motte does not appear to have been altered structurally from its original state, however the disturbed area immediately to the north of the site as it stands today may in fact be the "outworke" E, depicted in an etching of a plan of the castle in 1649. (Fig.11)

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<sup>417</sup> Graves, J., (1858), op.cit., p.111.



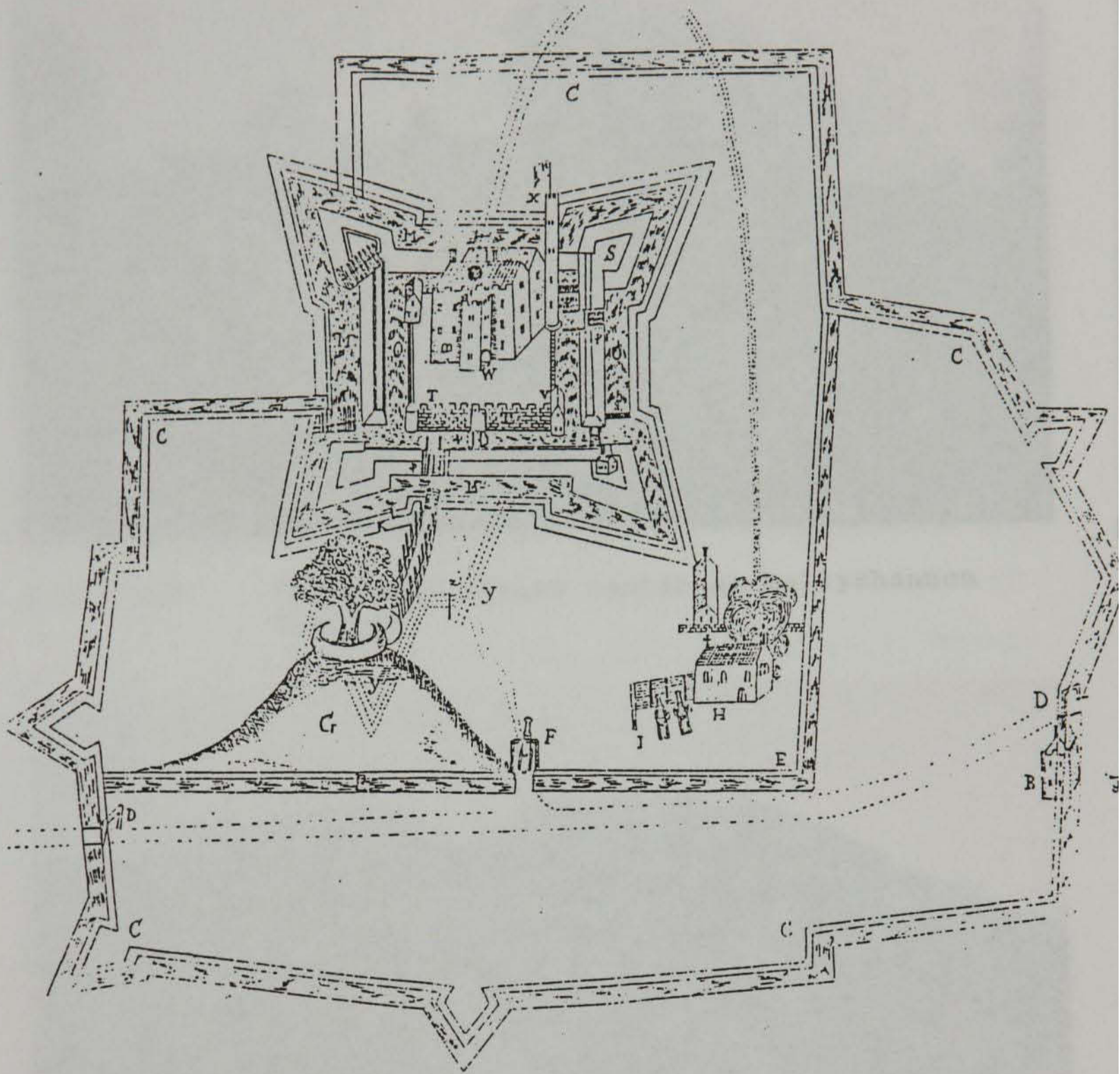


Figure 11. Ballyshannon, 1648. (after Graves, 1858)



Plate XIV - Motte-and-bailey castle at Ballyshannon  
Demesne



Plate XV - Motte castle at Ardscull

In a manuscript entitled "The Book of General Orders from 1654", the inhabitants of county Kildare petitioned the state to "contribute thirty pounds towards the finishing of a Fort....they have built at the Mote of Ardsnull lying near the Barrow, and upon a considerable road, and that the same may be a Garrison."<sup>418</sup> The petition would thus suggest that a fort was commenced, the construction of which probably accounts for the present unusual shape of the earthwork. (Plate XV)

This hypothesis is further supported by reference to a plan and description of the interior of the motte by Beaufort which was reproduced in Gough's edition of Camden's Britannia (originally published in 1600, which he illustrated and enlarged in 1789).<sup>419</sup> (Fig.12 ) The first edition carries no such description or illustration and therefore as such may be attributed to the partial construction of a Cromwellian fort there in the pre-1654 period. The military potential of the earlier Anglo-Norman castle was thus still recognised and utilised in the seventeenth century county.

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<sup>418</sup> J.K.A.S., Vol.2, (1896-99), p.188. The original reference was not located.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid. p.190-1. Camden, W., Brittania, (London, 1600, 1607); Gough, R., (ed) Britannia, (3 Vols., 1789), Vol.3, p.483.

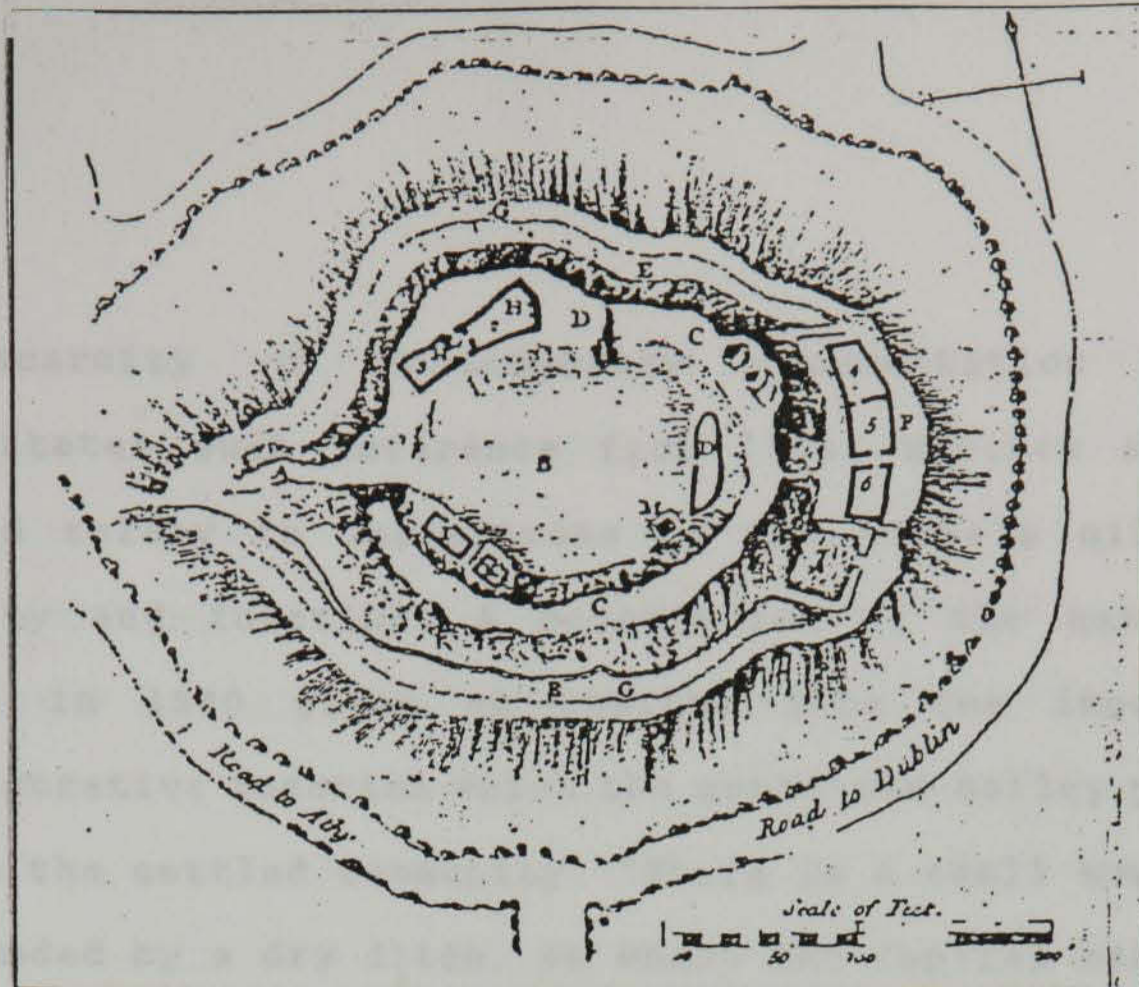


Figure 12. Plan of the Interior of the Moat of Ardsclull  
By W. Beaufort  
(From Gough's "Camden's Britannia", 1789.)

- E, is the mote or ditch, 150 ft. long, 100 ft. wide, and 40 ft. above the level of the country.
- B, the rath, or cuirt, from 12 to 20 ft. wide.
- G, the parapet, 20 ft. above the level of the country.
- C, the ban, or rampart of earth, from 8 to 10 ft. wide.
- A, the entrance from the west, 16 ft. above the platform of the fort, and 34 ft. above the mote (E), being from 16 to 20 ft. wide at the top, and from 40 to 50 ft. at the bottom.
- D, the amhaire, or radharc, that is, a speculum or watchtower, wheron the habitation of the chief was generally situated, and wheron were constantly placed the guards or watchmen. This is 120 ft. by 45, rises somewhat higher than the ban (C), and commands a most delightful and extensive prospect. On this may be traced the foundations of a building at (H).
- H, consisting of two apartments, of which that marked 1 is 14 ft. by 10; No. 2 is 30 ft. by 23; No. 3 is 14 ft. by 20. In that marked 2 about six years since Mr. Beaufort discovered, near two feet beneath the surface, a firehearth, consisting of four large stones, one for the hearth, one at the back, and one at each side; they were neatly hammered, but not chiselled, and on the hearth were found some pieces of coal we now denominate Kilkenny coal, and also pieces of wood burnt. There could also be traced the foundations of other buildings which have since been dug up to make room for a crop of potatoes.
- L, is an irregular apartment, 50 ft. by 15.
- M, was either a well or an entrance to a cave under the rath 10 ft. square.
- I and K were apartmenst in a recess of the parapet; I is 30 ft. by 12, and K is 20 ft. by 12.
- 4, 5, 6, and 7. The foundations of the apartments, or barracks, marked Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 7, are situated without the ban, and are in the whole 100 feet by 20. No. 7 is 30ft. square.

The scarcity of contemporary documentation which necessitates such inference from later sources is not limited solely to comparisons of the motte's military capacity and function. A description of the manor of "Kyll" in 1540 gives an insight into the important administrative function which the motte-and-bailey played within the settled community. "There is a small mountain surrounded by a dry ditch, on which the capital messuage of the manor was situated, and where the Court Baron is still held when the turn for it comes."<sup>420</sup> Of similar note it was recorded in 1540 that in Kildare town that there was "a messuage called the courte house, held of the priory in fee-farm by the earl of Kildare".<sup>421</sup> The cartographic evidence records that this court house was located on the same site as that formerly occupied by the motte castle.<sup>422</sup> Thus in both cases there is evidence of continuity of administrative function.

The specific chronology of the motte-and-bailey castles in Kildare is as yet undetermined. There are no definite references to construction dates within the contemporary documentary sources, however the records, in a number of cases, provide evidence in the form of a terminus ante

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<sup>420</sup> White, N.B., (ed) Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions, 1540-41, (Dublin, 1943), p.39.

<sup>421</sup> Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions, 1540-1541, (ed) White, N.B., (Dublin, 1943), p.157.

<sup>422</sup> Comparison of N.L.I. Ms. 22004 (5) and manuscript map "Kildare Town", scale 1:1056, 1838, (Ordnance Survey office, Dublin).

quem for the construction of the castle. The castle of Kildare is thus known to have been built prior to 1185, which is the first secure documentary reference to the site.<sup>423</sup> The castle and its garrison are also mentioned in Giraldus's Topographia Hibernica, although this is not accompanied by a precise date.<sup>424</sup> Giraldus first visited Ireland in 1183 and later in 1185, and the first edition of the Topography appeared in 1188. Whereas these references prove the existence of a castle at Kildare in the early years of the 1180's, it is more likely that the first motte castle was erected here a decade earlier.<sup>425</sup> Recent archaeological investigations at the site discovered that the occupation layers had been removed during the course of previous building projects and therefore the possibility of establishing the castle's chronology by archaeological means.<sup>426</sup>

In his comments on the pacification of Ireland by Hugh de Lacy, Giraldus noted that "he succeeded in reducing to an ordered condition all that his predecessors had either destroyed or thrown into confusion, and was the first to succeed in deriving any profit from that which

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<sup>423</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.I, p.4, "a place without the castle of Kildare". Dated c.1185.

<sup>424</sup> O'Meara, J., (ed) The Topography of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis p.66.

<sup>425</sup> It is of course possible that a ringwork existed here before the erection of the later motte for which there is cartographic evidence.

<sup>426</sup> Murtagh, B., (1986), op.cit.

had brought others nothing but trouble".<sup>427</sup> Giraldus attributed this success to de Lacy's programme of encastellation as much as to his conciliation of the vanquished. De Lacy was also to carry out a similar programme in Leinster in 1181 prior to his recall to England. In his capacity as governor he was accompanied in this exercise by his replacements John, constable of Chester, and Richard de Pec. "They joined with him in building a very large number of castles throughout Leintster. For hitherto very many castles had been built in Meath, but few in Leinster".<sup>428</sup> It has been tentatively conjectured that this may have indicated a concerted incastellation policy on behalf of the newly established Dublin government.<sup>429</sup>

In the summer of that year, 1181, a castle was built at "Tristerdermot in Ui Muireadhaigh for Walter de Ridelisford".<sup>430</sup> There is no documentary or cartographic evidence to suggest that there ever was an Anglo-Norman earthwork castle at Castledermot, despite the obvious placename inference and the mention of a prison there in the early documentary sources.<sup>431</sup> Orpen noted that the

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<sup>427</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.191.

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid.*, p.195.

<sup>429</sup> See below, Chapter 2, p.50-1.

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid.*, p.195.

<sup>431</sup> C.D.I., Vol.III, No.921, p.416. Referred to as "Walter de Rideleford's prison" in 1234, C.D.I., Vol.I, No.2139.

early English versions of the Expugnatio used "Kilcae" or "Kilca" instead of Tristerdermot as the site of de Riddlesford's castle, and he opted for Kilkea, where Walter held another manor, as the most likely site of the castle mentioned.<sup>432</sup> In 1182 or sometime shortly afterwards, de Lacy was again involved in castle construction in county Kildare. "A castle for Thomas of Flanders...in the furthest part of Ui Muireadhaigh, separated from Ui Buidhe by the waters of the Barrow; and a castle for Robert FitzRichard at Norrach."<sup>433</sup> Unfortunately there is no longer any trace of these earthwork castles to testify to de Lacy's castle building campaign.

During 1181, de Lacy also built a castle for John de Hereford at "Collacht".<sup>434</sup> Orpen's hitherto unquestioned conclusions on the location of this castle places it at Tullow, Co.Carlow. He suggested that a copyist's error may have been responsible for the initial confusion of placenames, Collacht transcribed instead of Tollacht.<sup>435</sup> However, a late sixteenth century map of Ireland exhibits an area marked "Tolloghe" in the south-west portion of

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<sup>432</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.340 n.363. Orpen,G.H., "Notes and Norman castles in Ireland" E.H.R., Vol.22, (1907), p.248.

<sup>433</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.195. Ardree was the presumed site of the first castle. Ardree was given by Strongbow to Thomas de Fleming: Song, l.3111-2.

<sup>434</sup> Expugnatio Hibernica, p.195.

<sup>435</sup> Orpen,G.H., (1907b) op.cit., p.248.



Co.Kildare, with the Barrow and Woodstock marked clearly to the west of it.<sup>436</sup> This is confirmed by later maps of Leinster, including one by Speed which marks "Tollagh" between Woodstock and Glassely, to the north of Athy.<sup>437</sup> Could this site be the location of the castle built for John de Hereford in 1181 ? If so, Collacht is now known as the motte of Ardsnull.

Some motte castles located at the capita of manors may be dated by the creation of the manor itself with protection and defence as the primary concern of the new land owners. Nonetheless, it still remains that the first known record of castle construction in the south of the county was post-1181, as noted above. The castles built by de Lacy in this area may thus reflect the initial establishment of Anglo-Norman power and control in this area, as witnessed by the expulsion of the O'Tooles to the Wicklow mountains. The "willing" submission of the native leaders of O'Faelan perhaps facilitated an early establishment by the grantees of their newly acquired lands in the north-east of the county, furthered by the security afforded by its proximity to Dublin. Giraldus noted that few castles had been built in Leinster up to this time. The impetus given by de Lacy's building spree

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<sup>436</sup> T.C.D. Ms. 1209, Hardiman Atlas No.83. Map of Ireland by Baptista Boazio.

<sup>437</sup> N.L.I. Ms. 16.A.2. (8). The Countie of Leinster with the citie of Dublin described. John Speed, 1610.

may have initiated the construction of the remainder of Kildare's motte castles in the mid-to-late 1180s. The duration of the construction period is not certain, however it would seem improbable that motte building in Kildare continued into the thirteenth century. The subinfeudation process was well established by this stage and the annals portray a picture of relative calm in Kildare in the first thirty years which followed the invasion. The time would have allowed for the consolidation of most land holdings, and the completion of all castle building projects.

Discussion of the chronological lifespan of Kildare's motte castles yet again charts relatively undocumented waters. The Cloncurry extent of 1304 recorded that the timber structure on the motte summit was not valued, "as no one is interested to rent it".<sup>438</sup> An inquisition regarding the holdings of Roger Bygod after his death listed a "ruinous tower" at the manor of Ballysax in 1306. "They say that at Ballysax there is a tower [turra] in bad condition and ruinous, and a small wooden grange covered with straw, which they cannot extend at any price as no one will rent them."<sup>439</sup> Furthermore it was reported of Castlewarden in 1309 that although named "castle

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<sup>438</sup> The Red Book of Ormond, (ed) White, N.B., (Dublin, 1932), p.27, "...et una mota in qua una camera bordis cooperta sita est quas non extendunt eo quod nemo est qui illas voluit locare."

<sup>439</sup> I.P.M., Vol.IV, p.305, no.434.

garney there is not there a castle or house".<sup>440</sup> It may also be argued that the single fee of the "mota de Kilbeg" listed in a 1329 inquisition regarding the tenants of Thomas FitzJohn, late Earl of Kildare, specifically identified a defined land unit regardless of the motte's worth.<sup>441</sup> No other motte castle was referred to specifically despite the fact that the many of those fees listed had such a castle as their centre.<sup>442</sup> The thirteenth century heralded an era in which the stone castle dominated and this may account for the impression of dilapidation and disuse as noted above. However the expence of building in stone limited the number of these castles and the motte may well have had a longer life among those owners of lesser means. Although limited by the lack of historical documentation, it may be plausible to suggest that the motte castle, though out-dated, continued to serve as a focal centre at the caput of the manor in all its capacities well into the thirteenth century.

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<sup>440</sup> P.R.O., S.C. 8/270/13495. See below, p.

<sup>441</sup> "Item, mota de Kilbeg feodum unius militis unde servicium ut supra XLs.", Red Book of Kildare, No.125, p.107.

<sup>442</sup> The motte of Kilbeg referred to is that located in Longtown Demesne, which lies in the parish of Killybegs. Previously the "mote of Kilbeg" was thought to have been represented by "an earthwork in the old churchyard in Killybegs Demesne", Otway-Ruthven, A.J., (1961), op.cit., p.169.

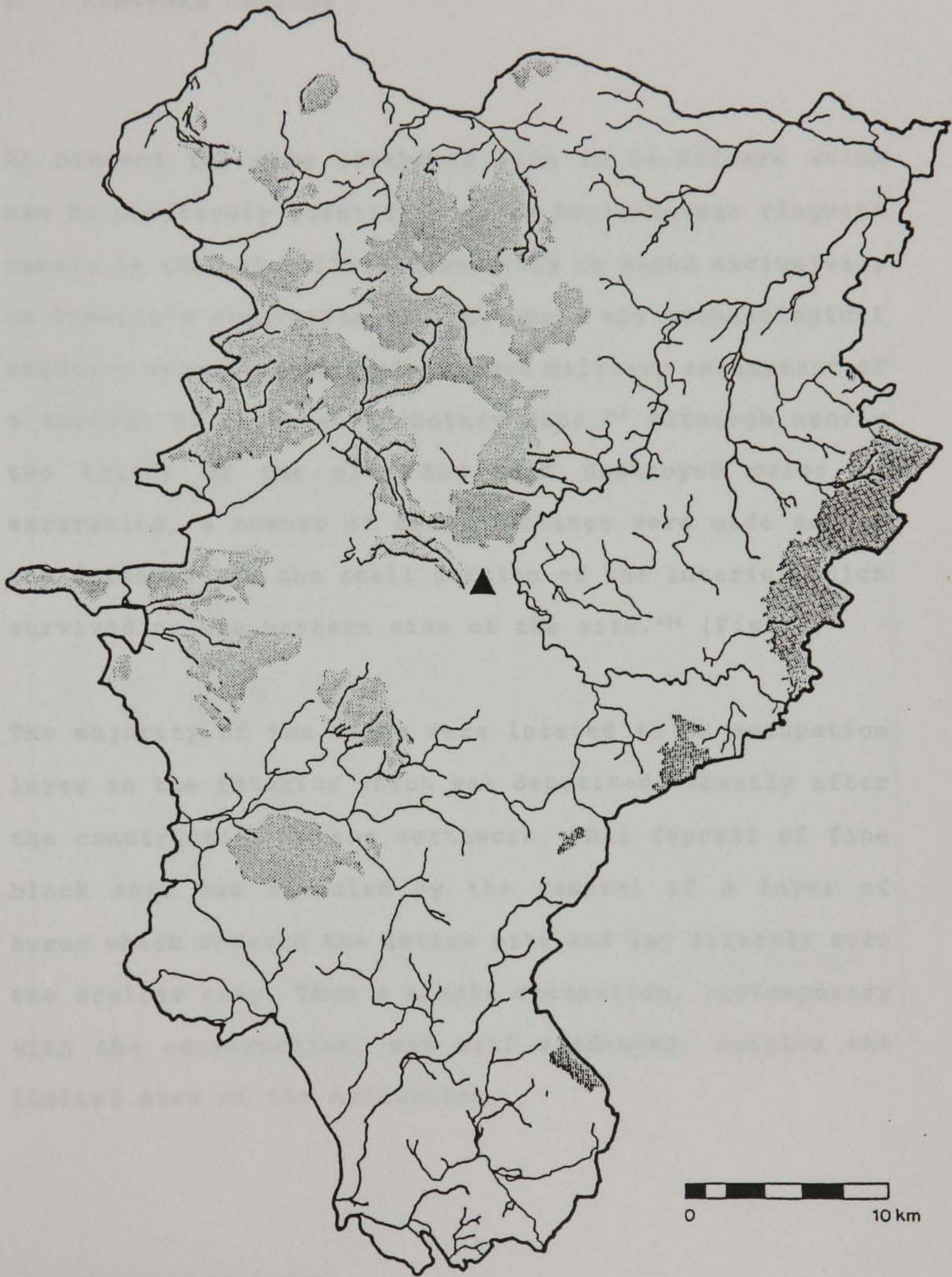


Figure 13. Distribution of Kildare ringwork castles

## 2. RINGWORK CASTLES

At present the only earthwork site in Co.Kildare which can be positively identified as an Anglo-Norman ringwork castle is that at Pollardstown. This is based exclusively on Fanning's excavation report, where the archaeological evidence suggested an Anglo-Norman military encampment of a twelfth to fourteenth century date.<sup>443</sup> Although nearly two thirds of the site had been destroyed prior to excavation, a number of small cuttings were made across the defences and the small portion of the interior which survived on the western side of the site.<sup>444</sup> (Fig.14)

The majority of the finds were located in an occupation layer in the interior which was deposited shortly after the construction of the earthwork. This deposit of fine black soil was revealed by the removal of a layer of humus which covered the entire site and lay directly over the boulder clay. Thus a single occupation, contemporary with the construction, was well evidenced, despite the limited area of the excavation.

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<sup>443</sup> Fanning, T., (1973-4), *op.cit.*, p.251-261.

<sup>444</sup> *Ibid.* p.251. An earlier survey conducted by Danaher gave the forts dimensions as 70m by 80m, consisting of a double bank with intervening fosse which enclosed a roughly oval shaped area.

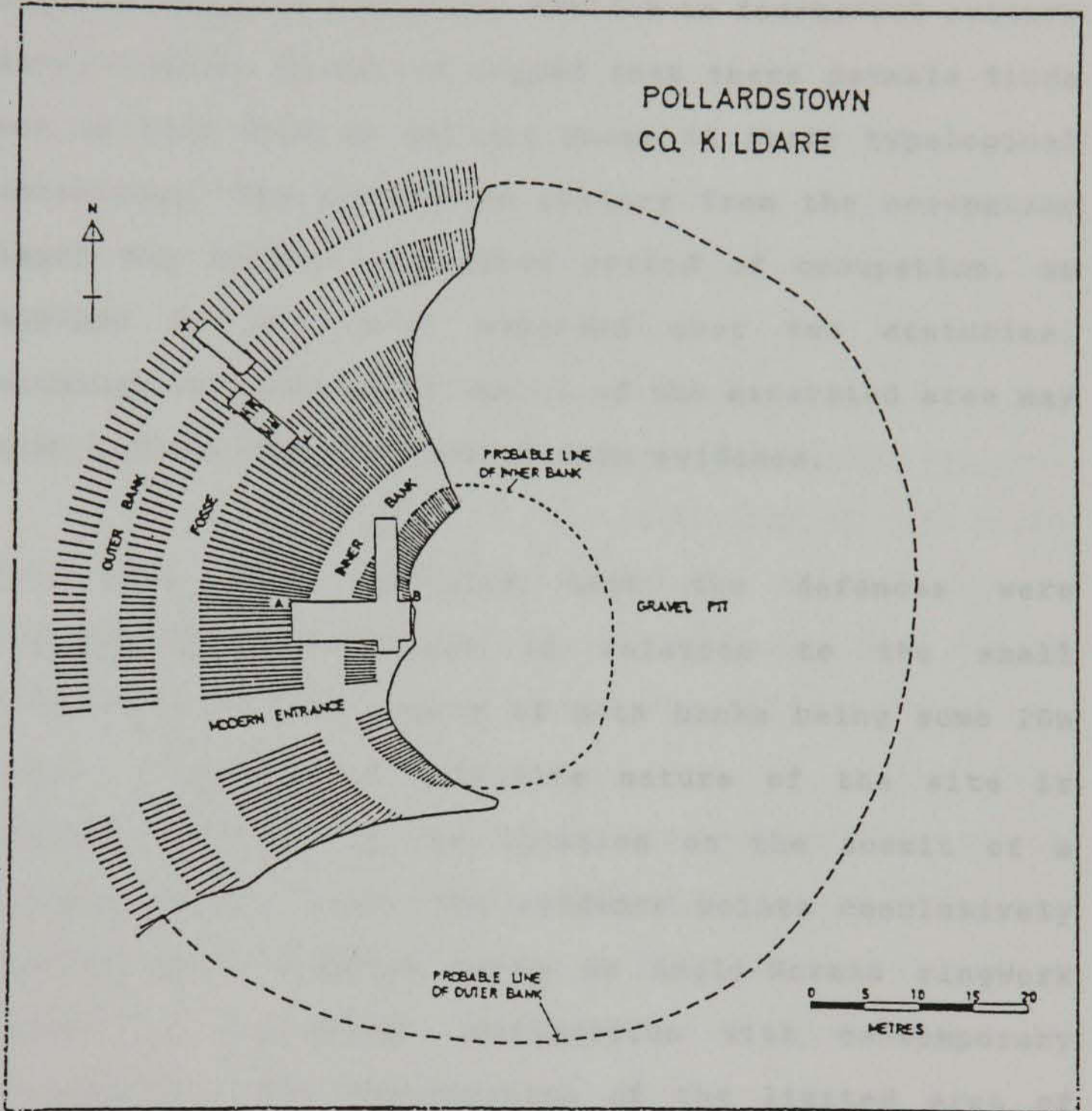


Figure 14. Pollardstown ringwork (after Fanning, 1974)

The finds, which consisted mainly of iron objects, included two stirrups, an arrowhead, harness buckle, and four "fiddle-key" horse-shoe nails. The typology of these objects suggests a possible twelfth to fourteenth century date, however it may be argued that these datable finds are in fact from an earlier phase in their typological chronology. The absence of pottery from the occupation layer may suggest a limited period of occupation, as opposed to one which expanded over two centuries, although the restricted nature of the excavated area may also account for the lack of such evidence.

The site plan indicates that the defences were disproportionately large in relation to the small internal area, the crests of both banks being some 20m apart. (Fig.14) The defensive nature of the site is further attested by its location on the summit of a natural gravel ridge. The evidence points conclusively towards the earthwork being an Anglo-Norman ringwork castle of one phase construction with contemporary occupation. In consideration of the limited area of excavation the non-discovery of structural remains is somewhat understandable, however it should be noted that the excavated area revealed no evidence of post holes, palisading or palisade trenches, even though sections were made across the tops of both banks. Given the accepted functional role of ringwork castles Fanning's suggestion that the sites location near a rich source of

iron ore was a primary factor in the choice of site is somewhat doubtful.<sup>445</sup> Nonetheless, the exploitation of such a source may have led to a longer occupation, and thus the twelfth to fourteenth century date tentatively forwarded in his report. The locational situation of Pollardstown is also curious in the fact that it borders on a large area of fen peat, and is sited in close proximity to the motte-and-bailey castle of Morrinstown Biller.

As stated Pollardstown presently represents the only known ringwork castle in the distribution of Anglo-Norman earthwork castles in Co.Kildare. It should however be stated that the present author believes that further ringworks possibly exist within the Kildare field area but their identification will have to await either archaeological or historical confirmation due to the difficulty in identification by morphological comparison alone. Use of documentary and cartographic sources have revealed no other positive identifications of similar earthworks.

Field survey of penannular and annular earthworks in Co.Kildare established the difficulties in attempted identification of such sites on purely morphological grounds. The ground plan of Pollardstown is a case in point, the nature of which was far from the generally

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<sup>445</sup> Ibid., p.254.



assumed typological characteristics of a ringwork castle. A systematic review was conducted of ringforts in areas of low motte castle distribution, especially those which displayed strategic placement. The omission of earthworks tentatively identified as ringworks by morphological comparison alone was deemed justifiable. Distortion of the known distribution of earthworks was primary in this concern. Nonetheless the author would maintain that without historical or archaeological evidence to the contrary the ringwork distribution in Co.Kildare should remain represented by the singular site of Pollardstown.

The location of Pollardstown close to the large motte-and-baileys castles of Morrinstown Biller and Oldconnell somewhat contradicts the argument that these ringworks may be found in areas of low motte density. The archaeological evidence suggests that the site was constructed and occupied sometime between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. Manipulation of the artefactual chronology could provide a late twelfth century date and thus it may be argued that Pollardstown, on the basis of British comparative studies, would more than likely pre-date the two motte-and-bailey castles.<sup>446</sup> Although the Pollardstown ringwork may date from the initial advance through Leinster to Dublin and despite the military nature of its associated finds, its role as a campaign

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<sup>446</sup> King, D.J.C. & Alcock, L., (1969), *op.cit.*, p.90-127.

castle is still open to question.

The siting of Morrinstown Billa 1km east-south-east of the ringwork would appear to suggest a possible subsequent re-location. The replacement of the hastily constructed entrenchment by the impressive format of a motte-and-bailey castle provided a more suitable residence for the lord of the manor. There is no evidence to suggest that earth was removed from Pollardstown to build the nearby motte, as is the case in some instances of such close proximity of ringwork and motte revealed by studies in England.<sup>447</sup>

The results of the published inventories of monuments in counties Louth and Meath illustrate the realities of the study of ringwork castles in Ireland.<sup>448</sup> Neither survey supplied a single additional site to Barry's earlier list of ringworks in the country.<sup>449</sup> The yardstick of morphology alone experienced extreme identification difficulties in an attempt to pinpoint ringworks in a country of c.30,000-40,000 annular earthworks.

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<sup>447</sup> Even though the western portion of the ringwork was all that remained at the time of excavation the site was recorded as intact on the first edition O.S. 6 inch map (1837) and subsequent editions.

<sup>448</sup> Buckley, V.M., (ed) Archaeological Inventory of Co.Louth, (Dublin, 1986). Moore, M., (1987), op.cit.

<sup>449</sup> Barry, T.B., (1983) op.cit., p.295-314.

As historical evidence with regard to the construction of ringwork castles in Co.Kildare was not forthcoming, part of the field survey within the county concentrated on earthworks which portrayed "typical" ringwork morphological characteristics. These sites were chosen predominately from their cartographic representation. Later surveys and descriptive accounts from secondary sources supplemented the list of possible sites. Earthworks with defences disproportionately large in relation to their small internal areas accounted for most of the sites surveyed when this approach was employed. Ballynagappagh (16.848280) and Donadea (16.844345), are two such examples of earthworks whose outer defences eclipse their respective enclosed areas.<sup>450</sup> However, although arguments may be forwarded for the inclusion of these and similar sites as ringworks on the basis of structural comparison and their location within the Anglo-Norman settlement network, without the confirmation of historical or archaeological evidence they must remain purely as conjectural possibilities and therefore detached from any conclusions on the subject.

Other earthworks which came under scrutiny were those which housed castles within their banks. Rathasker (16.887171), which was situated south of Naas until it was completely destroyed as a result of agricultural

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<sup>450</sup> "Moone Rath", Moone Td., Sh.36, 16.783923, has an internal platform 31m by 34m and a fosse 9m-11m wide.

improvement in 1987, did contain castle ruins, however these appear to have been those of a later tower house. Before its total destruction the site had previously been sectioned as a result of a quarry which revealed occupation layers and the outline of a "V" shaped fosse which once encompassed the site. (Plate XVI) However, like Rathasker, the few earthworks in this category displayed no outward signs which may have identified them as possible ringworks.

Plate XVI - Rathasker (1984)

Plate XVII - Rathasker (1984)



Plate XVI - Rathasker (1984)



Plate XVII - Rathasker (1990)

### 3. OTHER MILITARY EARTHWORKS

The military earthworks excluded from this study include town defenses, primarily in the shape of the town ditch, and the late medieval linear earthwork known as the Pale. Within the field area there are many earthworks which may have been utilised by the Anglo-Normans but with the inclusion of these, speculation takes the place of hard fact. The massive ringfort at Rathangan may well have been used by the Anglo-Normans in their development of the village and later borough there. John FitzThomas, Lord of Offaly, petitioned on more than one occasion for the King's service in aid of "building anew a fortalice against the Irish in those parts".<sup>451</sup> FitzThomas's town of Rathangan had been burned by Irish felons, who had committed homicides and depredations in the neighbouring lands, while he was away on active service on the king's behalf. However, as work had not commenced by the following year payment was postponed. What type of castle was this "fortalice" which had to be rebuilt and was it incorporated into the still formidable ringfort from which the town derived its name? This latter supposition is quite plausible given the location of the ringfort and the policy of re-use of existing earthworks practiced by

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<sup>451</sup> C.J.R., Vol.1, p.230, 1299 A.D.

the Anglo-Normans.<sup>452</sup> Historical documentation promotes Rathangan from the realm of pure speculation to that of possibility, which if viewed in isolation would be seen as a fine example of a large ringfort.

Apart from the re-use of pre-existing earthworks, the Kildare terrain provided a number of natural formations which would have presented the Anglo-Normans with ready-made motte like structures. The natural gravel mound at Clonard New is initially deceptive in its appearance.<sup>453</sup> Situated near the end of an esker ridge, this natural mound would have required little work to shape it into a perfect motte castle like those nearby at Cloncurry and Clonard, Co.Meath. Other examples of naturally defended locations occur at Balrinnet Hill (16.773394) and Foxes Hill (16.697400), the latter used as a retreat during the course of the 1798 rebellion.<sup>454</sup> "Moteenanow" (16.808097), a natural mound on the Curragh, is suggested by placename evidence as a possible site.

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<sup>452</sup> A later castle stood in the grounds of Rathangan Lodge, which was levelled c.1765 and "with the materials a Mr. Boyle Spencer erected the present Rathangan Lodge close to its site", "Rathangan", J.K.A.S., Vol.V, p.157, n.2.

<sup>453</sup> Grid Ref. 13.667434

<sup>454</sup> Balrinnet Td. and Clonuff Td. respectively. An escarpment immediately below the southern summit of Balrinnet Hill exhibits a number of hollows which could be interpreted as weapon pits.

However, although there are many easily defended sites throughout Kildare and arguments may be forwarded for their use at some stage during the conquest, the classic locational attributes outlined at the start of this chapter, combined with the results of historical research, dismiss most of them. The pattern of military earthwork castles as detailed in the distribution map advances the most complete picture of late twelfth century Anglo-Norman Kildare supplied by history and the landscape. Others will have to await new archaeological evidence, keeping in mind that without such evidence Pollardstown would still be regarded as a bi-vallate ringfort.

#### 4. PROBLEMS

The problems encountered in the present study fall in to two main categories. Those caused by the absence of historical documentary evidence, and secondly, the problem of identification of site type by morphological comparison alone. The first of these is one which is frequently expressed, the phrase "the paucity of source material" is often the mainstay of many an introductory paragraph. The lack of sources hampers a knowledge of the social and economic life of the occupants of these earthwork castles. In recent writings the function of



these motte-and-bailey castles in their community infrastructure is glossed over with larger terms, such as "administrative centre" and "caput". Routine daily operations, however, is one which is left to speculation. The question of the social status of the occupants is again restricted to the realm of tentative guesswork. The sources are indifferent to the researcher who attempts to piece together the anatomy of everyday motte life.

The problems encountered in the locational research of the elusive Anglo-Norman ringwork castle have already been referred to above. However, the positive identification of motte castles also gave rise to a review of the methods and criterion of field interpretation. The distribution of mottes in the county presented in this study is dependent on historical and archaeological confirmation. These factors were considered in the interpretation of motte look-a-likes, such as the mound at Ballyvass (16.777880), or platform ringforts like those at Rathgorragh (16.960225) and Eldon Fort (16.835275). Without sound evidence to the contrary the raised raths of the county remain so defined until proven otherwise.

The early castle sites which are referred to in the documentary sources have been, for the purposes of this present study, included in the list of motte castle sites. Some of these may have been ringwork castles, the

possible re-use of existing sites in their construction perhaps still evidenced in the landscape, as at the large ringfort at Narraghmore.<sup>455</sup> Nonetheless, such hypotheses await the results of future archaeological investigation. The re-use by the Anglo-Normans of the main tribal centres of Naas and Lyons Hill, prompts the question of why Mullamast was not similarly utilized, as it represents the other major centre. This again may reflect the then political situation with the final re-location of the O'Tooles sometime in the early 1180s.

Problems of a different nature arise in the explanation of the complete absence of evidence for the location of castles at known Anglo-Norman centres. Athy, Castledermot, Celbridge and Kilcullen top the list of important sites deprived by both documentary and field evidence of an early stronghold.<sup>456</sup> Further research may reveal evidence to the contrary but until then, although not disregarded in the overall analysis, these sites

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<sup>455</sup> Two destroyed ringforts in this area may have provided the location for this castle. Narraghmore Td., (16.790002); Armitage's Book of Mottes, op.cit., p.35, depicts this as a large bi-vallate ringfort. Narraghmore Demesne Td., (16.787984); Book of Mottes, p.36, "Molly Dillon's Moat", a large ringfort with an internal diameter of 54m.

<sup>456</sup> The castle of "Kyldrought" (Celbridge) is first mentioned in 1403, Rotulorum Patentium et Clausorum Cancellariae Hiberniae Calendarium, (ed) Tresham, E., (Dublin, 1828), p.167, no.23. In 1467 it was deemed "most expedient that a fortress called castle should be made at the said bridge [of Kilcullen], which is very convient for the defence thereof and of the country", Statute Rolls, Edward IV, (ed) Berry, H.F., (Dublin, 1914), p.609.

remain ambiguous.

Placename analogy brings into question the probable existence of castles at places such as Castlemartin which is mentioned frequently in the early documentary sources.<sup>457</sup> However, it must be remembered that Castlewarden is likewise referred to by the same sources from an early stage but whose interpretation is not that of either a motte or a ringwork.

"Castlewarden Moat" in north-east Kildare presents the field archaeologist with a curious anomaly, this made more peculiar when compared with the historical record. Orpen had originally attributed Castlewarden with a motte, as later did Glasscock.<sup>458</sup> This view was subsequently contradicted by an interdisciplinary discussion of settlement and agriculture in that area.<sup>459</sup> Nonetheless the site's unique morphological make-up, which is unparalleled in the rest of the county, features characteristics which has led to it being labelled as a moated site. Despite the earthwork's moat, the site itself is atypical of this site type in the field area

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<sup>457</sup> "Castello Martini" mentioned c. 1224-1226, "A Calendar of the Liber Niger and Liber Albus of Christ Church Dublin", (ed) Lawlor, H.J., P.R.I.A., 27C, (1908), p.54.

<sup>458</sup> Normans, Vol.1, p.379. Glasscock, R.E., (1975), op.cit., p.106.

<sup>459</sup> Hall, D.N., Hennessy, M., & O'Keefe, T., (1985), op.cit., p.16-25

and in the rest of the country as a whole.

An early thirteenth century reference to Castlewarden in a charter of Adam de Hereford to the abbey of St. Thomas, Dublin, notes that Castlewarden was situated in an area of marsh.<sup>460</sup> This and earlier placename references may infer that this was actually the site of a castle, a factor which no doubt led Orpen to its identification as a motte. Towards the end of the century a Pippard grant referred to "Castellum munitum [Castlewarden] with the manor", which again may be construed that there was a castle in existence there at that date together with the manor as stated. However, a petition from John le Blunt in 1309 which sought the King's grant of the manors of Castlewarden and Oughterard reads, "even though it is called castle garny there is not there a castle or house. Because of this he asks pardon of £3 9s. 7d. in aid and in order to cultivate the said place which is completely waste".<sup>461</sup> This may have important connotations for similar placenames which incorporate the word castle, as in the case of Castlemartin and Castledermot. The latter case cited has no firm documentary or archaeological evidence

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<sup>460</sup> "ex illa parte marisci in qua castellum Warni sedet", Register of the Abbey of St. Thomas the Martyr, Dublin, (ed) Gilbert, J.T., (London, 1889), p.75.

<sup>461</sup> P.R.O. London, SC 8/270/13495. Thanks to Dr. Phil Connolly who brought this to my attention and supplied the relevant transcript. In 1555 it was recorded that there was a castle at Castlewarden in need of repair but instructions were given for a hall to be built there suitable to receive Sir Thomas Butler, Earl of Ormond, and his servants, Ormond Deeds, Vol.V., No.49, p.84.

of an early Anglo-Norman castle. The origin of the placename "Tristeldermot" infers a probable initial function as that of a hunting lodge.<sup>462</sup>

It is difficult to ascribe a plausible date to the construction of the earthwork at Castlewarden. Anglo-Norman settlement in the area began in the mid-to-late 1170's within the context of the division of land in north-east Kildare under the de Hereford grant. However, the possibility of it being a much defaced motte castle can be immediately discounted not alone on comparative morphological grounds, but also with reference to the continuity in construction methods displayed at other de Hereford motte castle locations. The internal platform is disproportionately small in relation to the outer defences, which are comprised of an encircling moat, an outer bank and the remains of an outer fosse. This description bears some resemblance to that of a ringwork, however the nature of the location rules out the possibility of previous strategic importance. A series of low earthworks in the environs of the site which are traceable at ground level and more clearly from aerial photographs, are possibly the result of the site's location in what was formerly an area of marsh.<sup>463</sup> Castlewarden thus remains, despite historical research

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<sup>462</sup> McNeal Dodgson, J., "Tristel - in the place-name Castledermot", Dinnseanchas, Iml. V, Uimh. 2, (1972).

<sup>463</sup> GSI N 397-8.

and field survey, a morphological anomaly and an archaeological enigma.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Distribution pattern and morphological inference formed the basis for the functional interpretation of the motte castles and ringworks in Co.Kildare. The nature of the available evidence curtailed indepth analysis, nevertheless conclusions arrived at were substantiated by historical fact and archaeological precedent. Initial Anglo-Norman control and political stability facilitated the construction process, and as such the castles of Kildare were settlement rather than campaign related. The deployment and distribution of castles within the county was dictated by the initial subinfeudation process. This in turn adhered to established delineated land units within which the feudal lords built their castles. Desirable locational characteristics were primarily influenced by pre-existing settlements and the proximity of navigable and overland routeways. Strategic concerns were respected but were not a paramount locational factor.

1. DISTRIBUTION AND ANALYSIS.

The distribution of moated sites depicted in Fig. 15 represents the results of a comprehensive field and paper survey. The nature of this survey was similar to that outlined in the previous chapter. The total number of moated sites within the county is given as 42. To this number may be added a further 41 possible sites which are excluded.

CHAPTER 5

THE MOATED SITES OF ANGLO-NORMAN KILDARE

1. Distribution and Analysis

2. Classification

3. Function and Chronology

4. Problems

5. Conclusions

Using the evidence extracted from the Ordnance Survey six inch maps (Fig. 6) in this survey Clarendon identified seventeen moated sites in Kildare, with three additional uncertain examples. The increase, as over 1951, in the number of identified moated sites highlights the problem of the reliance on Clarendon's preliminary work and calls for a more up to date of the countywide distribution.

Clarendon, *op. cit.*, p. 151-77.

## 1. DISTRIBUTION AND ANALYSIS.

The distribution of moated sites displayed in Fig.15 represents the results of a comprehensive field and paper survey. The nature of this survey was similar to that outlined in the previous chapter.<sup>464</sup> The total number of moated sites within the county is now given as 42. To this number may be added a further 41 possible sites which await future positive identification, or potential exclusion.<sup>465</sup> This latter group of sites is mostly composed of cropmark sites and irregular enclosures, many of which have been partially or wholly destroyed. (Fig.16)

Prior to the present study the only published work relevant to the distribution of moated sites in Kildare was as part of a plotted distribution of rectangular earthworks for the whole country, which was compiled using the evidence extracted from the Ordnance Survey six inch maps.<sup>466</sup> (Fig.6) In this survey Glasscock identified seventeen moated sites in Kildare, with three additional uncertain examples. The increase, of over 100%, in the number of identified moated sites highlights the problems of the reliance on Glasscock's preliminary work and calls for a review and update of the countrywide distribution.

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<sup>464</sup> See above, Chapter 4, p.158.

<sup>465</sup> See Appendix III.

<sup>466</sup> Glasscock, R.E., (1970), *op.cit.*, p.162-77.



Fig.15	Townland	Grid Ref.
Ref.		
1.	BALLINDOOLIN	16.648378
2.	DUNFIERTH	16.781378
3.	DUNFIERTH	16.779377
4.	GORTEEN	16.781377
5.	CLONSHANBO	16.858343
6.	GRIFFINRATH	16.951345
7.	YEOMANSTOWN	16.853204
8.	TURNINGS LOWER	16.919278
9.	CLOWNINGS	16.934276
10.	DRUMSRU	16.722233
11.	TIPPER SOUTH	16.916189
12.	THOMASTOWN WEST	16.685168
13.	GUIDENSTOWN NORTH	16.701175
14.	MYLERSTOWN	16.874143
15.	COOLSICKIN/ QUINSBOROUGH	16.633142
16.	CHERRYVILLE	16.693120
17.	SALLYMOUNT DEMESNE/ CRAMERSVALLEY	16.868096
18.	FEARMORE	16.642064
19.	KILPATRICK	16.649064
20.	FASAGH	16.655068
21.	THOMASTOWN	16.799054
22.	TAWNRUSH	16.743026
23.	SHEEAN	16.665989
24.	CLOGORROW	16.691976
25.	RUSSELLSTOWN	16.715960
26.	ARDSCULL	16.721974
27.	RATHGRUMLY	16.718985
28.	FONTSTOWN LOWER	16.740004
29.	KILMEAD	16.746987
30.	MULLAMAST	16.774959
31.	BRAY LOWER	16.722927
32.	MULLAGHREELAN	16.757885
33.	MULLAGHREELAN	16.761882
34.	CARRIGEEN NORTH	16.839867
35.	TANKARDSTOWN	16.830862
36.	NEWTOWNPILSWORTH	19.724832
37.	DUNMANOGE	19.724831
38.	NEWTOWNALLEN	19.743829
39.	GORTEENVACAN	19.760813
40.	BALLYCULLANE UPPER	19.813817
41.	BALLYRAGGAN	19.832828
42.	GRANGEFORD	16.792882

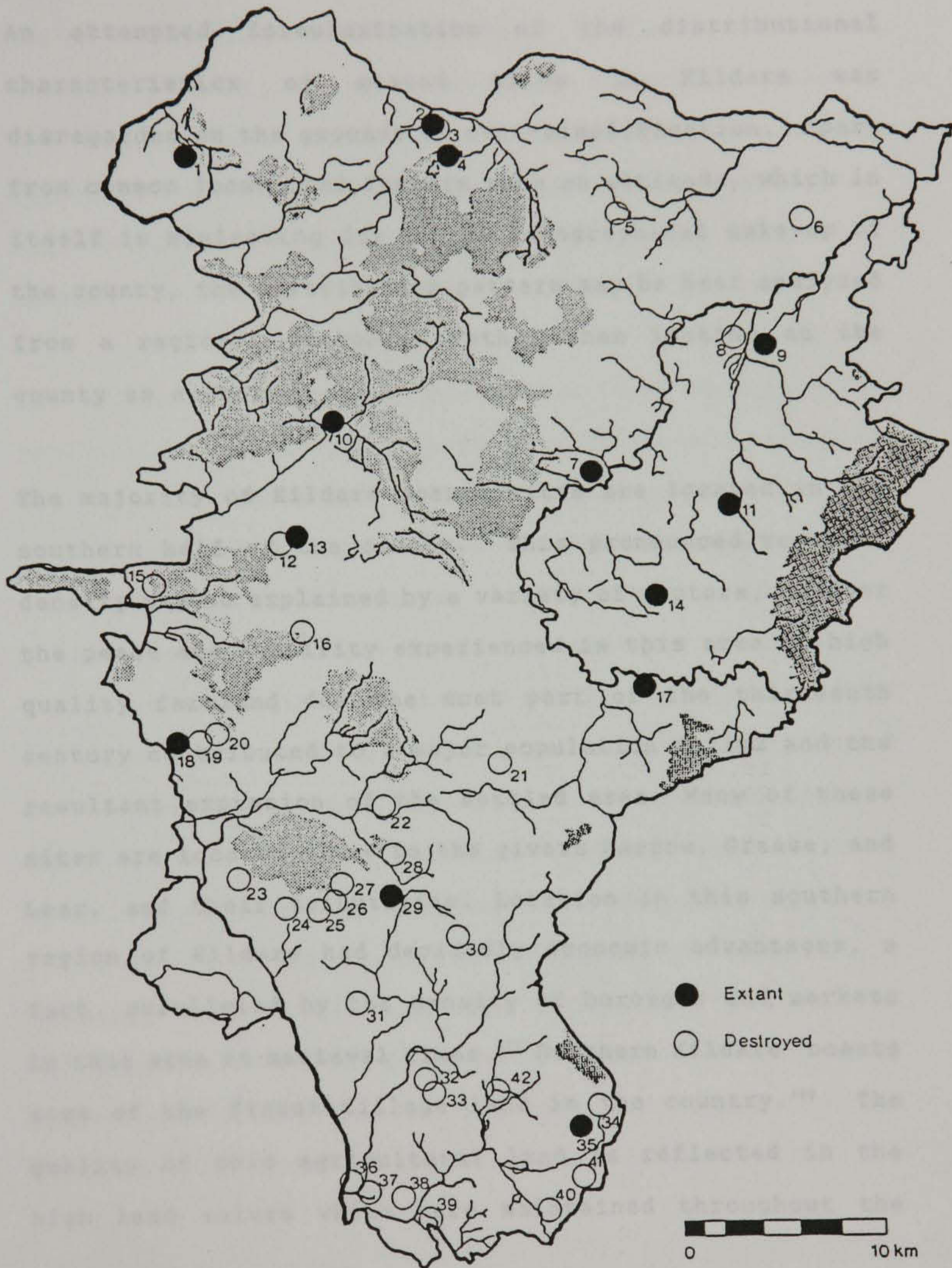


Figure 15. Distribution of moated sites in Co. Kildare

An attempted formularization of the distributional characteristics of moated sites in Kildare was disregarded on the grounds of over-simplification. Apart from common locational factors such as altitude, which in itself is misleading due to the topographical make-up of the county, the distribution pattern may be best analyzed from a regional viewpoint rather than looking at the county as a whole.

The majority of Kildare moated sites are located in the southern half of the county. This pronounced regional density may be explained by a variety of factors, however the peace and stability experienced in this area of high quality farmland for the most part of the thirteenth century contributed to a major population influx and the resultant expansion of the settled area. Many of these sites are located close to the rivers Barrow, Greese, and Lear, and their tributaries. Location in this southern region of Kildare had decidedly economic advantages, a fact paralleled by the density of boroughs and markets in this area in medieval times.<sup>467</sup> Southern Kildare boasts some of the finest tillage land in the country.<sup>468</sup> The quality of this agricultural land is reflected in the high land values which were maintained throughout the

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<sup>467</sup> Graham, B.J., (1985b), *op.cit.*, p.28, Fig.5, "Boroughs and villae mercatoriae in medieval Ireland".

<sup>468</sup> Conry, M.J., Hammond, R.F. & O'Shea, T., (1970), *op.cit.*, p.54-57.

period, even in times of disturbance.<sup>469</sup> The importance of the Barrow valley with the navigable route from Athy to New Ross, which draws on a hinterland of immense agricultural potential, resulted in the high density of Anglo-Norman settlement in this region in the thirteenth century.

The moated site distribution has thus to be accounted for within the context of this economically vibrant area with its high agricultural output. Intensive use of the available land brought about the classic moated site locational characteristic, with the subsequent utilization of marginal land. Documentary records for the later half of the thirteenth century provide abundant evidence of sustained population growth and related settlement development. References to the depletion of the natural forests for the purposes of building materials conceivably indicate that settlement expansion in this region had reached a threshold. In 1297 it was reported that the wood of "Ballycallen", south of Castledermot, contained no "great oak but only underwood".<sup>470</sup> This presumed expansion of the settled area is readily verified by use of the placename evidence for

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<sup>469</sup> Demesne acreage at Moone extended at 12d. an acre in 1282 (C.D.I., Vol.2, No. 1963, p.447) was extended at 10d. an acre in 1299 despite regional evidence of "murrain of the people and disturbance of peace", C.D.I., Vol.4, No.643, p.309-310.

<sup>470</sup> C.J.R., Vol.1, p.173.

land utilization in southern Kildare.<sup>471</sup>

However, the distribution pattern of moated sites in southern Co.Kildare cannot be explained totally as a consequence of population pressure and the subsequent use of marginal lands. A high proportion of the sites are located in groupings or clusters close to pre-existing and well established settlements. Explanation for this distributional phenomena may take many forms. Proximity to boroughs and markets provided economic outlets for the agricultural produce of these outfarms. Security was also another consideration, as location close to garrisoned towns afforded assurance in the march region. The wealth generated in southern Kildare may have allowed for this type of settlement form to become more accessible to a larger social grouping. However, by use of various inquisitions which note an unwillingness among some of the townfolk to take on the extra responsibility of demesne farming, it may be conversely argued that the owners of these moated sites in southern Kildare were financially independent of the surrounding economy.<sup>472</sup>

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<sup>471</sup> See Chapter 6, 272-277.

<sup>472</sup> C.J.R., Vol.II, p.369-371. The community of Moone surrendered their rights to a common of pasture as they found the farm "too heavy".

Fig.16	Townland	Grid Ref.
Ref.		
1.	KILRATHMURRY	16.659431
2.	KILRATHMURRY	16.650414
3.	RATHMORE	16.706311
4.	PARSONSTOWN	16.727332
5.	DREHID	16.732345
6.	CLONDUFF	16.872363
7.	DERRYBRENNAN	16.701277
8.	KILLINAGH UPPER	16.733278
9.	KILMURRY	16.846314
10.	PAINESTOWN	16.871327
11.	BALSCOTT	16.996316
12.	GRANGECLARE WEST	16.765238
13.	BARRETTSTOWN	16.867236
14.	RATHANGAN DEMESNE	16.675180
15.	KILMONEY NORTH	16.703187
16.	CONLANSTOWN	16.722182
17.	FEIGHCULLEN	16.730207
18.	MOORTOWN	16.840194
19.	MISIDENTIFIED SITE	
20.	PUNCHESTOWN LOWER	16.983196
21.	RATHMUCK	16.702095
22.	FENNOR	16.706103
23.	GREYABBEY	16.727110
24.	DERRYOUGHTER WEST	16.638038
25.	KILBERRY	16.654985
26.	CLOGORROW	16.693977
27.	SMALLFORD	16.700977
28.	AGHANURE	16.716966
29.	COLBINSTOWN	16.833981
30.	COOLROE	16.652943
31.	NICHOLASTOWN	16.742921
32.	BELAN	16.776911
33.	COMMONSTOWN	16.813917
34.	KILKEA LODGE FARM	16.745896
35.	KILKEA UPPER	16.737875
36.	HALLAHOISE	16.747861
37.	KILKEA UPPER	16.757873
38.	GORTEENVACAN	19.755818
39.	MOATAVANNY	16.807868
40.	MARSHALSTOWN	16.804881
41.	DAVIDSTOWN DEMESNE	16.815895
42.	COOLRAKE	16.816899

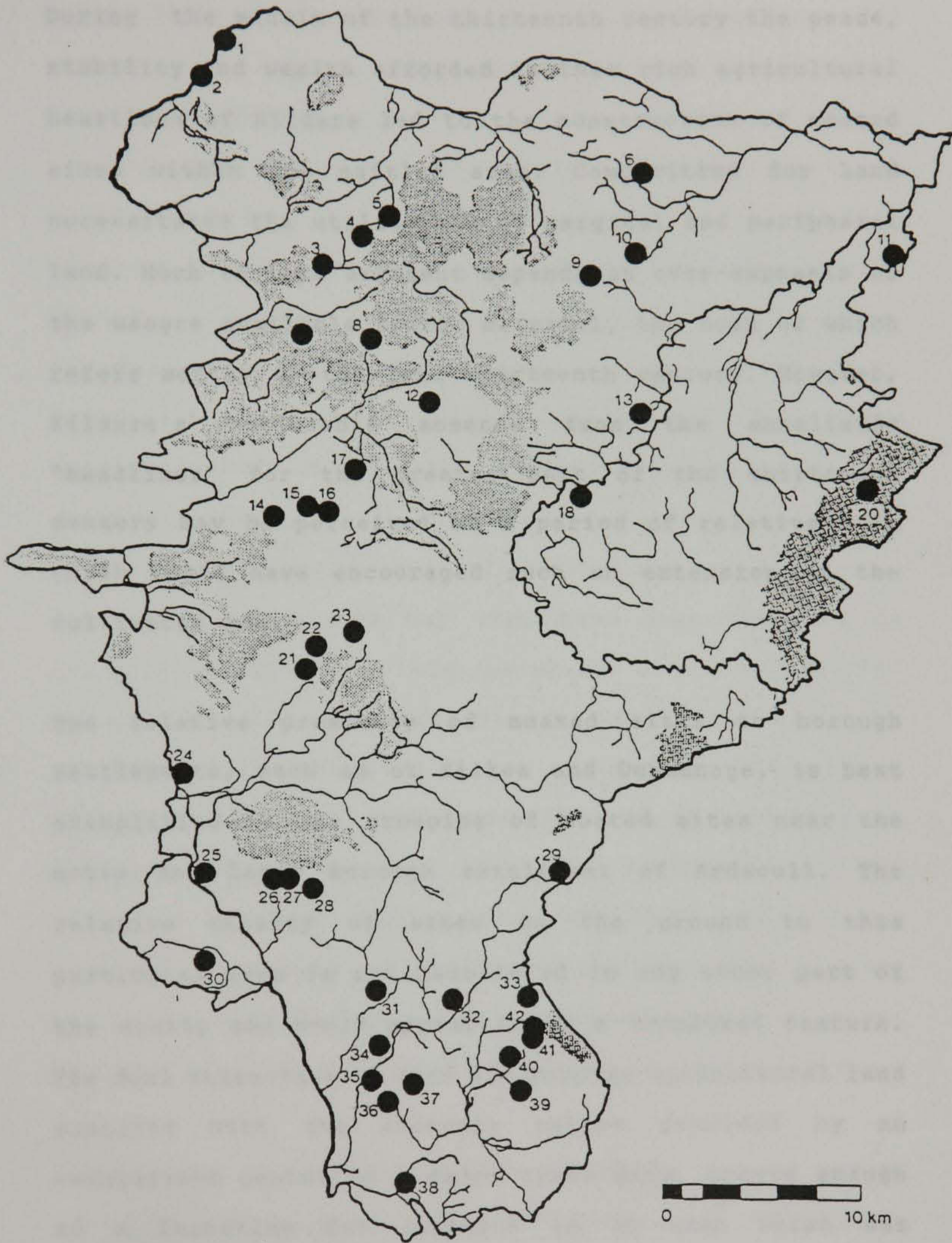


Figure 16. Distribution of possible moated sites.

During the middle of the thirteenth century the peace, stability and wealth afforded in this rich agricultural heartland of Kildare led to the construction of moated sites within the settled area. Competition for land necessitated the utilisation of marginal and peripheral land. Much of this argument depends on over-emphasis of the meagre available source material, the bulk of which refers mostly to the late thirteenth century. However, Kildare's noticeable absence from the annalistic "headlines" for the greater part of the thirteenth century may be perceived as a period of relative calm which would have encouraged such an extension of the cultivated area.

The relative proximity of moated sites to borough settlements, such as at Kilkea and Dunmanoge, is best exemplified in the grouping of moated sites near the motte and later borough settlement of Ardscull. The relative density of sites on the ground in this particular area is not paralleled in any other part of the county and would appear to be a localized feature. The dual attraction of good all purpose agricultural land combined with the economic outlet provided by an established centre on a major trade axis, proved enough of an incentive for location in an area which was considered to be well within the march by the start of the fourteenth century.



Due to the total destruction of these moated sites, such efforts to assess this distributional trend by functional origins fails immediately. It is thus left to conjecture to reason out this curious cluster. An initial problem is that all these sites may not have been occupied at the same time, if they were occupied at all. Whether these were outfarms or not, may be confirmed by the fact that three of the sites to the north-west of Ardsnull bordered on an area of lowlying bog. This again reiterates the consistent peripheral nature of moated site distribution.

Individual sub-manors may also have been enclosed by moats depending on the relative status of the owners. The example of the large moated site at Kilmead shall be discussed later, however one of the destroyed sites was very substantial in size. Described as encompassing an area of almost an acre, the now destroyed site in Clogorow townland would appear probably to have been the largest moated site in Kildare.<sup>473</sup> The location of these relatively large sites in close proximity adds a further dimension to the curious cluster of sites near Ardsnull.

Most of the sites in southern Kildare are situated at an altitude of 200-300ft. O.D. However as already noted the topographical nature of Kildare is perhaps the basic reason behind this overall characteristic. Those sites on

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<sup>473</sup> Darby, M., (1899-1902), op.cit., p.191.

the south-east border with Wicklow and Carlow located at altitudes between 300 and 500ft O.D., exemplify the dictates of regional topography over locational determinants. The majority of moated sites in this southern region are situated on well drained flat-to-gently undulating pastureland.

The second area of regional interest is the western border of Kildare. The distribution pattern in this area is probably best explained when the plotted sites are superimposed onto a map showing the extent of lowlying bog and the Bog of Allen in particular. The concentration of sites to the east of Rathangan together with the closely knit localized grouping of moated sites at Kilpatrick, Fearmore and Fasagh, typify the extent of Norman settlement between these bog stretches. The paucity of moated sites in the north-west of the county may well reflect the political and military instability in that area in the later half of the thirteenth century, the period most associated with the construction of Irish moated sites. Some of the sites in the north-west corner of the county, such as those at Dunfierth and Gorteen, display moated site construction as a peripheral phenomena. Nonetheless, the distribution pattern cannot itself be assessed in isolation. Village settlements, which will be discussed at greater length below, were often closer to hand than that depicted using

a distribution map of known settlement centres.<sup>474</sup> A reappraisal of the information derived from deserted village studies, coupled with placename evidence of population location and the later church and castle distributions, show that this corner of north-west Kildare was not bereft of locational attractions. The apparent gaps in the moated site pattern have thus been accounted for in a settlement pattern which no longer exists on the modern landscape.

The western frontier presents two different aspects of moated site distribution, those sites which are found in clustered groupings and those which exist in isolation. Similar locational characteristics occur in both categories, however functional differences may have had some influence on this eventual pattern. This particular region of Kildare was an area much troubled by native disturbance in the later quarter of the thirteenth century. Locational incentives for settlement were thus disadvantaged as apposed to other parts of Kildare. The degree of local lord involvement in the defence of the area presumably enhanced the development of settlement despite the average low quality of land in this district.<sup>475</sup>

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<sup>474</sup> See Chapter 6, Fig.20 and Fig.21.

<sup>475</sup> The military involvement of resident lords John FitzThomas and Peter de Bermingham are discussed in Frame,R., (1971), op.cit., p.124 ff.

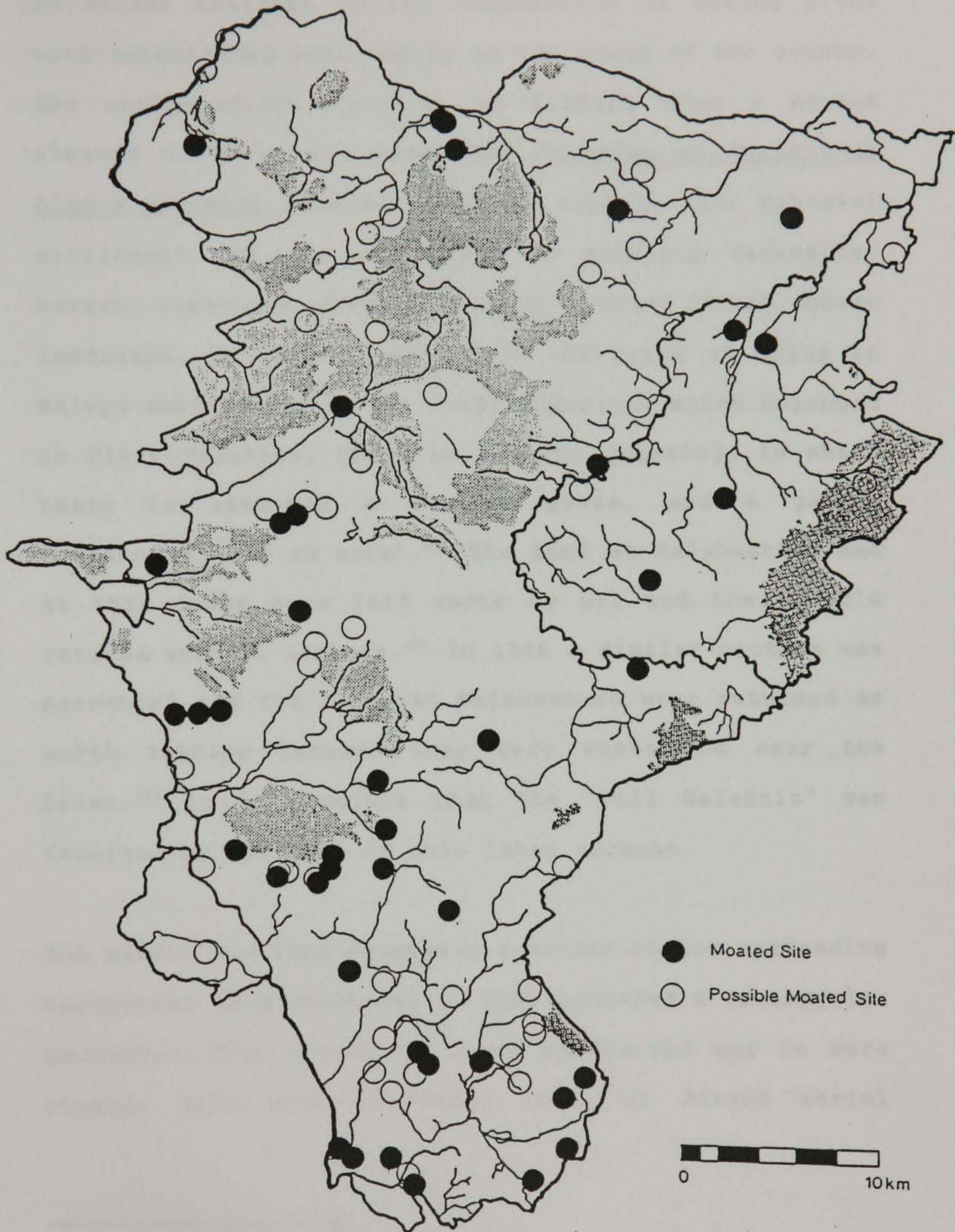


Figure 17. Distribution of moated sites and possible moated sites.

In direct contrast to the correlation of moated sites with established settlements in the south of the county, the north-eastern baronies of Kildare show a marked absence of this site type. The Calendar of Archbishop Alen's Register provides abundant evidence for manorial settlement and the occupation of outlying tenements, however these are often difficult to trace in the modern landscape. In 1276 an extent of the lands of Elias le Waleys stated that at the "vill Walensis, which belonged to Elias Walensis, there is a manor [mansio], in which there is situated a ruinous house, and a garden containing half an acre".<sup>476</sup> The land at Walshestown had at this stage been laid waste by war and the manor's returns were in arrears.<sup>477</sup> In 1326 a similar picture was presented and the lands at Walshestown were returned as worth nothing because they were waste and near the Irish.<sup>478</sup> It is possible that the "vill Walensis" was deserted by the time of this later account.

The modern townland possesses a series of low upstanding earthworks from which may be distinguished a rectangular enclosure. The layout of these earthworks may be more clearly seen with reference to a St Joseph aerial

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<sup>476</sup> C.D.I, Vol.II, No.1283, p.232. Walshestown Td., (Naas North By./Naas South By.), O.S. Sheet 24.

<sup>477</sup> Ibid., p.233.

<sup>478</sup> Alen's Reg., p.189-194.

photograph of the site.<sup>479</sup> It is possible that this levelled moated site contains the remains of the manor house of Elias Walensis. However, without the aid of archaeological investigation this remains a tentative suggestion.

Deserted settlements such as those at Tipper and Tipperkevin, the latter which was granted a weekly market and a yearly fair in 1252, now only survive as relict remains. The tenants mentioned in these documents perhaps lived in unenclosed settlements or clustered hamlets. Recent comparisons with Anglo-Norman Wales using projections of population figures suggest that the bulk of the Anglo-Norman population lived outside the boroughs, creating a need for large numbers of non-burghal settlements on the manors.<sup>480</sup> Such house clusters have left no trace on the modern landscape.

The baronies of Salt and Naas represent an area of consolidated Anglo-Norman settlement in the thirteenth century. This fact may be attributed to the low density of moated site distribution in this region, as all the available and suitable land may have been utilized before the introduction of the moated site type. The individual sites themselves pose problems of interpretation and

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<sup>479</sup> St Joseph, API 10.

<sup>480</sup> Soulsby, I., The Towns of Medieval Wales, (Chichester, 1983).

function due to the degree of variation between each site (on the basis of morphological comparison). However, one common factor of the displayed distribution is the obvious limit marked by the upland areas. Tipper South and Mylerstown are located between c.400-500ft. O.D. Despite the concentration of settlement in this area, no moated sites are situated in what might be considered marginal land on the eastern boundary of Kildare with Wicklow.

Many reasons may be forwarded for this apparent gap in the distribution pattern. Early deforestation on the Kildare/Wicklow border may have brought more land into the general area of cultivation and thus habitation.<sup>481</sup> This movement pre-empted the moated site trend, normally associated with assarting projects. The land was already utilized to capacity, what could be described as marginal land by the latter quarter of the thirteenth century was that which was a "no go" area, very much in the control of the native Irish. The reality of the threat which confronted isolated settlements in this frontier area may have deterred further moated site building. The Dublin government had experienced difficulties in the prevention of Gaelic reprisals and attacks from the outset of the 1270s. This period coincided with the accepted chronology of moated site construction in Ireland.

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<sup>481</sup> C.D.I., Vol.1, No.1757, p.262.

The absence of moated sites beyond a certain altitude in this particular area is also reflected in the statistics for altitudinal location over the rest of the county. The majority of sites, 66%, occur between 200-300ft. O.D., with a further 13% situated between 300-400ft. There are, of course, regional differences mostly reliant on the nature of the terrain in particular areas. The overall lowlying physical topography of Kildare is a contributory factor in the final analysis, however the preference shown in previous surveys for moated site location in the fertile lowlands should not be overlooked.<sup>482</sup>

The remarkable correlation of moated site distribution on soil groups classified as "Class A" suitability soils is no coincidence.<sup>483</sup> Although this soil group represents 48.54% of all soils within the county, the preference for site location on this soil group alone suggests that in choosing a suitable location not all marginal lands were considered. The soils in this category have a wide use range and are suitable for tillage, pasture, meadow, and forestry. Nonetheless, the gaps in moated site distribution are not totally equated with reference to the consideration of height above sea level and the performance of the land.

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<sup>482</sup> Barry, T.B., (1979b), op.cit., p.34.

<sup>483</sup> Conry, M.J., Hammond, R.F., & O'Shea, T., (1970), op.cit., appended Soil Suitability Map of Co.Kildare.



Other considerations and local determinants had to be weighed up. The absence of moated sites in the area east of Oldconnell is readily explained with reference to the reserved pasture of the Curragh of Kildare.<sup>484</sup> However, areas around Maynooth and immediately south of Kilcullen, exemplify the traditional peripheral nature of moated site location. The density of Anglo-Norman settlement in these areas resulted in the total utilization of all the available suitable land. This again may be verified with reference to placename evidence for the density of population distribution.

Of course the soil classification refers to modern day usage. Most of the soils classed in "Class A" are well drained soils, a factor enhanced by artificial drainage as initiated in the nineteenth century by the then Duke of Leinster and continued to the present under the auspices of the Land Project and Arterial Drainage Schemes. Water tables in many areas have been reduced since medieval times by the deepening of river and stream systems and the installation of field drains, thus the improvement of the drainage properties of the soils. There is also a tendency for most of the sites to have a clay subsoil similar to the distribution pattern as examined in England. Clarke in her synopsis of moated

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<sup>484</sup> Early Statutes, p.217; "It is forbidden...that swine henceforth feed in the Curragh of Kildare, which is common pasture...in the soil of the lord the King". 1299 A.D.

site locational characteristics noted that the concentration of sites on clay subsoils facilitated construction, as the soil was easy to excavate, "waterproof and needed little maintenance".<sup>485</sup>

The distribution pattern of moated sites in Co. Kildare is marked by a pre-dominance of sites in the south of the county. Determinant locational factors included the quality of the agricultural land and the economic prosperity of the area. These very factors dictated that the only land available was at the limits of the settled society. Settlement of marginal lands in this region of Kildare presented lesser risks than those experienced in the remaining frontiers of the medieval county.

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<sup>485</sup> Clarke, H., The Archaeology of Medieval England, (London, 1984), p.53.

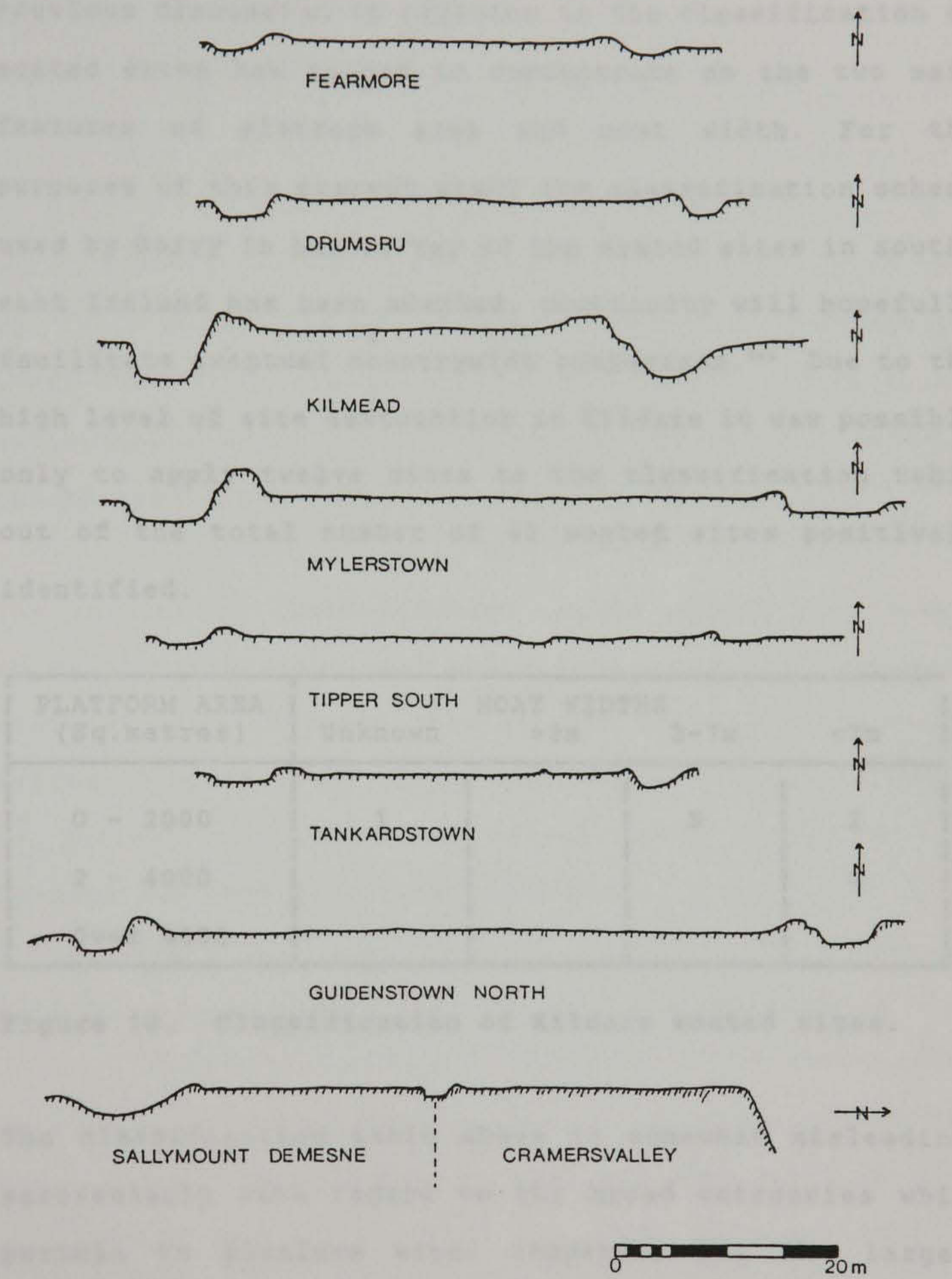


Figure 19. Kildare moated site profiles.

## 2. CLASSIFICATION.

Previous discussion in relation to the classification of moated sites has tended to concentrate on the two main features of platform area and moat width. For the purposes of this present study the classification scheme used by Barry in his survey of the moated sites in south-east Ireland has been adopted, continuity will hopefully facilitate eventual countrywide comparison.<sup>44</sup> Due to the high level of site destruction in Kildare it was possible only to apply twelve sites to the classification table out of the total number of 42 moated sites positively identified.

PLATFORM AREA (Sq.metres)	MOAT WIDTHS			
	Unknown	>3m	3-7m	<7m
0 - 2000	1		5	2
2 - 4000				4
Over 4000				

Figure 18. Classification of Kildare moated sites.

The classification table above is somewhat misleading, particularly with regard to the broad categories which pertain to platform area. (Appendix IV) The largest extant site in Kildare is that of Guidenstown North, the internal area of which is 2695sq. m. Two more of the four

<sup>44</sup> Barry, T.B., Medieval Moated Sites of South-East Ireland, (Oxford, 1977).

sites classified in the "2 - 4000" sq.m. group qualify only by the slightest margin.<sup>487</sup> Reference to the Ordnance Survey six inch maps in an attempt to estimate platform area from the scaled representations, would appear to substantiate the conclusion that most of the moated sites in Kildare encompassed an area of less than 2000sq. m. Local information gathered from farmers with regard to the recollected size of sites now destroyed, frequently state that " it was roughly half an acre". Often this estimation includes the area of the surrounding fosse, nonetheless the average site area remains constant.

The results of these findings would appear to mirror those of Barry's own work which also noted the average platform area as being consistently below 2,000 square metres.<sup>488</sup> Apart from this general trend the development of overall conclusions or axioms using morphological comparative analysis proved difficult.

Survey work indicated that the size of the internal platform had no direct bearing on the dimensions of the fosse, therefore it was not uncommon for a small site to have a large moat and vice-versa. In general, most of the platforms were found to be on the same level as the surrounding land, few sites in fact were noticeably raised.

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<sup>487</sup> Sallymount Demesne/Cramersvalley, 2115 sq.m.; Mylerstown, 2064 sq.m.

<sup>488</sup> Barry, T.B., (1979b), op. cit., p.33.



Plate XVIII - Moated site at Tipper South



Plate XIX - Moated site at Kilmead  
(Ardsnull visible to distant right)

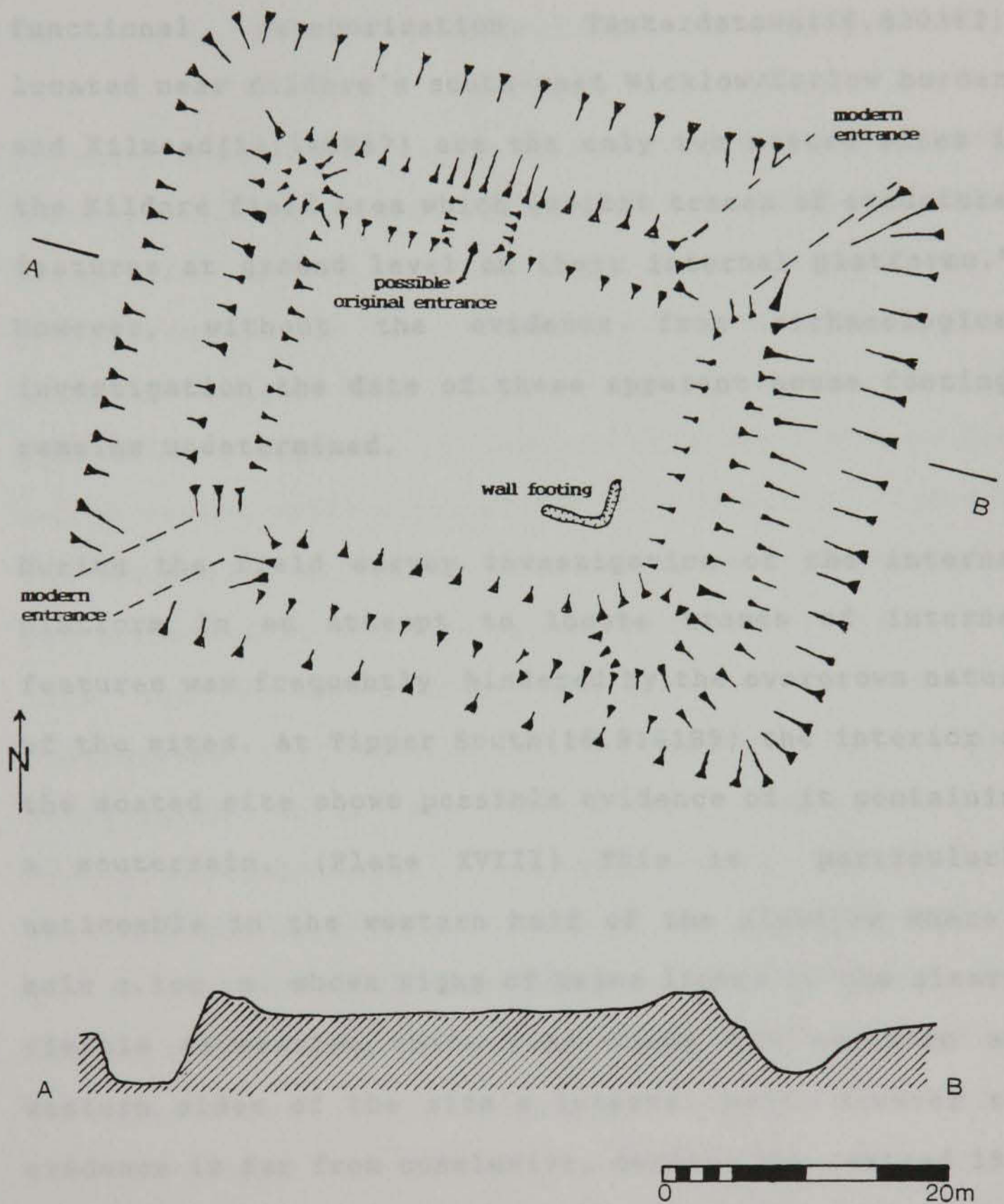


Figure 25. Moated site at Kilmead.

One of the major factors in the differentiation, and thus classification, of moated sites within the field area may be discussed more readily under the heading of functional categorization. Tankardstown(16.830362), located near Kildare's south-east Wicklow/Carlow border, and Kilmead(16.746987) are the only two moated sites in the Kildare field area which exhibit traces of structural features at ground level on their internal platforms.<sup>489</sup> However, without the evidence from archaeological investigation the date of these apparent house footings remains undetermined.

During the field survey investigation of the internal platform in an attempt to locate traces of internal features was frequently hindered by the overgrown nature of the sites. At Tipper South(16.916189) the interior of the moated site shows possible evidence of it containing a souterrain. (Plate XVIII) This is particularly noticeable in the western half of the platform where a hole c.1sq. m. shows signs of being linked to the clearly visible depression which runs along the southern and western sides of the site's internal bank. However the evidence is far from conclusive, despite the revised 1939 Ordnance Survey six inch map which names the site as "The Cave Rath" and the annotation "souterrain".<sup>490</sup> The first

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<sup>489</sup> That is apart from Yeomanstown and Ballindoolin as discussed below, see p.268.

<sup>490</sup> O.S. 6 inch (1939), Kildare Sh. 19.



edition marks the site as a plain rectangular enclosure, while at the end of the nineteenth century de Burgh made no mention of a souterrain while making the observation, "Some few raths are square, like the one at Tipper".<sup>491</sup>

In the townland of Clogorrow a description of the now destroyed moated site called "Coreally" also refers to a souterrain. "It was about an Irish acre in extent, not a perfect square, as the northern and southern sides were somewhat longer than the eastern and western. An embankment surrounded it. Outside this was a fosse, from ten to twelve yards wide, always full of water.....A cave ran diagonally across it from the south-east corner".<sup>492</sup> The author added that the placename Coreally was derived from the Norman French "courale" which means an underground fortification.<sup>493</sup> The numbers of isolated souterrains which may have been associated with unenclosed habitation sites are few in Co. Kildare. However, the case for Anglo-Norman re-use on this basis is far more plausible than that of the re-working of a ringfort plus souterrain into a rectilinear moated site. The ground plan of the depressions at Tipper North if representative of souterrain collapse, are unusual in plan, the cave theory at Coreally perhaps belonging to

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<sup>491</sup> De Burgh, T.J., (1896-99), op.cit., p.318.

<sup>492</sup> Darby, M., (1899-1902), op.cit., p.191.

<sup>493</sup> Ibid., p.191. The modern French "cour" translates as a court or square.

the country wide fascination with this particular type of monument.<sup>494</sup>

Some of the moated sites in the field area have assorted low earthworks in their environs which are possibly related. Further examples of possible associated features are recorded in soil and cropmark evidence, as shown at Clonshanbo(16.858343) and Gorteenvacan(19.760813).<sup>495</sup> However, evidence of associated moated enclosures have only been discovered at Dunfierth, and possibly at Bray Lower where an irregular cropmark is located close to a ploughed out moated site.<sup>496</sup> At Dunfierth a previously unrecorded site was discovered during the course of fieldwork. Barely traceable at ground level the rectilinear site featured an enclosing fosse, c.2m. wide, surrounding an area c.900sq. m. This may have been the site of a temporary encampment used during the construction of the adjacent moated site. However, it is perhaps more plausible that the enclosure may have served a variety of functions, from that of animal enclosure to perhaps an area of enclosed specialized industry. The

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<sup>494</sup> St. Joseph aerial photographs of the destroyed site in Clogorow Td. show no evidence of the diagonally placed cave. St. Joseph BDH 67:1970 and BGH 57:1971.

<sup>495</sup> St. Joseph AVO 78:1968, AVR 11:1968, Clonshanbo Td.; St. Joseph AYL 48:1969 shows cropmark evidence of the moated site at Gorteenvacan and related earthworks.

<sup>496</sup> St. Joseph AVM 14:1968 and BDO 45:1970. The second of these oblique photographs supplies a clearer definition of the associated cropmark.

answer awaits the results of archaeological enquiry.

The most common discernable attributes of the moated sites surveyed in Kildare are those of an enclosed area delimited by an internal bank with an outer U-shaped fosse. Most of the inner banks, though much eroded over time, reflect the size of the outer fosse. In a few examples raised corners were particularly evident, however it was only at Mylerstown, and perhaps Kilmead, that these features could have had any serious defensive application. The remarkable size of the fosse at Mylerstown no doubt accounts for the raised corners with the accumulation of upcast from the ditch. These raised areas were capable, perhaps, of supporting corner towers. There was no evidence to suggest the use of stone revetments in the construction of any of the sites within the field area. Where exposed sections allowed inspection it was evident that the parent material from the fosse was used in the construction of internal banks.

The moated site at Sallymount Demesne/Cramersvalley is one of a small number of moated sites in Kildare to have incorporated the use of a natural feature in its construction. The northern side of this site utilised the natural drop to the Liffey floor to form part of its outer defences. A similar, but less spectacular, use of a natural slope was employed to fashion the southern defences at Fearmore; in this instance the inner bank was

constructed from material extracted from the other fosses.

The destroyed site of Newtownpilsworth was constructed with one of its sides adjoining the old course of the river Greese. This accomplished the dual purpose of ensuring a constant fresh water supply, while lessening building costs.<sup>497</sup> Apart from the probable re-use of pre-existing boundary ditches, which may have been the case at Balyraggan, where one side of the now destroyed site forms part of the county border between Kildare and Carlow, there is little evidence for the re-use of pre-existing settlement features.

All of the sites recorded in the classification table evolved from the same constructional concept. Most of these are, strictly speaking, rectangular in shape, a curious fact being that the east-west dimensions of the platform areas are consistently slightly longer in length than those for the north-south one. However, irrespective of size, the shape of moated sites in Kildare are fairly regular. Occasionally it can be argued that sites of similar dimensions in close proximity were probably the

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<sup>497</sup> The possible moated site at Derryoughter West was built adjoining the river Barrow. This site was destroyed as a result of the draining and straightening of the river.

result of the same construction crew.<sup>498</sup>

As a result of later human and animal disturbance identification of original entrances or causeways proved to be an impossible task. Most of the modern accesses to the interior of Kildare's moated sites were of questionable origin, cattle were frequently culpable as creators of the "multi entrance" moated site.

A number of sites within the county were situated on the slopes of undulating terrain, this resembled a locational characteristic common to ringforts.<sup>499</sup> In many instances the surface ground was not conducive to supporting a water-filled fosse. The feature of a water-filled moat appears to have been an optional consideration rather than of primary concern when choosing the location for a moated site. Some sites within the field area were obviously constructed with no intention of the fosse ever containing water. Many of these disregarded locations immediately adjacent to a water source in preference to securing the high ground; Tipper South and Guidenstown North being among these. For other sites, like that at Drumsru, the advantage of a water source to fill the

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<sup>498</sup> For example, the moated sites of Mylerstown and Sallymount Demesne/Cramersvalley share roughly the same internal dimensions.

<sup>499</sup> Barry had commented on this fact and noted that a majority of sites were located "on the lee of slopes which command a view of the surrounding countryside", Barry, T.B., (1977), op.cit., p.38.

surrounding fosse was among one of the primary locational determinants. The Ordnance Survey records the presence of a well just outside the western fosse at Dunfierth.

The result of centuries of agricultural disturbance contributed to difficulty in the identification of possible leats. Moated sites which presently exhibit water-filled moats occasionally do so as a consequence of modern water diversion and their incorporation into the farm drainage system. Examples of this are found at Puddlehall Moat, in Clownings townland (Plate XXI), and the moated site at Tankardstown. It should be noted that in these generalizations the water sources referred to were examined with relevance to their capacity in supplying the moated site with a water filled fosse.<sup>500</sup>

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<sup>500</sup> The personal needs of the occupants necessitated location within reasonable proximity to a fresh water source.



Plate XX - "Puddlehall Moat". Moated site at Clownings.



Plate XXI - Outer fosse of "Puddlehall Moat" from N.W.

### 3. FUNCTION & CHRONOLOGY

The interpretation of the original functional role of the moated sites in Co.Kildare highlights the lack of detailed primary documentary evidence on the subject. However the results of morphological classification and comparison augment the limited historical record and the resultant conclusions are supported and validated by earlier research on moated sites in Ireland and western Europe.

Analysis of the distribution pattern within the medieval context also contributes to an individual assessment of initial and probable subsequent function. Many of the moated sites though comparable in size clearly had varying purposes. Two main groupings may be advanced at this stage, those being 1) the moated manor house, and 2) the defended outfarm. Further categories may be devised, however these tend to obscure the final picture. The function of the moat itself was basically to defend the occupants, their possessions and movable stock. Some sites in the county are more heavily defended than others, however the pitfalls of the interpretation of these as a distinct grouping is well evidenced by the varied factors of their position in the distribution pattern, their relationship to other nearby settlements and their proximity to the march.



Categorization into sub-groups demands defined boundaries. To pigeonhole these individual sites into the various groupings of manor house and outfarm leads to a heavy reliance on distributional analysis in the light of the paucity of documentary evidence. Fortunately the historical record for Kildare is not totally lacking, although classification of documented sites with the ground evidence seems to be a problem inherent to moated site studies in Ireland.

Among the many Irish exchequer documents housed in the Public Record Office, London, a rare, if somewhat unexpected, reference is made with regard to the construction of "a wall and fosse and one breteche at Granvarnak".<sup>501</sup> Initial placename research failed to locate the exact site, however the historical record provides many clues from which conclusions on location and function may be gathered.<sup>502</sup> The area is first referred to in the 1220s in a Chancery roll in which 4 carucates of land are listed at "Garnenath".<sup>503</sup> In 1228, Walter de Ridelesford sought a licence to divert outside his park at "Garnenan", a way which passed through it.<sup>504</sup> Though

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<sup>501</sup> P.R.O., E.101/230/13.

<sup>502</sup> The true location of the site as that of Graney (Sh. 40) has been ruled out as both are mentioned within the one document as distinctly separate places; Tresham, p.4, No.53.

<sup>503</sup>. Ibid., p.4, No.53.

<sup>504</sup>. C.D.I., Vol.1, No.1641, p.246.

noted as a manor together with those of Kilkea and Castledermot in a grant to Edward I by Christiana de Mariscis in 1281, three years later in an extent of her lands "Gavenanc" was still referred to as a "park".<sup>505</sup> The reference to Thomas de Blakeham, who came to Ireland as seneschal of Christina de Mariscis in 1276, provides dating evidence for the partially destroyed exchequer document and thus the construction of the site.<sup>506</sup>

As the site is consistently referred to as a park the intended purpose of the construction may have been that of a hunting lodge.<sup>507</sup> The site's curious exclusion from the extent of John Wogan's lands at Kilkea and Tristeldermot in 1311 perhaps indicates a cessation of use, Wogan himself having gained possession of the lands by the king's gift in 1305.<sup>508</sup> The last reference to "Gavernagh" is noted in 1302 when rent for it and Tristeldermot were owed by Walter de Ivethorn.<sup>509</sup> In 1304 the lands of the king at Kilkea and Tristeldermot were committed to Walran Wodelok, who was to collect the rents of the lands which the deceased Walter de Ivethorn held

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<sup>505</sup> C.D.I., Vol.II, No.1799, p.377, "...the manors of Kilkea, Garnenagh, and Tristeldermot.." March 1281. Also C.D.I., Vol.II, No.2339.

<sup>506</sup> C.D.I., Vol.II, No.1207.

<sup>507</sup> cf., Rahtz, P.A., (1969), op.cit.

<sup>508</sup> Red Book of Ormond, p.12 and p.21 respectively. C.D.I., Vol.V, No.391., p.127, A.D. 1305.

<sup>509</sup> Account of Walter de Ivethorn for "Garuenagh", D.K.R., 38th, Pipe Roll a.r XXX Edward I, p.69; C.D.I., Vol.V., p.13, no.58.

there.<sup>510</sup>

In 1540 there was "an old castle, now broken down" recorded on the land at "Grangefoure".<sup>511</sup> When the Civil Survey was compiled over a century later there was no mention in the index of observations of a castle at "Graingefore".<sup>512</sup> Taylor's map of 1783 likewise depicts no evidence of remains at Grangeford. A small rectangular enclosure delimited by trees is shown in the southern part of the townland on the Ordnance Survey 1837 six inch map. Danaher had notified the Office of Public Works in 1955 that a rectilinear earthwork in Grangeford townland had recently been demolished.<sup>513</sup> Brindley who surveyed the levelled site in 1985 noted that it was roughly 34 m. in diameter.<sup>514</sup>

The initial financial outlay of £9 16s. 11d., compares favourably with that of construction costs at Ballyconnor where £14 was expended during the two year building

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<sup>510</sup> P.R.O.I., EX 2/1 mem 5.d.

<sup>511</sup> Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions, 1540-1, (ed) White, N.B., (Dublin, 1943), p.169.

<sup>512</sup> Civil Survey, p.116.

<sup>513</sup> O.P.W. Files, 1955. Peter Danaher's correspondence with the Director of National Monuments also noted the destruction of three other moated sites, Fassagh Td. (Sh.26), Thomastown Td. (Sh.28), and Rathgrumly Td. (Sh.31), in the years 1953-55

<sup>514</sup> O.P.W., Sites and Monuments Record files, S.M.R. No. KD038-038 .

phase, 1282-1284.<sup>515</sup> However the inclusion of the provision for the building of a bretache indicates the desirability of such a feature as an integral part of the moated site's defences, or at least its deemed necessity in this particular part of Kildare.

An inquisition in relation to the holdings of Roger Bygod after his death, listed a "ruinous tower" at the manor of Ballysax in 1306.<sup>516</sup> "They say that at Ballysax there is a tower [turra] in bad condition and ruinous, and a small wooden grange covered with straw, which they cannot extend at any price as no one will rent them".<sup>517</sup> The state of the buildings at Ballysax was the immediate concern of Thomas de Kent who in 1305 was assigned by the King to hold court there, let the land to farm and repair the houses.<sup>518</sup>

The reference to a tower in connection with a grange or barn, may suggest the importance of grain production on the manor. This is clearly shown in Lyons' appraisal of the manor's agricultural productivity in her use of the surviving account rolls for Ballysax during the 1280's.<sup>519</sup>

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<sup>515</sup> P.R.O., S.C.6 1247-9.

<sup>516</sup> I.P.M., Vol. IV, No.434, p.305.  
C.J.R., Vol. II, p.347.

<sup>517</sup> C.D.I., Vol.II, No.617, p.174, A.D. 1307.

<sup>518</sup> P.R.O.I. EX 2/1 mem. 33., A.D. 1305.

<sup>519</sup> Lyons, M.C., "The manor of Ballysax, 1280-86", Retrospect, New Series No.1, (1981).

Although it may be argued that the tower referred to was in fact a grain silo, the defensive connotations of such a reference should not be overlooked.<sup>520</sup> The manor though unmoated, more than likely was surrounded by a strong palisade, the tower playing a major part in these defences. In the reeves account for Ballysax in 1286 under the section dealing with house expenditure an outlay of 13s. 3d. went towards the construction of four perches of wall around the courtyard.<sup>521</sup>

Early references to wooden towers are usually to those which crown motte tops, however in 1245 an order was given for " 8 wooden towers [bretachiae] to be made ready in Ireland for shipment ".<sup>522</sup> Although these were probably intended for use as moveable siege-towers, known as "belfries", their relative importance as part of rural defensive measures should not be neglected. There is also documentary evidence for the existence of a wooden tower as part of a manor's defence in sixteenth century Ireland.<sup>523</sup>

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<sup>520</sup> In 1593 there is reference to the castle of Ballysax. D.K.R., 16, p.241, No.5830. This castle is also mentioned in 1614, Calendar of Patent Rolls, (London, 1891-), 11 James I, p.250.

<sup>521</sup> Lyons, M.C., "The manor of Ballysax, 1280-86", Retrospect, New Series No.1, (1981), p.42; " In iiij perciatis muri circa curiam faciendis iij s. iij d. scilicet pro pertica xij d. ". (P.R.O., S.C. 6 1237/5).

<sup>522</sup> C.D.I., Vol.I, No. 2736.

<sup>523</sup> See below, p.266.

In May 1307 " unum mesuagium quod solet vocari le Blakehalle cum fossatis et gardinis adiacentibus in arste", together with other adjacent surrounding lands was granted by William le Poer to John fitz Thomas, Lord of Kildare, his wife and son.<sup>524</sup> The fosses here mentioned refer to those of an enclosing nature rather than those frequently mentioned in land grants which were used to delimit fixed boundaries. A year later an inquiry stated that it would be to the advantage of the King and others if a licence was given for the subsequent granting of "one messuage, one mill...twenty acres of meadow, forty acres of wood and two hundred acres of moor in Blackhalle in Arst to John, son of John, son of Thomas, to hold in chief".<sup>525</sup> The manor was growing at this stage, as previously in 1305 the same forty acres above mentioned was the subject of an assize to determine "reasonable estover for enclosing, burning and building, in 40a. of wood in Keppoc in Clane in his manor of Blakehale".<sup>526</sup> A pipe roll of Edward III for the year 1334 refers to the issues of the court of Blackhall.<sup>527</sup> The Blackhall here referred to is located within the modern townland of

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<sup>524</sup> Red Book of Kildare, No.111, p.94; "one messuage that is accustomed to be called Blackhall with adjacent fosses and gardens in Arst".

<sup>525</sup> C.J.R., Vol.III, p.75.

<sup>526</sup> C.J.R., Vol.II, p.94; The court proceedings were basically concerned with the alleged abuse of the privilege of estover as exercised by a freeholder who lived in Clane, and his unwarranted taking of trees from the wood.

<sup>527</sup> D.K.R., 44th., p.35; Pipe Roll Ed. III, a.r.viii.

Painestown, which Mauricius Ercedekyn held of Thomas fitz John.<sup>528</sup> The same land was earlier described as "Rathconneche quod vocatur Payneston".<sup>529</sup> The 1307 grant provides the information to positively identify the townland location as most of the placenames mentioned are located on Sh.10 (Painestown, Rathcoffey, and Graiguesallagh), and Cappagh on Sh.4. The moated site of Blackhall is thus placed firmly in Arst, as opposed to the modern townland of the same name situated south-east of Clane in the barony of South-Salt.

The documentary evidence reveals this site to have been a defended manor house. In the townland of Painestown, immediately to the west of Painestown House, is located a small square enclosure delimited by a fosse, c.2m wide.<sup>530</sup> Without the benefit of archaeological investigation it is impossible to link this site with that referred to above in the documentary evidence. However, the particular nature of this site and its representation on the 1837 first edition O.S. map questions the antiquity of the site. The original site may have been superseded by the present Painestown House. There is also a tower house at Painestown which may be situated within the earlier fossed message.

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<sup>528</sup> " unum mesuagium <et> quatuor carucatas terre cum pertinentiis in Payneston que nunc vocatur Blakhall' ", Red Book of Kildare, No.130, p.115.

<sup>529</sup> Red Book of Kildare, No.110, p.93.

<sup>530</sup> Painestown, O.S. Six Inch Sh.10., 16.871327.

Similar examples of moated manor houses were perhaps located at the de Rupefort manors in the same part of the county. Henry de Rupefort owned the manor of Rathcoffey which comprised one messuage, 200a. of land, 7a. meadow, 20a. moor, 20a. pasture, and 20a. of underwood in 1300.<sup>531</sup> Evidence to date reveals no trace of moated sites at any of these medieval manors. Recent archaeological investigation near the tower house at Rathcoffey similarly produced no new evidence.<sup>532</sup>

Guidenstown North is one of the largest surviving moated sites in Kildare, with an internal area of 2695sq.m. (Plate XXIII). At an altitude of 300-400ft. O.D. this rectangular moated site is defined by a wide and deep fosse, the platform area in modern times was protected by a high inner bank constructed of earth and stone. The impressive nature of this site is furthered by its situation on a slight hill in an area of high ground which facilitates good views of the surrounding countryside. Located c.2 miles south-east of Rathangan, it is worth questioning if this was indicative of the type of site constructed in this area. Apart from Drumsru this is the only moated site to have survived the ravages of time in this area of west Kildare, its size no doubt contributing to its survival. Military activity and quasi

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<sup>531</sup> C.J.R. Vol. I, P.322.

<sup>532</sup> Byrne, G., "Rathcoffey", Cotter, C. (ed) Excavations 1986, (Dublin, 1987), p.21.



"gaelic resurgence" is well documented for this area in the late thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries. As such settlement on the margins of "Norman control" in west and north-west Kildare was at the very least hazardous, thus it may be argued that the moated sites in this area date from an initial building phase prior to hostile Gaelic activity.

On the basis of morphological comparison and site location, the moated site at Guidenstown North represents a strongly defended farmstead. Situated between Rathangan and Milltown, the site has no documentary evidence to suggest that it was anything more than an outfarm, though by its very size the occupants may well have had some social standing in the community. A reference to Geidonnyston in 1379 is the first time it is referred to as a manor, an earlier indenture in 1360 records that it was through the grantor's wife's, Isabella Geidon's family line, that the present townland acquired its name.<sup>533</sup> This site is of interest when compared with three other well defended moated sites which are located not on the border, but well within the limits of settled Anglo-Norman Kildare in the later thirteenth century.

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<sup>533</sup> Red Book of Kildare, Nos, 172-175, p.158-160.



Plate XXII - Moated site at Dunfierth

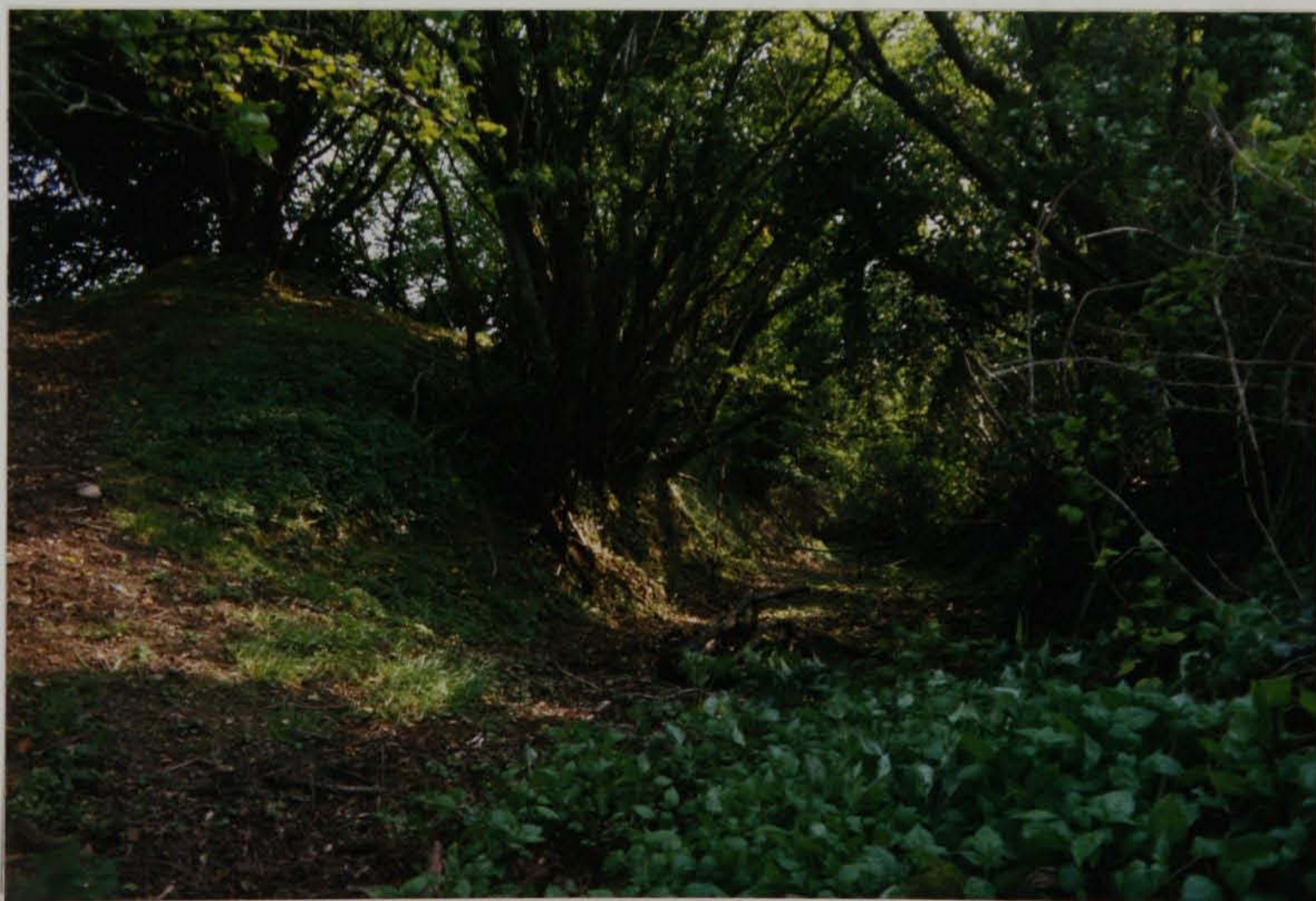


Plate XXIII - N.W. raised corner and outer fosse of moated site at Guidenstown North

The moated sites of Kilmead, Mylerstown, and Sallymount Demesne /Cramers Valley display similar characteristics when their overall plans are considered. However as noted these sites fall into a different category from that of Guidenstown North as they occur well within the limits of Anglo-Norman settlement. A common factor to all these sites is the apparent importance of defensive capability. The moated site at Sallymount Demesne/Cramers Valley, the townland boundary bisects the site and utilizes the natural drop to the Liffey valley floor as protection on one side, while the western side has evidence of a possible double ditch where an entrance to the site once stood.

Both Kilmead and Mylerstown are slightly raised above the respective surrounding land, however the extent of the outer defences as displayed by fosse width and depth, and the high inner bank, set these sites apart from other examples within the field area. The location of the latter three may well suggest that these moated enclosures once housed the elite of the Anglo-Norman farming community. The sheer size of the defences portray a military capacity rather than that of a defended farmstead, these seemingly unwarranted measures perhaps were the result of some outward ostentation on behalf of the then occupants.

A common feature of most of the moated sites in Kildare was the dimensions of the enclosed platform. Though the majority of these sites have now been destroyed, a rough estimation of their original enclosed area may be established by use of the scaled representations depicted on the Ordnance Survey six inch maps. This results in a corroboration of the conclusions based on the extant sites. The high level of moated site destruction within the county limited the formation of conclusions based on morphological comparison. Furthermore, the paucity of historical documentation determined that the final interpretation of the functional role of Kildare's moated sites was dependant on analysis of the distribution pattern.

In the southern half of the county there is evidence of a pattern of clusters of moated sites, some of which are located within close proximity of nearby established settlements. Despite the absence of substantive documentary evidence it is probable that a number of these sites were simply sub-manors which were emulating a trend by enclosing their holdings with a fosse and palisade. The financial standing of the owners of these enclosed manors is perhaps reflected in the size of the outworks and thus Mylerstown and Kilmead would represent those of the wealthier class within the farming/land owning community.

Not all manors were encompassed by moats. Further research and archaeological excavation may show more conclusively the extent to which Kildare's manor houses were defended. Cartographic and field evidence bear little witness to the importance of the manor of Ballymadden, home and "fortress" of John de Saunford. Likewise, information reveals that the manor of Ballysax did not possess a moat. In 1276 it was recorded that there was "at Ardenoch a manor, in which there is a stone house commenced, without a roof".<sup>534</sup> There is no field evidence for the manor of Ardinode ever being moated. The present Ardinode House, west of Ballymore Eustace, probably replaced the old manor house. In this way continuity of settlement perhaps distorts the overall distribution pattern.<sup>535</sup>

In the south and west of Kildare many of the moated sites were constructed as defended farmsteads for their inhabitants. These sites were located in apparent isolation in border areas, many of which were within the bounds of what was regarded as the march by the end of the thirteenth century. The defensive capabilities of these sites, based on modern day assessment of their defences and strategic situation, infer that defence was a secondary consideration outweighed by locational

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<sup>534</sup> C.D.I., Vol.II, No.1283, p.232.

<sup>535</sup> Conclusions with regard to moated sites being a reserve of the rich should be taken with care.

determinants such as land quality and availability. This assessment of course is also based on the presumed chronology of moated site construction in Kildare. Moated site construction in frontier regions may have predated native resurgence in a particular area.

The chronology of Kildare's moated sites depends solely at present on the conclusions of documentary evidence, as to date no site has undergone archaeological investigation. However, the restrictions of the available documentary material, both in scope and time scale, limit final conclusions and in ways perhaps shape and determine them. References in the historical record to the moated sites at Blackhall and Granvarnagh coincide with the thesis that moated sites in Ireland were a late thirteenth /early fourteenth century phenomena. Nonetheless, how does this picture fit in with the realities on the ground in medieval Kildare?

Moated sites have been associated with the consequences of population pressure and thus use of land which was previously regarded as marginal. Although population figures are difficult to assess, the distribution of that population on the ground may be plotted by use of placename evidence and matched against the moated site distribution in an attempt to assess the peripheral nature of this site type in Kildare. The continued depletion of Kildare's woodland resources, especially of

hard woods used for construction purposes, is a common feature of thirteenth century Kildare. Nonetheless, the association of assarting with the development of unrealized land resources due to population pressure, and thus the trend of moated site construction in areas which were previously forested, is difficult both to document and assess.

In 1229 a grant to the archbishop of Dublin brought about the disafforestation of large tracts of land on the Wicklow/Kildare border.<sup>536</sup> This specified "that all men who have woods within these limits, though in the time of the king's ancestors they were in forest, may inclose and impark them, take, sell, and assart them".<sup>537</sup> The Kildare lands specifically affected by this grant lay to the west of Naas between Ballymore Eustace and Kildeel and were mostly situated well above the 500ft. O.D. contour. The absence of moated sites from this area of early large scale assarting may therefore not be directly attributed to the non-emergence of this site type as a habitation form at this early date, but equally to the preference of the rest of Kildare's moated sites for the fertile lowlands.

The documentary evidence for Kildare, substantiated by

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<sup>536</sup> C.D.I., Vol.I, No.1769, p.164; No.1757, p.262.

<sup>537</sup> Calendar of Charter Rolls, (London, 1903- ), Vol.I, 14 Hen.III, m.4, p.107.

previous research in the rest of Ireland, suggests that the proliferation of moated sites in the county belongs to the later half of the thirteenth century. It is difficult to arrive at a starting point for the introduction of this settlement form, nonetheless it may be suggested that the distribution of sites in western Kildare predate the beginnings of what could be construed as a determined native resurgence with the subsequent emergence of a volatile frontier zone.

In 1284 an inquisition returned Carbury as being worth nothing, "because the land is destroyed by the war of the Irish in Offaly".<sup>538</sup> At this stage this statement was representative of the general state of affairs in the western regions of Kildare. Kildare castle itself was regarded as well within the march before the turn of the century.<sup>539</sup> In 1297 nothing was returned for the premises of a manor in Arst because as it was situated in the march near the Irish, "the manor is burned by them, and nobody has the courage to live there".<sup>540</sup> The deterioration of conditions were hardly considered conducive to the advancement of settlement in outlying regions. Moated site construction in this region, particularly north-west Kildare, most likely predated such disturbance and

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<sup>538</sup> C.D.I., Vol.II., No.2324.

<sup>539</sup> Early Statutes, p.219.

<sup>540</sup> D.K.R., 38th., Pipe Roll Ed.I., a.r.XVIII, p.82.



may be confined to a limited time scale. The earliest recorded reference to Dunfierth dates from 1273 and it may be argued that this is no mere coincidence.<sup>541</sup>

Although southern Kildare suffered similar, though less thorough, attacks and depredations from bands of local Irish felons, land values "in time of war" did not suffer the same depreciation, and frequently were only reduced to 50% below the average returns. The majority of the settled farming community in the south of the county did not desert their holdings. Consequently, moated site development may have carried on in this region into the fourteenth century.

#### 4. PROBLEMS

The problems encountered in researching the moated sites of Kildare were manifold. Dearth of documentary evidence inhibited functional interpretation. Archaeological fieldwork also highlighted various difficulties. The high rate of destruction of this monument type in the county left a relatively small number of sites from which to draw positive conclusions on the basis of morphological comparison. This high destruction rate resulted in the

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<sup>541</sup> I.P.M., Vol.II, p.253.

number of probable and inconclusive identifications forwarded in the text of this study.

The lack of documentary evidence relative to the construction and function of moated sites proved to be the major obstacle in the extrapolation of conclusive findings. Tentative conclusions are thus advanced through the manipulation of a number of incidental references. Despite the absence of direct documentation, historical reference to the territory in which the sites are located facilitated a regional analytical approach. Furthermore, distribution of the settled population was assessed by use of placename evidence. However, most of the relevant available material related to the late thirteenth/early fourteenth century and this in itself hindered any attempted formation of a time scale for the construction period of moated sites in Kildare. An additional problem in this area relates to contemporaneity of moat usage and later moat construction. An indenture related to the manor of Turvy, Co. Dublin in 1404, detailed the construction of a moat around an orchard, "For which they shall ditch (fossabunt) the said orchard, and clear it and make a palisaded fence (frethenam) at their own costs and charges."<sup>542</sup> In Co. Kilkenny in 1549 a "tymbre castell" was among the buildings which the rector of Lysterlyng was to enclose as he was directed to "mound or compace the chiefe dwellyng place with a wall of grene

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<sup>542</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.II, No.380, p.272.

soodes so as it shalbe defensyble".<sup>543</sup>

Despite the dilemma of functional clarification, some features which may now appear as rectangular enclosures as detected by use of aerial photographs may not belong to the category of moated sites at all. Interpretation of aerial photographs, particularly those of the Geological Survey of Ireland taken at high altitude, create similar problems. The cropmarks are real features but are they of archaeological significance and how should they be defined? Field survey in a number of instances can rule out some of the marginal cases on grounds of unsuitable locational factors. However the main problem still relates to the interpretation of the large number of rectangular enclosures which show up on these photographs.

At Osberstown (16.875221) a series of low earthworks which incorporate a central rectangular earthwork was identified using oblique aerial photographs taken by St. Joseph.<sup>544</sup> Field survey, however, found these earthworks to be depressions c.1m. below ground level. Despite the initial interpretation which was admittedly somewhat circumspect, other photographs belonging to the same series were sometimes not as they appeared. An aerial view of Conlanstown (16.720181) was interpreted

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<sup>543</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.V., No.11, p.27.

<sup>544</sup> St. Joseph BDU 31: 1970.

as a rectangular enclosure with a possible house platform in its north-east corner with associated field systems.<sup>545</sup> The site nevertheless was not that of a ploughed-out moated site, but that of a series of stone foundations, some which were house platforms contained in a well defined rectangular area (45 by 50m.), the field regarded by local tradition to be that of the site of an old town.<sup>546</sup>

At Yeomanstown (16.854203) a rectilinear earthwork, 1760 sq.m. in internal area, with an outer fosse which is barely traceable, is situated in flat well drained pastureland close to the river Liffey. Located at the centre of the enclosure are the stone foundations of a rectangular building, 8m by 18m, of east-west orientation. However, this is the site of an enclosed church associated with the move of the Dominicans from Naas to Yeomanstown, sometime after 1666.<sup>547</sup> A similar site is located at Ballindoolin at which a sub-square moated enclosure houses the foundations of a structure, 8.2 by 19m., which again is of an east-west orientation.<sup>548</sup> Local tradition in the area refers to this enclosure as the site of an old church.

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<sup>545</sup> St. Joseph AHL 96: 1963.

<sup>546</sup> Pers. comm. with landowner of site.

<sup>547</sup> Gwynn, A. & Hadcock, R.N., (1970), op.cit., p.234.

<sup>548</sup> The internal platform measures 1123 sq.m. in area.

Other problems arise mainly in the area of positive identification due mostly to the high destruction figures. Map representation was rarely found to be misleading, that is when depicting square or rectangular earthworks. However there were quite a proportion of rectilinear earthworks which on investigation proved to be ringforts. Effects of erosion were at times difficult to calculate as banks may have acquired new height due to the accumulation of earth around the scrub and trees which covered most of the sites.

The limited nature of the available evidence created difficulties with regard to the particular question of moated site occupation. By the end of the thirteenth century it was recorded that much of the march land was left waste and uncultivated without a guard. Moreover, the previous landowners were "living in their lands in the land of peace rather than on their other lands close to the Irish".<sup>549</sup> The development of similar situations in other frontier zones in an Irish context has been examined with the benefit of archaeological evidence.<sup>550</sup> As in the case of the moated site at Rigsdale, Co.Cork, many Kildare moated sites in outlying regions may have been only partially constructed or occupied before they

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<sup>549</sup> Early Statutes, p.199.

<sup>550</sup> Barry, T.B., "The shifting frontier: Medieval moated sites in counties Cork and Limerick", in Aberg, F.A. & Brown, A.E., (ed) Medieval Moated Sites in North-West Europe (Oxford, 1983), p.71-85.

were swallowed up by the advancing marchland.<sup>551</sup>

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The distribution pattern of moated sites in Co.Kildare may perhaps best be explained with reference to the populated townland distribution maps as presented in the following chapter.<sup>552</sup> The pre-dominance of sites in the south of the county evidence the desirability of agriculturally viable land at the limits of the settled society and a preference for locations which provide relative safety. Despite the documented construction of a breteche at the moated site in Grangeford Td., the moated sites of Kildare functioned primarily as defended farmsteads. High density of settlement in north eastern Kildare and the inherent dangers of the eastern border with the Dublin and Wicklow mountains curtailed the proliferation of this site type in this region of the county.

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<sup>551</sup> Sweetman, P.D., (1981), op.cit., p.205.

<sup>552</sup> Figs. 20 and 21.

## CHAPTER 6

## SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT IN ANGLO-NORMAN KILDARE

1. Placename Evidence
2. Townland Settlements
3. House Construction
4. Mills and Commercial Growth
5. Stone Castles
6. Conclusions

## 1. PLACENAME EVIDENCE

The relative stability which characterised Kildare in the first seventy years of the thirteenth century facilitated the growth and expansion of the settlement infrastructure established in the last thirty years of the twelfth century. The nature of the surviving documentary material limits what is known of settlement development in the centuries which followed the initial invasion. The earthworks discussed in this thesis formed part of the overall picture but the complex settlement framework has yet to be revealed. Placename evidence may be used to define the extent and spatial distribution of this settlement.<sup>553</sup>

Placenames are frequently used as indicators of past settlement. To examine the validity of such a treatment, the placename evidence provided in the historical documentation for Kildare was compared against the archaeological record as represented by the physical remains of Anglo-Norman presence on the landscape. The three printed volumes of the Calendar of Justiciary Rolls formed the historical basis for this research.<sup>554</sup> These judicial records provided countywide coverage and were chronologically compatible with the settlement period

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<sup>553</sup> See below, Chapter 2, p.58-62.

<sup>554</sup> Calendar of the Justiciary Rolls of Ireland, 1295-1314, (ed) Mills, J. & Griffith, M.C., 3 Vols. (Dublin, 1905-14).



under discussion. Further placename evidence was provided by the Calendar of Archbishop Alen's Register.<sup>555</sup> This additional information was used to augment and, in certain instances, verify the initial findings.<sup>556</sup>

The relevant Kildare placenames were initially extracted from these documentary sources. The placenames had then to be identified and provided with a modern equivalent within the townland system, the present form of which did not always reflect the medieval counterpart. Redefinition of boundaries and change of ownership contributed to this transformation of nomenclature. An example of this is the townland of Morrystownbiller which was referred to in 1352 as "Athronthye, now called Morrystown (Villa Mauricii de Fitzgallyn)".<sup>557</sup> Some of the new landholders imposed their identity by similar designation. "Henry FitzRys, son of Henry, lord of Penkoyte, confirms the grants ... of the chapel anciently called Kylengly, but after the arrival of the English and Welsh in Ireland, Penkoyte, belonging to Kylculyn church".<sup>558</sup> Comparison of Kildare townland names with those of land units from

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<sup>555</sup> Calendar of Archbishop Alen's Register, (ed) McNeill, C., (Dublin, 1950).

<sup>556</sup> Despite the predominant interest in land matters in eastern Kildare Alen's Reg. substantiated the initial findings and provided further important placename information.

<sup>557</sup> Alen's Reg., p.269. It was also named as "Villa Mauricii Fitzcullin", p.267.

<sup>558</sup> D.K.R., 20th, p.57. Taken from the Calendar of Christ Church Deeds, c.1282.

Pembrokeshire and Glamorganshire in South-Wales reveal shared names, such as Nicholstown, Sherlockstown, Bishopstown, Arthurstown, Kerdiffistown, Flemingstown, Sigginstown and Bodenstown.<sup>559</sup>

Furthermore, the phonetic transcription of placenames by court clerks and stenographers resulted in numerous and varied forms of spelling. Thankfully later medieval documentation frequently recorded the transition of placename change.<sup>560</sup> Some of these sources which were originally used to authenticate land transactions document the name change of holdings, such as noted in the examples of "the manor of Thre Castels alias Fountsland"<sup>561</sup> and "Reynoldeston alias Payner castell juxta castrum de Carbry".<sup>562</sup> These documents also record the occasional total placename change of a townland, as

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<sup>559</sup> Sherlock, Rev. Canon, "The original Anglo-Norman settlers in County Kildare", J.K.A.S., Vol.3, (1901), p.290-294. The example of the "vill Walensis", which belonged to Elias Walensis, has already been noted within the context of the previous chapter. The English origins of Kildare townland names has more recently been discussed by Mac Aodha, B.S., "Ainmneacha Bearla na mBailte Fearainn i gContae Chill Dara", Studia Hibernica, No.26, (1991-92), p.217-226.

<sup>560</sup> See below, Chapter 2, p.64.

<sup>561</sup> D.K.R., 8-11, p.28. 1547 A.D. In 1179 it was known as "Tehcheli" (Alen's Reg., p.5, n.4). It is now represented by the modern townlands of Fontstown Lower and Fontstown Upper, O.S. Sh. 31. A similar example is provided in the Fiants of Eliz. I, "lands of Callowstown alias Calviestown alias Ballenchalloe, co.Kildare", D.K.R., 14, p.28. (Calfstown Td., Sh. 3).

<sup>562</sup> Rotuli Selecti ad res Anglicas et Hibernicas, (ed) Hunter, J., (London, 1834), p.84, 1424 A.D.

exemplified by the modern townland of Hortland, which was formerly known as Scullogestown and prior to that Ballymascollog.<sup>563</sup> In the pursuit of placename identification, with 1,240 townland names in the county, the List of Townlands in County Kildare compiled by Close was invaluable.<sup>564</sup> The index prepared by Liam Price for Alen's Register contained additional information and exemplified his scholarly work in the field of placename studies.

On analysis of the compiled documentary evidence the list of Kildare placenames were assigned to a modern townland identification and this information was then translated to a map format. The base maps used for the final plotted distributions were the 25 inch or 1/2500 scale plans.<sup>565</sup> Such a method has many constraints. Primarily, the scale adopted presents problems of accuracy. In the preparation of these distribution maps whole townlands were plotted, whereas many may have only been partially settled. However, the settlement pattern represented compares favourably with the archaeological and historical record.

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<sup>563</sup> The modern townland of Hortland is in the parish of Scullogestown. In 1304 it was "Balymacscolog" (Red Book of Ormond, p.29); A regal visitation in 1615 refers to "Ballenesculloke" (T.C.D. Ms. 2627, p.3); The Civil Survey, p.203, in 1654-56 records the lands at "Skullogstowne".

<sup>564</sup> Close, C.F., (1911), op.cit.

<sup>565</sup> Each represented an area of land equivalent to 964.2 acres or 390.2 hectares.

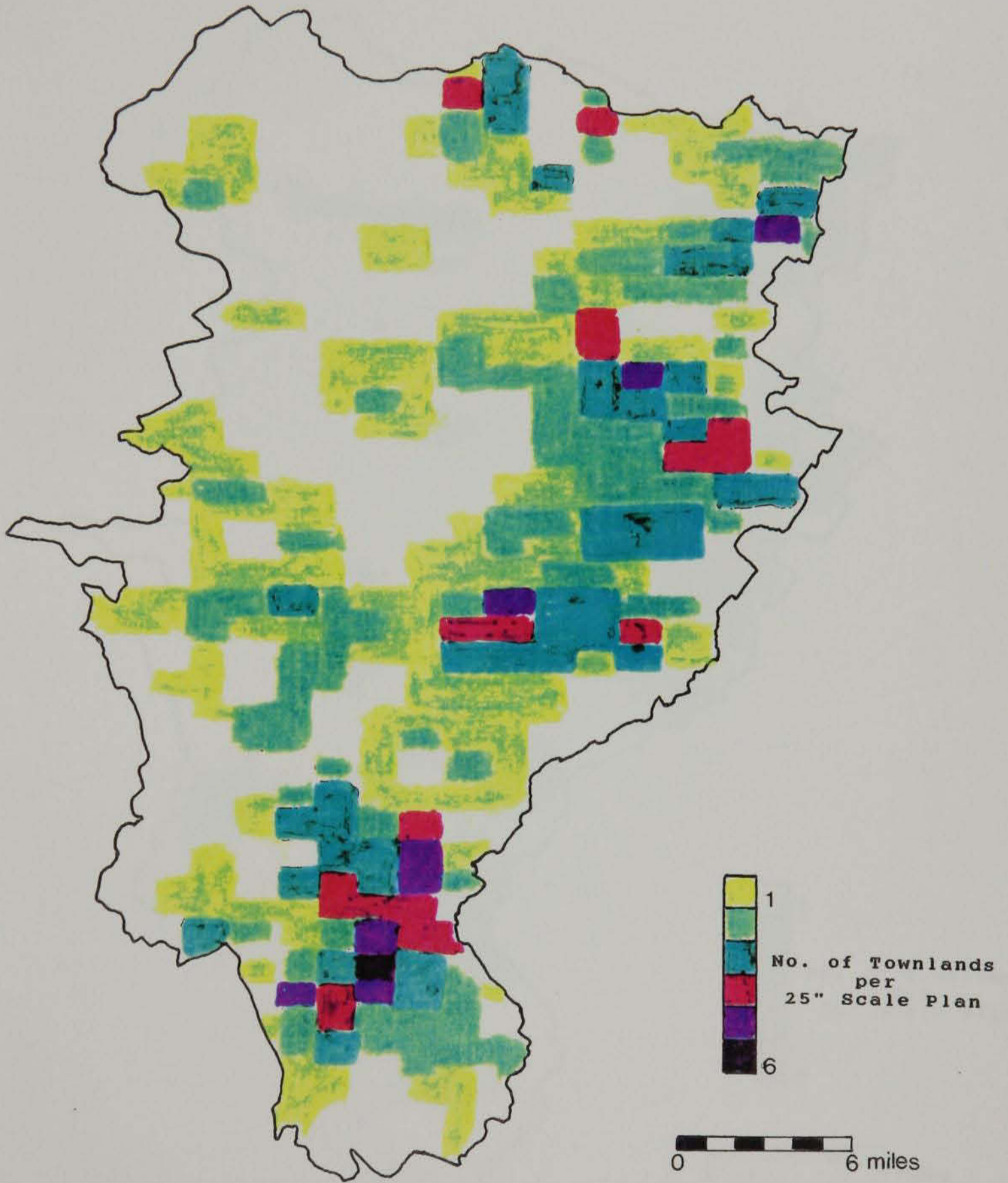


Figure 20. Populated townland distribution based on Calendar of Justiciary Rolls.

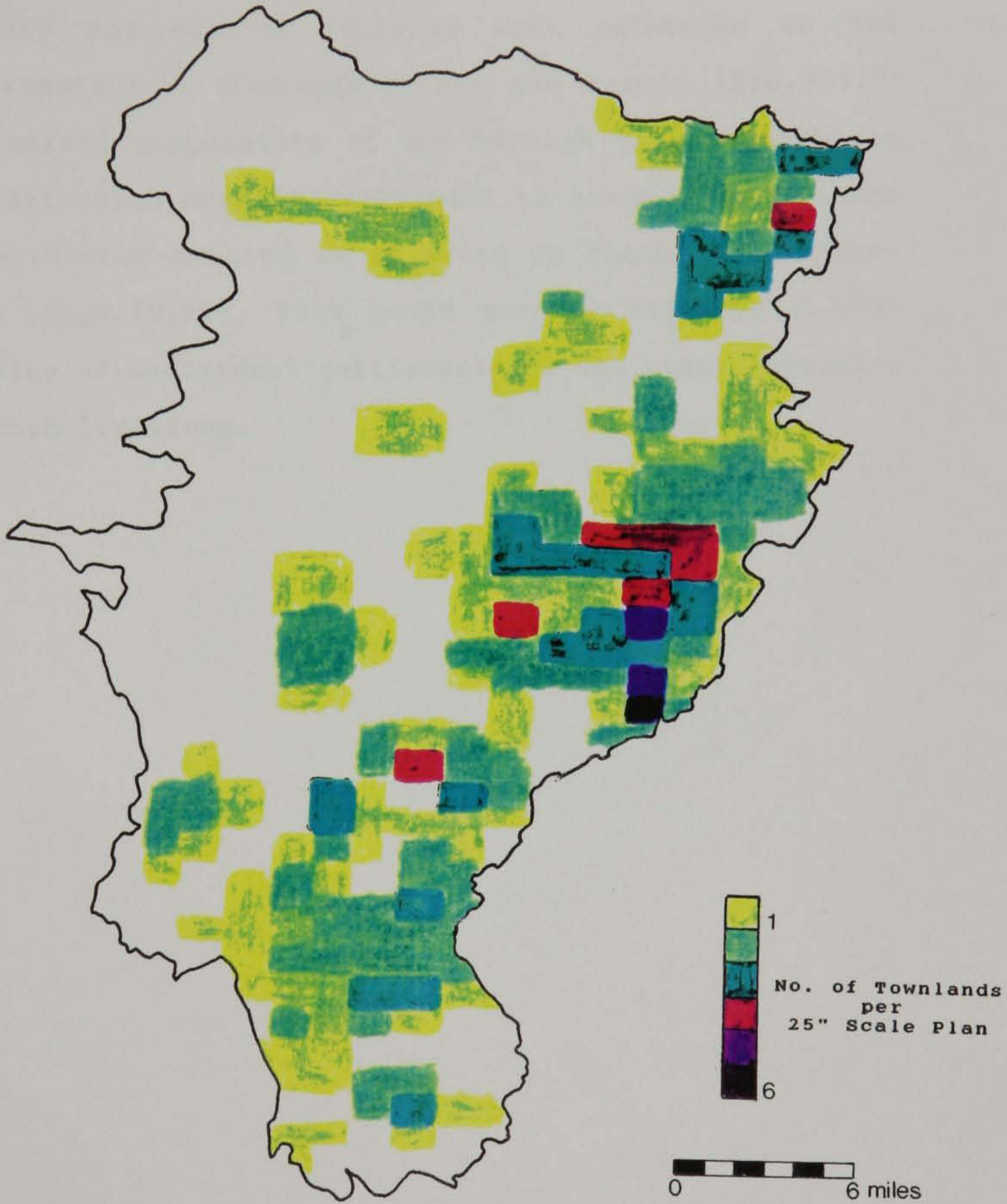


Figure 21. Populated townland distribution based on Calendar of Archbishop Alen's Register.

These maps reflect the known settlement distribution pattern of County Kildare at the end of the thirteenth century and may be verified with reference to the distribution of boroughs within the county (Fig.22).<sup>566</sup> The marked association of the borough sites aligned in an east-south sweep corresponded to areas of population / habitation density as recorded by these distribution maps. (Figs.20,21). This would perhaps indicate a high density of individual settlements in the areas adjoining borough locations.

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<sup>566</sup> This map was compiled from the evidence supplied by Glasscock, R.E., "Moated sites and deserted villages and boroughs: Two neglected aspects of Anglo-Norman settlement in Ireland", in Stephens, N & Glasscock, R.E., (ed) Irish Geographical Studies, (Belfast, 1970), p.174-5; and Graham, B.J., "The documentation of Irish medieval boroughs", G.S.I.H.S. Bull., 4 (1977), p.9-20.

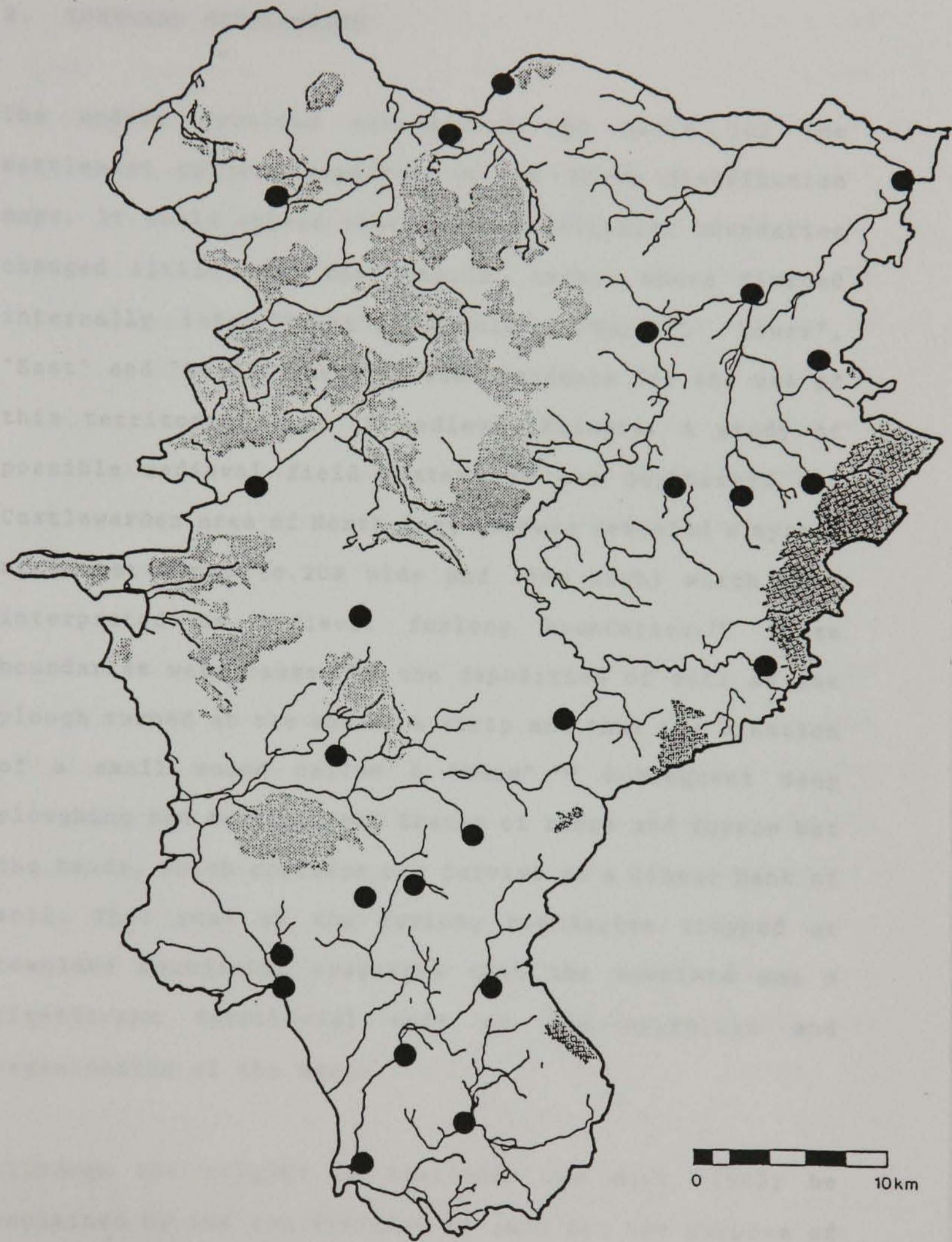


Figure 22. Medieval boroughs in Co.Kildare.

## 2. TOWNLAND SETTLEMENTS

The modern townland constituted the basis for the settlement pattern depicted in the above distribution maps. It would appear that their territorial boundaries changed little over the interim, except where divided internally into "Great", "Little", "Upper", "Lower", "East" and "West". There is some evidence for the use of this territorial unit in medieval Kildare. A study of possible medieval field systems in the Oughterard and Castlewarden area of North-East Kildare revealed a system of linear banks (c.20m wide and .50m high) which were interpreted as medieval furlong boundaries.<sup>567</sup> These boundaries were caused by the deposition of soil as the plough turned at the end of a strip and thus the creation of a small mound called a "head".<sup>568</sup> Subsequent deep ploughing can destroy most traces of ridge and furrow but the heads, which coalesce can survive as a linear bank of soil. That some of the furlong boundaries stopped at townland boundaries suggested that the townland was a significant territorial unit in the operation and organisation of the manor.

Although the origins of townlands can most likely be explained by the sub-division of land for the purpose of

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<sup>567</sup> Hall, D.N., Hennessy, M. & O'Keefe, T., (1985), *op.cit.*, p.16-25.

<sup>568</sup> *Ibid.*, p.18-19.



farming and grazing in the pre-Norman period, present and past townland names often reflect Anglo-Norman settlement. It is most probable that the terms "vill" and "villatum" were used indiscriminately to refer either to villages or to townlands. In 1297 the death of the miller at Leyistown (Levitstown) was recorded and the subsequent inquiry named the neighbouring vills as "Kylla, Myrtonyn and Bethlan".<sup>569</sup> The following year the nearest towns to Levitstown were recorded as those of "Balitarstne, Moygauery, Midestown, ..Dullardstown".<sup>570</sup> Identification of one of these placenames facilitates the possible location of the remainder.

On examination of the available information it would appear that the townland unit would be a more suitable translation than that of village as suggested by the documentary evidence. Similarly this would apply to the four neighbouring "towns" of Westreton, Balycutlan, Yagoestown and Breynokeston.<sup>571</sup> For most of the aforementioned there is little or no evidence that they possessed a manorial village in the sense of a nucleated settlement. In 1234 "Stephen de Hereford granted to William Pippard all the land which belonged to Yago de

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<sup>569</sup> C.J.R., Vol.1, p.444. Levitstown Td., Sh.37; Belan Td., Sh.36,38.

<sup>570</sup> C.J.R., Vol.1, p.206. Maganey Lower Td. & Maganey Upper Td., Sh.37,39; Dollardstown Td., Sh.37.

<sup>571</sup> C.J.R., Vol.II, p.514. Coghlanstown East & Coghlanstown West, Sh.24,29; Gaganstown Td., Sh.29; Brannockstown Td., Sh.29.

Naas, near the vill of Naas....and he and his heirs shall defend the said land by knight service".<sup>572</sup> The land here referred to is Yagoestown mentioned above in 1307 as a town or vill. It is now the modern townland of Gaganstown. All that remains today are the ruined stone footings of a church, perhaps that which was valued at 10 pounds a year in 1297, on the south bank of the river Liffey.<sup>573</sup>

There is detailed evidence in the de Hereford land grants to confirm that by the early thirteenth century land transactions in north Kildare were subject to conform with demarcated properties and recognised land units. Many of these original grants record the adjacent proprietors and the limit of their holdings. These individual properties were distinguished by use of enclosing ditches and streams.<sup>574</sup> Roads were also used to identify units of land.<sup>575</sup> A land grant, dated c.1210, records how Adam de Hereford's agent initially

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<sup>572</sup> Ormond Deeds, Vol.1, p.38, no.82.

<sup>573</sup> C.J.R., Vol.1, p.171.

<sup>574</sup> This should not be confused with the statutory enclosure and fortification of lands in the marches as stipulated in 1226 to fee holding tenants of William Pippard, C.D.I., Vol.I, no.1445.

<sup>575</sup> In 1335 an area of land was described as lying between "the highway from Kynneigh to Adgarvan and the Curragh of Kildare, and between the roads called the Canonbothir and the Rathbothir", D.K.R., 20th, p.76. These roads are traceable in the modern road network and delimit a triangular area of land to the west of Athgarvan and Kinneagh.

perambulated the land to determine the set boundaries before the grant was finalised.<sup>576</sup> These grants record the intensified settlement of all available land between Kill and Rathmore. The grant to Silvester de Droys of a messuage and six acres of land in the village of Kill entailed the dispossession of Padin Makenulti of four of those acres.<sup>577</sup> William, the parson of Forenaghts, in turn received the six acres formerly held by de Droys in a field named Agancloy by the village of Kill but no mention is made of what happened to Makenulti.<sup>578</sup>

The pressure for land instigated the gradual acquirement by the new settlers of land close to the most desirable locations. What had developed as a loosely integrated society now moved towards segregation with the influx of a new wave of land hungry settlers.<sup>579</sup> The grant of Adam de Hereford to the Abbey of St. Thomas's of the moiety of "ville Macunkerde, cum omnibus burgagiis et domibus que Mackelan in ea habuerit", exemplified this trend.<sup>580</sup>

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<sup>576</sup> D.K.R., 24th, Calendar of Christ Church Deeds, p.100.

<sup>577</sup> Register of the Abbey of St. Thomas the Martyr, Dublin, (ed) Gilbert, J.T., (London, 1889), p.82-83.

<sup>578</sup> *Ibid.*, p.83.

<sup>579</sup> Irishtown Td., south of Mullamast, C.J.R., Vol.I, p.191; C.J.R., Vol.II, p.29.

<sup>580</sup> *Ibid.*, p.79, "with all of its burgages and houses which Mackelan used to hold".

Analysis of the evolution and structure of the manor of Cloncurry has identified the two largest tenements as those which belonged to Thomas Ledwiche and Bedwin Blund, owners of "Le Kappagh" and "Lillinston", who also paid the lowest rent per acre.<sup>581</sup> This was due to a number of the hereditary holdings which had fixed rents. Continuity of settlement by extended families may be similarly illustrated with reference to the Camfords, later Camelfords, of the now shrunken rural-borough of Tipperkevin in east Kildare.<sup>582</sup> They are first recorded between 1181-99 when Richard Camforde of Tipperkevyn, "of 70 years of age and upwards" was named on a witness list.<sup>583</sup> In or about the year 1250, Thomas son of Roger de Camford was granted a carucate of land in the tenement of Tipperkevin,<sup>584</sup> whilst in 1316 a William Camelford was granted 22 acres in the tenement of Tipperkevin.<sup>585</sup> Later in 1361 John Camelford senior and John Camelford junior were mentioned among the freeholders in Dowdinstown and Tipperkevin.<sup>586</sup>

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<sup>581</sup> Lyons, M.C., (1984), op.cit., Vol.1, p.325.

<sup>582</sup> Tipperkevin was granted a weekly market and a yearly fair in 1252; C.D.I., Vol.II, No.116, No.852.

<sup>583</sup> Alen's Reg., p.26.

<sup>584</sup> Ibid., p.73.

<sup>585</sup> Ibid., p.165-6.

<sup>586</sup> Ibid., p.214. Today there is a Comerford living in Swordlestown, c.1 mile west of Tipperkevin.

The expansion of the settled area led to the development of new villages and towns. In or about 1215 William Marshall reaffirmed his original grants in Kildare to the Hospital of Jerusalem and granted "also the new town between the town of Kildar and Kilmelin".<sup>587</sup> The grant further stipulated that the grantees could have access to the woods and common pasture upon the Curragh by Kildare outside the "grantors enclosure".<sup>588</sup> This presents evidence of the establishment of a new town and church with a possible earliest reference datable to c.1175.<sup>589</sup> The present townland of Kilbelin lies on the opposite side of the Liffey to Great Connell Priory and contains the site of an old cemetery.<sup>590</sup> This form of ribbon development witnessed the establishment of small villages along the major routeways. Some of these roads were later altered so as to bypass certain settlements as in the case of the road through Sigginstown, "which road is the cause of great waste and destruction of the said town".<sup>591</sup>

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<sup>587</sup> Calendar of Ancient Deeds and Muniments preserved in the Pembroke Estate Office, Dublin, (Privately printed, Dublin, 1891), p.12-13.

<sup>588</sup> Ibid., p.13.

<sup>589</sup> Ibid., p.11. Deed 30; "...and at Kildaran [Kildare], the church which is called Kilmelin, with 10 carucates lying next about and extending in the town of Kildaren".

<sup>590</sup> O.S. Sheet 23.

<sup>591</sup> Statutes of Ireland, Edward IV, (ed) Berry, H.F., (Dublin, 1914), p.115.

The exact nature of these settlements has yet to be discovered. The identification of town, borough, village and dispersed settlement within the medieval framework necessitates the use of both historical documentation and archaeological survey. The medieval village has yet to be historically explored before excavation is contemplated.<sup>592</sup> The need for this prerequisite is illustrated in the difficulty encountered by Bradley in the formation of conclusions on the extant ground remains despite access to a "vivid pen-picture" of a medieval manor as provided by the manorial extent at Duleek in 1381.<sup>593</sup>

The placename evidence would also suggest that most of the population lived outside the manorial centres.<sup>594</sup> It has been suggested that this section of the Kildare community inhabited unenclosed house clusters or small hamlets which were perhaps the precursors of the later clachans. These settlements have left little or no trace on the modern landscape apart from some dubious earthworks. The impermanence of some of these settlements may be illustrated by the account of how the war cries of nine men led to the immediate desertion and subsequent petty robbery of the "town" of Hugetown le Rede (now the modern townland of Hughstown in the Barony of Kilkea and

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<sup>592</sup> See below, Chapter I, p.38-44.

<sup>593</sup> Bradley, J., in Simms, A. & Bradley, J., (1988), *op.cit.*, p.318-321.

<sup>594</sup> This is based on comparison of documented manorial centres with the evidence for inhabited townlands.

Monne).<sup>595</sup> Inference would suggest that this was in fact an unenclosed cluster of houses rather than a town. The occupants had no apparent defensive system and their small numbers necessitated flight in the face of attack.

Evidence for the existence of these townland settlements often represents itself in the shape of stray finds. Scatters of medieval pottery located in newly ploughed fields. Elsewhere, systematic programmes of field walking have added to the archaeological record and support the evidence for medieval settlement. Unfortunately Kildare as yet has not undergone such a programme. It may be argued that moated sites can be linked with these non-village settlements. However the present author would contend that moated sites were primarily associated with the exploitation of marginal land in the late thirteenth century and that these "townland settlements" were well established prior to the former's introduction as a settlement type.<sup>596</sup>

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<sup>595</sup> C.J.R., Vol.III, p.244, "in that town of malice shouted in a aloud voice "Fennok abo, Fennok abo", which was the war cry of the O'Tooles and by this cry of malice all the men and women of the town fly out of their houses and this done, robbed in the said town four hens and eight pullets worth 6d. and a cheese worth a halfpenny". (1312 AD).

<sup>596</sup> Comparison of the Kildare distribution maps of populated townlands (Figs.20,21), moated sites (Fig.17) and borough settlements (Fig.22) facilitates the theoretical approach to the relationship between these settlement types.

### 3. HOUSE CONSTRUCTION

The historical record confirms that house construction at the end of the thirteenth century in Kildare was still of timber and sod. It is possible to reconstruct some of these houses by use of information supplied in the documentary sources. The structural design of one of these houses may be extrapolated from an event in 1244 in which it was reported that a great blast of wind had blown down a house in Co. Leitrim and "one couple fell on Magnus McMortagh and killed him stone dead".<sup>597</sup> Another disaster provided evidence for the use of sods to cover roofs. "William Duraunt was casting out manure outside his house from the stable where his cattle were want to stay at night, under one Taelot upon whom descended from above a great quantity of clods, and as he was casting out the manure the said clods together with Taelot fell upon him and so crushed him that he died".<sup>598</sup> The case was adjudged an accident and the clods were valued as worth 20d. Use of shingles and thatch for roofing materials is provided by the evidence of the extent taken at Ballymore in 1326.<sup>599</sup>

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<sup>597</sup> Annals of Clonmacnoise, (ed) Murphy, D., (Dublin, 1896), p. 238. A couple is one of a pair of inclined rafters or beams, that meet at the top and are fixed at the bottom by a tie, and form the principle support of a roof.

<sup>598</sup> P.R.O.I. K.B. 2/7, p. 19.

<sup>599</sup> Alen's Reg., p. 189.



The increase in house construction brought about an eventual strain on woodland resources.<sup>600</sup> In 1307 the parson of the church of Rathmore was had to acquire permission to take " 10 ashes of Castle Garny and 30 alders in Okethy for building houses at Rathmore".<sup>601</sup> Many of these houses had a short life span. Often they were re-used before this time elapsed. There is abundant evidence of houses which were "torn down" and carried away.<sup>602</sup> In 1306 William of Athy complained that a William Poer "pulled down his houses [at Ardree] and carried the timber of them to his house of Dunlost and burned it".<sup>603</sup>

There were also a number of stone houses in Kildare at this period. In 1982 the remains of a sub-rectangular house foundation was discovered at Blackcastle in southern Kildare.<sup>604</sup> The excavation also uncovered an area of associated gravel flooring and a number of pits. The finds assemblage included imported thirteenth century pottery, local cooking wares, iron slag, an iron key and numerous animal bones. Although the excavation was limited in extent later field survey found no evidence of

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<sup>600</sup> See below, Chapter I, p.24-27.

<sup>601</sup> P.R.O.I., EX 2/2, m.18 (d), entry 467, p.296.

<sup>602</sup> P.R.O.I., EX 2/2, m.28 (f), entry 761, p.335.

<sup>603</sup> C.J.R., Vol.II, p.268, 1306 AD.

<sup>604</sup> Sleeman, M., "Blackcastle, Co.Kildare", Med. Arch., Vol.XXVII, (1983), p.128. The Archaeology of the Cork Dublin Natural Gas Pipeline, Vol.II, (U.C.C., 1984, pre-publication issue), p.202-212.

an extended earthwork complex.<sup>605</sup> Barry later suggested that Sleeman had found evidence of an undefended manor house but such a conclusion is unsubstantiated.<sup>606</sup> The quality of associated finds is not necessarily linked to manorial status. Many of these stone houses were the homes of merchants, as illustrated by the account of the robbery of items from a stone house at Moygaveny in 1314 in which made no reference was made to damaged outer defences.<sup>607</sup>

The documentary sources provide some further detailed evidence for the construction of stone houses in Okethy in northern Kildare, where there was a stone quarry in operation at Mainham from the early part of the thirteenth century.<sup>608</sup> In 1310 it was recorded that stone taken from the walls within Rathcoffey demesne was used to build a stone house.<sup>609</sup> In 1311 another stone house was recorded at Rathcoffey this time constructed on the manor

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<sup>605</sup> O.P.W. Files, 1985.

<sup>606</sup> Barry, T.B., (1987), op.cit., p.95.

<sup>607</sup> C.J.R., Vol.III, p.325; Stolen items included "eleven ells of Irish woollen cloth..five ells of Irish linen cloth... twelve horseshoes...one and a half stone of iron".

<sup>608</sup> Tresham, p.4, No.50, [lapidicina]. This resource was well exhausted by the seventeenth century as the Civil Survey only noted stone quarries at Whitestowne and Skullogstowne; Civil Survey, p.218..

<sup>609</sup> P.R.O.I. EX I/I, m.45.

of Elizabeth, wife of Henry de Ruperfort.<sup>610</sup> The heightened security risk at the start of the fourteenth century may have necessitated the included stipulation as part of a regrant of a tenement in Leixlip in 1312 which directed that the tenants should build a stone house.<sup>611</sup>

#### 4. MILLS AND COMMERCIAL GROWTH

The historical documentation of timber and stone houses provides evidence as to the nature of housing but little to what is known of the settlements to which they belonged. A much neglected area of study which may provide a possible solution to the problematic question of settlement distribution and nucleated settlement may be found with reference to mills recorded in the documentary evidence. Previous studies have noted their presence but only in relation to income derived from the control of mills and the preparation of agricultural produce for market.<sup>612</sup> Although the Sites and Monuments Record for Co.Kildare notes the site of two mills at Athy and one at Graney West, the recently published survey of Co.Louth does not include a single entry on mills within

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<sup>610</sup> P.R.O.I., R.C. 8/4, p.781.

<sup>611</sup> P.R.O.I., R.C. 8/7, p.22.

<sup>612</sup> Graham, B.J., "Economy and town in Anglo-Norman Ireland", in Bradley, J., (1988), op.cit., p.252.

the county,<sup>613</sup> despite a published account of the detailed documentary evidence for the mills at Ardee.<sup>614</sup>

The mill was essential to Kildare's agrarian based economy which was noted for its intensified grain production. Archaeological field survey can uncover abandoned medieval watermills as they display characteristic earthworks such as the remains of the mill pool and mill race.<sup>615</sup> In conjunction with this information there is abundant documentary evidence for their existence in thirteenth century Kildare.<sup>616</sup> A total of five mills were recorded in the extent taken at Ballymore in

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<sup>613</sup> Buckley, V.M. & Sweetman, P.D., Archaeological Survey of County Louth, (Dublin, 1991).

<sup>614</sup> Lydon, J.F., "Mills at Ardee in 1304", J.C.L.A.S., Vol. 19, No. 4, (1980), p. 259-263.

<sup>615</sup> In 1316 it was recorded that a man "fell into the mill pond of Monmehenock and was killed by the mill wheel", K.B. 2/7, p. 19

<sup>616</sup> There were water mills at Allen, D.K.R., 45, p. 47; Balicotlan [Coghlanstown], C.J.R., Vol. III, p. 164; Ballybough, D.K.R., 39, p. 65; Ballymadden, 2 mills, C.D.I., Vol. III, no. 558, p. 251; Ballymore, 2 mills, Alen's Reg., p. 190; Ballysax, I.P.M., Vol. IV, no. 434, p. 305; Castlemartin, C.J.R., Vol. III, p. 157; Castlewarden, 2 mills, P.R.O. S.C. 12 20/48; Inchaquire, Ormond Deeds, Vol. II, no. 290, p. 210; Kildare, C.D.I., Vol. II, no. 573; Kilcock, C.J.R., Vol. I, p. 271; Ladycastle, D.K.R., 13, p. 202, no. 4127 (3468); Leixlip, 2 mills, P.R.O. C. 47 10/20 (1); Levitstown, C.J.R., Vol. I, p. 444; Maynooth, D.K.R., 44, p. 34; Mainham, C.J.R., Vol. I, p. 271; Milltown, D.K.R., 39, p. 65; Monmehenock, K.B. 2/7, p. 19; Moone, The Diginitas Decani of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, (ed) White, N.B., (Dublin, 1957), p. 19-20; Oughterard, C.J.R., Vol. I, p. 290; Ryban, C.J.R., Vol. I, p. 329; Timolin, C.J.R., Vol. III, p. 148; Welshtown, C.D.I., Vol. I, no. 1283, p. 232. [This is not a complete list of all the watermills in thirteenth century Kildare].

1326.<sup>617</sup>

The majority of mills in Kildare were water mills, although in 1316 a windmill, "now broken down", was recorded at Kildare town.<sup>618</sup> Technological evidence provided by reeves' accounts for thirteenth century England indicate that these mills were vertical rather than horizontal.<sup>619</sup> Similar information is also available for Kildare. In 1312 it cost 7s. for the price of the upper mill stone of Castlemartin mill, "a wheel inside and outside, and the iron of said mill".<sup>620</sup> Quality millstones were of great importance in the production of flour free from grit and both large and smaller hand-grind stones were shipped to Ireland during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>621</sup> At Leixlip 7l. 13s. 4d. was "paid for two French mill stones and their carriage to Leixlip, the king being bound to provide millstones when necessary; 7l. 6d. for repairs of the mills ...and for the repairs of the pool of said mills

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<sup>617</sup> Alen's Reg., p.189-194.

<sup>618</sup> D.K.R., 39, p.67. A watermill was recorded at Kildare in 1300 but this was also thrown down, C.J.R., Vol.II, p.29.

<sup>619</sup> Holt,R., The Mills of Medieval England, (Oxford,1988), p.117-118.

<sup>620</sup> D.K.R., 39, P.66.

<sup>621</sup> O'Neill,T., Merchants and mariners in medieval Ireland, (Dublin,1987), p.92.

newly constructed of lime and stone".<sup>622</sup> A fullers mill was recorded at Ardinode in 1276.<sup>623</sup> This to date is the only recorded instance of such a mill in Kildare. The site of this mill would be worthy of archaeological investigation to ascertain whether this industrialised process had contributed to the commercialisation of the cloth industry in the countryside.

Further to and in conjunction with the evidence here produced of the mills in medieval Kildare, the economic state of the county may be employed to indicate the health and size of individual towns and villages. Lack of figures which would allow comparative analysis has proved a major difficulty in the assessment of the economic status of medieval Kildare. The early fourteenth century ecclesiastical taxation of Pope Nicholas IV represents the only nationwide returns from which to gauge economic fluctuations.<sup>624</sup> Fortunately a taxation of the diocese of Dublin for the year 1294 survives which provides comparative information for the deaneries of Ballymore, Salt and Omurthy.<sup>625</sup> The evidence is by no means conclusive as it only taxed the temporalities of the

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<sup>622</sup> D.K.R., 42, p.77. 1327. Two mill stones were also recorded for Leixlip in 1323; *ibid.*, p.54. Another millstone carried there in 1304, D.K.R. 38, p.86.

<sup>623</sup> C.D.I., Vol.I, p.232.

<sup>624</sup> C.D.I., Vol.V, p.242-251.

<sup>625</sup> D.K.R., 20th, no.150, p.60-63.

Irish clergy,<sup>626</sup> nonetheless it does indicate a degree of stabilization in Omurthy while producing evidence of a period of growth in the deanery of Ballymore. However the second half of Wogan's administration (1295-1312) saw increased government intervention in the Leinster mountains which announced a reversal of earlier gains in this area. Both of these taxation returns also provide evidence with regard to possible concentrations of population.

The extent of the manor of Ballymore in 1326 highlights the result of the constant battle between government forces, the local community and the Irish of the mountains.<sup>627</sup> Most of the outlying free tenements within the march were listed in the decrease of rent section of the extent. There is evidence for the desertion of lands and land which was waste and untilled because it was near the Irish.<sup>628</sup> The extents of lands and tenements formerly held by William de Mohun and John de Mohun provide an opportunity to gauge the economic stability through an assessment of land values over a twenty year period at

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<sup>626</sup> Barry, T.B., (1987), op.cit., p.7.

<sup>627</sup> Alen's Reg., p.189-194.

<sup>628</sup> Lyons examination of the manorial economy of Ballymore extrapolated from Alen's Reg. provides a useful concise analysis of the deterioration of a march manor; Lyons, M.C., (1984), op.cit., Vol.II, Chap.3, table 2.

the end of the thirteenth century in southern Kildare.<sup>629</sup> The demesne acreage extended in 1282 at 12d. an acre had decreased to 10d. by 1299. It is interesting to note that among the similarities between the two extents land held in the barony of Carbury is recorded as untilled and worth nothing on account of war. Also the 1282 extent notes that land on the Wicklow border was affected by the war with the Irish.<sup>630</sup>

The recent publication of the Dublin Guild Merchant Roll provides further information on Kildare's economic status.<sup>631</sup> Although the membership of Kildare merchants represents only a small percentage of those enrolled the distribution of their place of origin confirms the prominence of certain "towns" within Kildare's economic structure. This important source affirms Castledermot's role as a major market, trade and distribution centre in the thirteenth century as later amply illustrated by the diversity of goods listed in 1295 on the implementation of customs at Castledermot in "aid of inclosing their

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<sup>629</sup> Extent of lands of William Mohun, 1282, C.D.I., Vol.II, No.1963, p.447-449; Extent of lands of John de Mohun, 1299, C.D.I., Vol.IV, No.643, p.309-310, C.J.R., Vol.II, p.28-29.

<sup>630</sup> C.D.I., Vol.II, p.448; "Walter de Hyde holds one quarter of a fee in Balymony in Homayl, which is waste by war of the Irish". This fee is discussed by Otway-Ruthven, A.J., (1961), op.cit., p.179.

<sup>631</sup> The Dublin Guild Merchant Roll, c.1190-1265, (ed) Connolly, P. & Martin, G., (Dundalk, 1992).



vill".<sup>632</sup> The attributed Kildare membership was supplied by twenty five named towns and villages of which Naas, Kildare and Athy were, as expected, well represented.<sup>633</sup> This overall membership reflected Kildare's role as part of Dublin's extended economic hinterland and may be used as an indicator of the established commercial complexity of Anglo-Norman market centres in Co.Kildare by the middle of the thirteenth century.

This highly developed state of commercialisation and inherent agricultural organisation led to the comment that in 1246 Leinster had "a larger supply of wine and corn than elsewhere in Ireland".<sup>634</sup> Kildare not alone supplied the increased food needs of Dublin's growing population but also contributed heavily to the provision of the warring armies in Wales, Scotland, and Gascony, which resulted in the cultivation of marginal land and the growth of intensive methods of farming.<sup>635</sup> It was only

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<sup>632</sup> C.D.I., Vol.IV, p.106-7. The goods listed compare favourably with those itemised on the customs established for Dublin and Drogheda in the same year. This similarity does not owe itself to bureaucratic formularization as the list is particular to Castledermot.

<sup>633</sup> Kildare placenames were; Ardree, Ardsnull, Athy, Ballymore Eustace, Carbury, Castledermot, Castlewarden, Celbridge, Clane, Cloncurry, Gaganstown, Glassely, Kilcullen, Kildare, Kill, Leixlip, Maynooth, Monasterevin, Moone, Naas, Oldconnell, Oughterard, Rathangan, Rathmore, Rheban.

<sup>634</sup> C.D.I., Vol.I, No.2827. The King later ordered that ten ships should convey wine and corn to Wales.

<sup>635</sup> Cloncurry specialized in grain production; Lyons, M.C., (1984), op.cit., Vol.I, p.270.

with the worsening weather conditions of the early fourteenth century, famine, population contraction, and the curtailment of military purveyance after 1322 that there was a resultant contraction of the market and of the agricultural base.

The increased commercialisation of later thirteenth century Kildare brought about a growth in individual wealth and some of this wealth manifested itself in the buildings of the day. The large centrally located moated sites of Kilmead and Mylerstown indicate the power wielded by certain wealthy landowners towards the end of the thirteenth century although the construction of stone castles was the ultimate achievement. The obituary in 1283 of Art McCormack O'Melaghlen, nicknamed Art ne gaislean, "he that broke down 27 castles both great and small in the course of his wars" is of interest in the mention of castles "both great and small".<sup>636</sup> Although much has been written about the strategic and structural development of the great Anglo-Norman stone castles of the thirteenth century, most of which relates to surviving upstanding remains, the question of the smaller

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<sup>636</sup> Annals of Clonmacnoise, (ed) Murphy, D., (Dublin, 1896), 1283 AD. Hugh O'Connor who died in 1274 was similarly described as he that "prostrated their manor-houses and castles", A.F.M., 1274. ("ccuirti" from Irish cuirt, a court, manor or palace.).

stone castle of the same period has yet to be addressed.<sup>637</sup>

## 5. STONE CASTLES

Collectively, Kildare's thirteenth century castles have received little or no academic attention. The first phase of stone castle construction in county Kildare was represented by the castles at Kildare, Maynooth, Ballymore Eustace, and Leixlip. Descriptive accounts of the structural ground plan of these four castles are provided in a number of early fourteenth century extents. An extent of 1331 recorded that at Kildare there was one castle in which were four towers, a chapel and a kitchen.<sup>638</sup> In 1328 Maynooth was extended as a stone castle "within the pallisade of the manor of Maynooth" and a description was given of the castle's associated buildings.<sup>639</sup> In 1326 the castle of Ballymore Eustace was extended as follows; "In the castle there was a hall now

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<sup>637</sup> McNeill recognised the existence of fourteenth century stone hall houses in Ireland but added little to our knowledge of this castle type; McNeill, T.E., "The origins of tower houses", Archaeology Ireland, Vol.6, No.1, (1992), p.13-14.

<sup>638</sup> Red Book of Kildare, No.122, p.101, "unum castrum in quo sunt quatuor turres".

<sup>639</sup> Red Book of Kildare, No.120, p.98, "infra claustrum manerii de Mainoth". A section of this curtain wall is later referred to as situated "between the gateway of the castle" and the "water" of the Lyreen river, which conforms with the present ground plan of the castle.

thrown down, a chamber for the archbishop, a chapel, a small chamber for clerks, a kitchen roofed with shingles, a stable and a grange, thatched; of no value, for no one will hire them and they need great repair. There was a chamber for the constable, and a granary, now burnt and thrown down."<sup>640</sup> Leixlip castle was described in 1341 as having one great tower and three smaller towers.<sup>641</sup>

The initial construction dates for each of these four castles are debatable. Stylistic comparisons with other datable Irish castles provide no definite clues. It may be tentatively advanced that Kildare castle represents a early prototype in the castle construction projects of the Marshalls in Leinster. Comparable in ground plan to the trapezoidal castle of four towers at Kilkenny, Kildare may represent the embryonic stage of the inspired later design of the turreted keep at Carlow castle. This hypothetical suggestion would imply a construction date of c.1200 for Kildare. The solitary stone keep of Maynooth enclosed by curtain walls is comparable to that at Trim castle and may again infer a construction date in the first decade of the thirteenth century. The castle as described at Ballymore possessed a similar ground plan to the archbishop's palace at Swords castle, Co.Dublin.<sup>642</sup> The earliest datable architectural features at Swords belong

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<sup>640</sup> Alen's Reg., p.189.

<sup>641</sup> P.R.O. C47 10/20 (1).

<sup>642</sup> Alen's Reg., p.175.

to the period c.1250 although the castle itself is presumed to have been constructed in the early years of the thirteenth century. Leixlip castle underwent many structural alterations during the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries but may safely be dated by structural comparison to the period 1220-1240.<sup>643</sup> These castles represented a major financial outlay in terms of initial construction costs and later upkeep. William Marshall was granted the service which he owed for the years 1222-3 and 1225-6 to assist him with his castle building projects.<sup>644</sup> There is however a substantial body of documentary evidence to suggest that lesser lords were also building stone castles in Kildare albeit on a smaller scale in the later part of the thirteenth and early part of the fourteenth century.

In 1308 John de Bonevill, steward of Kildare and Carlow, was granted access through the meadow of Robert de Clahull of Adron "for carrying stones for building a fortress".<sup>645</sup> In 1310 after John de Bonevill was slain,

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<sup>643</sup> Marshall interest in Leixlip was confirmed by Kings writ of 1216, C.D.I., Vol.I, no.688; Works at Leixlip Castle, D.K.R., 38th, p.86, D.K.R., 42nd, p.77, D.K.R., 47th, p.54; "Master Robert the Engineer [Ingeniator] custos of the works of the castle of the manor of Leixlip", D.K.R., 47th, p.59, 1342 AD.

<sup>644</sup> C.D.I., Vol.I, no.1030: grant of service to William Marshall "in aid of the fortification of one of his castles in Ireland"; C.D.I., Vol.I, no.1269; "to enable the Earl to fortify a castle in Ireland". This later service was postponed C.D.I., Vol.I, nos. 1439, 1515.

<sup>645</sup> C.J.R., Vol.III, p.41.

his "fortalice" in the manor of Balylethan was forcibly entered and looted.<sup>646</sup> This fortalice is most probably that of Ballyloughan Castle, Co.Carlow.<sup>647</sup> This would support Leask's original contention that Ballyloughan was as an example of a keepless castle of the later thirteenth century as indicated by structural design and chronological comparison of the original windows features.<sup>648</sup>

In north west county Kildare there is evidence that at least two smaller stone castles were constructed in this area in the late thirteenth century. The first stone castle at Carbury was built within the precincts of the bailey of the original motte-and-bailey castle. This complex of structures built on top of a rock outcrop is now represented by the much dilapidated Carbury castle, described by Leask as "picturesque and late".<sup>649</sup> The first stone castle which stood at Carbury was used by de Bermingham to host his infamous dinner party for the O'Connors of Offaly in 1305. The Annals of Inisfallen describe that the bloody deed took place at the castle of Carrick Feorais and that de Bermingham's godchild was thrown over the castle, which no doubt refers to the

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<sup>646</sup> C.J.R., Vol.III, p.163.

<sup>647</sup> Grid Ref. 19 S. 74 58. Barony Idrone East.

<sup>648</sup> Leask, H.G., (1941), op.cit., p.72, p.24 Fig.14m. See also, De Paor, L., "Excavations at Ballyloughan Castle, Co.Carlow", J.R.S.A.I., Vol.42, p.1-14.

<sup>649</sup> Leask, H.G., (1941), op.cit., p.157.

battlements.<sup>650</sup> Between 1237-8, "Robertus Balistarius de castro de Karebri" was enroled as a member of the Dublin Guild Merchant.<sup>651</sup> The next reference to a castle at Carbury dates to 1249,<sup>652</sup> whereas the constable of the castle of Carbury was later mentioned in a treasurers account for 1275-6.<sup>653</sup> It is impossible to attribute a plausible date to the construction of the first stone castle on the site on the basis of such non-specific and infrequent evidence. It may be argued however that the history of the region in the later half of the thirteenth century would have necessitated construction in stone as reflected on a smaller scale by the construction of stone houses in Okethy.

In the same area of north-west Kildare on a hill top site, adjacent to the ruins of a medieval church, is located the remains of Carrick castle. This castle appears to have been built in two stages, as the earlier part, closest to the church, displays a method of vaulting which is characteristic of earlier castle

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<sup>650</sup> Annals of Inisfallen, p.395; "Masir, the little child...was thrown over [the battlements of] the castle, and it was thus it died".

<sup>651</sup> The Dublin Guild Merchant Roll, c.1190-1265, (ed) Connolly, P. & Martin, G., (Dundalk, 1992), p.72. In the list of new members for 1251-2 a Robertus Balistarius was enroled, perhaps a son of the crossbowman from Carbury, *Ibid.*, p.91.

<sup>652</sup> C.D.I., Vol.I, no.2989.

<sup>653</sup> C.D.I., Vol.I, No.1294.

construction. Documentary sources substantiate this comparative architectural assessment as the castle of Carrick is mentioned when it reverted to the Crown on the death of William de Bermingham in 1333.<sup>654</sup> This incidental reference to the castle of "Carrig" clearly indicates that this castle co-existed with that of Carbury as both are identified in the same reference.<sup>655</sup> In 1654-1656, the castle at Carrick was recorded as demolished but worth thirty pounds.<sup>656</sup>

Identification of possible early stone castles from later documentary sources is problematic. It is difficult to distinguish the fifteenth century castles from those built in the preceding centuries even with use of the seventeenth century Civil Survey. Ten pounds was granted to Roger Penkeston in 1465 for a tower which was "one storey above the vault in Ballynagappagh..which tower contains in length and breadth according to the form of the statute".<sup>657</sup> By the time it was recorded in 1656 it was described as "one castle very much decayed".<sup>658</sup> This castle has since disappeared from the landscape and was not

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<sup>654</sup> D.K.R., 47th, p.66. "Carryk in Carbry", military service recorded in 1322, Red Book of Kildare, no.125, p.107.

<sup>655</sup> D.K.R., 47th, p.66-67.

<sup>656</sup> Civil Survey, p.184.

<sup>657</sup> Statutes of Ireland, Edward IV, (ed) Berry, H.F., (Dublin, 1910), p.397.

<sup>658</sup> Civil Survey, p.149.



recorded by the Ordnance Survey. Thus use of the general descriptive term "old castle" should be treated with caution, despite the fact that many older castles through upkeep, modification, re-edification and good fortune have withstood the test of time.

In 1298 reference was made to the "ward of the castle of Alewyne", which is also in the neighbourhood of the aforementioned Carbury and Carrick.<sup>659</sup> The castle at this stage seems to have been owned by John Lenfaunt. Earlier, Walter l'Enfant was noted to have held one knights fee in Allewyn, as recorded in the extent of the lands of Roger de Mortimer in 1282-3.<sup>660</sup> Speculation on the existence of a late thirteenth century stone castle at this location is tenuous. Documentary nomenclature does not assist matters as it was recorded in 1285 that cattle were driven "within the close of the castle or fortalice", which may indicate that a fortalice possessed an outer ward.<sup>661</sup> As evidenced above John de Bonevill's "fortilice" at Ballyloughan was in fact a stone castle but as yet there is no definite evidence to support the existence of a similar castle at John Fitz Thomas's fortalice at

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<sup>659</sup> C.J.R., Vol.I, p.203.

<sup>660</sup> C.D.I., Vol.II, No.2028.

<sup>661</sup> Early Statutes, p.60-61; "a Chastel ou a forcelet". Orpen in his translation of the Song in one instance used the word "fort" in the translation of "chastel", [l.1417], while fortress is used to describe the abandoned "forcellette" [fortalice ?] or ringwork of Hugh Tyrll at Trim, [l.3339].

Rathangan on Kildare's western border.<sup>662</sup>

It is most unlikely that these fortalices were solely of earth and timber construction. Nonetheless, it is also a dangerous assumption to perceive that all major centres in thirteenth century Kildare possessed stone fortifications, particularly in the shape of castles.<sup>663</sup> In 1295 Castledermot, was granted the right to impose a series of customs for seven years "in aid of enclosing their vill and for the greater security of those parts".<sup>664</sup> Similarly, it was not until the mid-fifteenth century that it was deemed "most expedient that a fortress called a castle should be made at the...bridge [of Kilcullen]."<sup>665</sup>

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<sup>662</sup> C.J.R., Vol.I, p.230.

<sup>663</sup> In 1278 it was recorded that wooden towers were newly constructed at Rindown, C.D.I., Vol.II, no.267. However, these wooden towers were probably only used in the construction process as in the instance in 1228 in which a carpenter was required for the construction of the towers of Dublin Castle and to repair those recently thrown down by the wind, D.K.R., 35, p.30.

<sup>664</sup> C.D.I., Vol.IV, No.253, 1295 AD.

<sup>665</sup> Statutes of Ireland, Henry VI, (ed) Berry, H.F., (Dublin, 1910), p.457, 1467-8 A.D.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The placename evidence produced above in Figs. 20 & 21 correlates with the archaeological and historical record for medieval settlement in Co. Kildare. It could be argued that this evidence provides merely a simple overview suggested by the questionable manipulation of scaled distribution patterns. However, this placename evidence was substantiated by the individual distribution maps of motte castles and moated sites as presented in the previous chapters and further corroborated by reference to the distribution of boroughs and the historical documentation of mills within the medieval county. By the mid-thirteenth century Kildare had evolved as an economically vibrant unit and expanded its agricultural and commercial base. The foundation for the near total settlement of the county developed primarily from the initial land grants. The subsequent emergence of towns, boroughs, rural boroughs, manorial villages, and nucleated settlements led to the distribution pattern represented by the placename evidence.

## CHAPTER 7

## CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has endeavoured to commit to paper features of the landscape essential to the development of Anglo-Norman Kildare in the period 1169-1350. Assessment of field evidence and contemporary documentary sources have contributed to define the settlement objectives of the architects of the initial settlement and its subsequent progression. Individual analysis of each site, particularly consideration of function and morphology, generated specific common characteristics to facilitate definition of the criteria behind the final distribution pattern. Despite the insular nature of the study and the "site specific" basis for conclusions, the general results of this survey complement those of comparable surveys conducted in the rest of the country.

Initial deployment of motte castles adhered to a deliberate strategic policy despite the absence of native resistance. The utilisation of pre-existing settlement sites and territorial boundaries achieved enhanced control and the implementation of this tested tactic was successfully executed. Documentary evidence suggests that

all of these earthwork castles were constructed in the first two decades following the initial invasion, however the precise functional time frame of individual sites has yet to be resolved. The majority of Kildare's motte castles functioned primarily as administrative centres and consequently as focal points for the introduction and development of a manorial society and an agriculturally based market economy. Although all of the motte castles displayed common characteristics, analysis of location and design emphasised the significant rogue factor of individual preference in the final determination of site morphology.

The success of these early settlements provided a secure foundation for the effective total colonisation of the county by the end of the thirteenth century. This achievement is to a degree substantiated by the distribution pattern of Kildare's moated sites, which records the appreciable absence of these defended farmsteads from areas of high density settlement, in particular the baronies of Salt and Naas. However, not all of Kildare's moated sites were peripheral in location. A number of sites in the south of the county were located close to borough and nucleated settlements, a pattern which differs considerably from research conducted in the south-eastern counties of Ireland which identified isolated areas as a key location factor.<sup>666</sup>

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<sup>666</sup> Barry, T.B., (1977), op.cit., p.159.

It must be reiterated however, that essentially the particular circumstances of Kildare's political and economic history contributed to the final distribution pattern of these earthwork sites and consideration of this factor should be stressed prior to comparison of aspects of distribution and function with similar sites in the rest of the country.

Individually, the earthwork sites discussed in the preceding chapters contributed to the eventual successful Anglo-Norman settlement of county Kildare. Unfortunately, the nature of the source material limited the detailed analysis of this procedure. The evidence here presented highlights the need for investigative archaeology to answer the immediate questions posed by the lack of historical documentation. A planned programme of excavations concentrated on known documented sites could resolve the fundamental problems of construction technique, basic function and chronology of usage. An integrated research programme devised to examine these specific questions and the inter-relationship between medieval earthworks in pre-researched and designated areas where the medieval framework is still intact could potentially revise present thinking and generate a new field of research.<sup>667</sup>

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<sup>667</sup> The research potential presented by the manor of Cloncurry has been outlined above. See Chapter 2, p.59-60.

As noted, lack of direct historical reference limited discussion, and therefore development of conclusions, on the chronological lifespan of these earthwork sites. Fortunately, documentation of the initial financial outlay for the construction of a moated site with breteche at Grangeford townland in southern Kildare supplied the first Irish example of the positive identification of a moated site authenticated by a contemporary reference. This information corroborates the current accepted chronology for this site type in Ireland and may provide the possibility for future archaeological research.

The results of exhaustive research revealed that the future study of ringwork castles would appear to be totally dependant on archaeological techniques as they were deemed morphologically indistinguishable from the numerous ringforts in the field area. Ironically, the single example of Pollardstown ringwork castle emphasised this conclusion, as interpretation of its cartographic representation in conjunction with field inspection of the monument prior to excavation indicated that the site was a bi-vallate ringfort. Hopefully, in the near future research archaeology will address the problem of field identification of ringwork castles, perhaps under the aegis of the government's "Discovery Programme", and focus its attention on this much neglected area of medieval studies.

These earthworks are a testament to the achievement that was Anglo-Norman Kildare. Subjectively, the distribution patterns of earthwork sites presented in this study remove, and at times obscure, the researcher from the complex realisation of this accomplishment. They represent two centuries of subjugation, interaction, integration and confrontation between a newly imposed foreign settler hierarchy and a displaced native indigenous population. Documentation reveals elements of this at times uneasy fusion, however the innovative step of an archaeological investigation of a motte castle, moated site and their immediate environs within the field area could provide evidence of this process in terms of defensive measures, local trade and craftsmanship, and continuity of settlement.

This thesis has increased the number of previously documented and recorded motte castles and moated sites in Co.Kildare by 100%. Hopefully, future documentary research and archaeological investigation will further advance our understanding of these earthworks, and so preserve this Anglo-Norman legacy on paper and on the Irish landscape.



## APPENDIX 1

## Locational Characteristics of Motte-and-Bailey Castles

Townland	Location	Bailey
ARDREE	R, Ch.	
ARDSCULL	H, Maj. Rd.	*
BALLYMORE EUSTACE	R, F, H, P.	
BALLYSHANNON DEMESNE	H, Ch, Maj. Rd.	*
CARBURY	H, Ch, s.	*
CARRIGEEN	R, F.	
CASTLEREBAN SOUTH	R, s.	*
CLONCURRY	Ch.	
DONODE BIG	H.	*
HORTLAND	Gy., r.	
KILDARE	S.	
KILLHILL	r.	*
KILKEA DEMESNE	r, Ch.	
LACKAGH MORE	Ch.	
LADYCASTLE LOWER	R.	*
LONGTOWN DEMESNE	H, r.	
MAINHAM	Ch.	*
MAYNOOTH	S, Ch., r.	
MORRISTOWNBILLER	H, r.	*
NAAS WEST	S, Ch., R, H.	*
NARRAGHMORE	S(?), r.	
OLDCONNELL	R, F.	*
RATHMORE EAST	H, P, Ch, s.	*
RATHSILLAGH UPPER	Maj. Rd.	

## POSSIBLE SITES

BALLYSAX GREAT	Ch.
BARONSLAND	H.
BROADLEAS COMMONS	Ch.
BURTOWN BIG	Ch.
CASTLEWARDEN NORTH	
LEIXLIP	R.

Ch.	...Church	R.	...Major River
F.	...Ford	r.	...Minor River
H.	...Height (Strategic Advantage)	S.	...Pre-existing settlement
Maj. Rd.	...Major Roadway	s.	...re-use of earlier site
P.	...Pass		

## APPENDIX 2

## MOTTE-AND-BAILEY CASTLES in Co.KILDARE

ARDREE Td. O.S. 35 16.690922

Hugh de Lacy built a castle for Thomas of Flanders "in the furthest part of Ui Muireadhaigh, seperated from Ui Buidhe by the waters of the Barrow" [Expugnatio Hibernica, p.195]. Armitage's Book of Mottes noted that the summit area measured 30 paces N/S by 24 paces E/W. At the time of this survey a gravel pit had destroyed some of the western section of this site. It is possible, given Armitage's depiction of the site, that this was in fact a ringwork castle.

ARDSCULL Td. O.S. 35 16.728976

"Moat of Ardscull". This is the site of a much altered motte castle due to a later Cromwellian fortification of the site. The present summit measures 46m N/S by 31m E/W. Very impressive site.

BALLYMORE EUSTACE Td. O.S. 29 16.929102

This motte castle was scarped from the natural feature of Close Hill to the north of the village of Ballymore Eustace. The summit area is 8m in diameter.

BALLYSHANNON DEMESNE Td. O.S. 28 16.787046

Height varies due to nature of ground. 11m on east side, 1.75m north side, 2.5-3m west side. Surface diameter 12m E/W by 14m N/S with elongated bailey to south. No evidence of outer fosse. To north there is possible evidence of sixteenth century trenches. Local information suggests that a cist was uncovered at the centre of the mound in the 1940's during excavation of a grave to bury a bullock. Sand pit cut into bottom of mound on south side. Church site to immediate west of motte-and-bailey.

CARBURY Td. O.S. 8 16.687350

The summit area of this motte-and-bailey castle measures 18m by 18m. A later stone castle is situated in the bailey.

CARRIGEEN Td. O.S. 14 16.877268

Motte castle, 6m in height, summit area 13m N/S by 16.5m E/W. The fosse survives to the south and west of the motte and has an average width of 5m.

CASTLEREBAN SOUTH Td. O.S. 34 16.649974

"Rheban Moat". Partially destroyed motte-and-bailey. Height 9-10m. Surviving summit 41m N/S by 20.8m E/W. Large fosse survives on N., S., and E. side. Fosse is 7m in width with evidence of outer bank. Fosse depth 3m.

CLONCURRY Td. O.S. 4 16.803411

Large motte castle 10m in height. Circular saucer-shaped summit 11m. in diameter. Fosse at base 10m. wide in places.

DONODE BIG Td. O.S. 24 16.918130

Circumference at base 210m. Fosse 8m wide. Outer bank is 5.6m wide in places. Bailey platform 17m N/S by 16.5m E/W, with terrace 4m wide and 2m below platform level on N. side. Motte summit platform 17.5m N/S by 16.5m E/W. Fosse between summit and bailey 10-11m in width.

HORTLAND Td. O.S. 4 16.813367

Flat topped steep sided conical motte castle. 6.5m high with saucer-like summit 8m N/S by 8.7m E/W. Surrounded at base by a denuded fosse, 2m wide and 20cm deep. Traces of mortar amongst bonded stones on western side of motte summit may suggest former re-use as summer house.

KILDARE Td. O.S. 22 16.727127

Now destroyed, the original site of the castle of Kildare is preserved in a survey of the town of Kildare in 1757 [N.L.I. Ms. 22004 (5)].

KILLHILL TD. O.S. 19 16.943226

Motte summit 16m N/S by 18m E/W. Bank at top 1.2m high. Base circumference 155m. Fosse 6m wide, wet in places. Possible entrance on eastern side. Bailey dimensions 32m N/S by 40m E/W. The bank which encloses the bailey is 3m above the exterior land. Small stream delimits the motte-and-bailey to the North-West.

KILKEA DEMESNE Td. O.S. 37 16.748887

Platform diameter 27.5m N/S by 27m E/W. Small splayed mound on top of motte 1.2m in height, radius 9-10m. Surrounded by fosse 7-8m wide and denuded bank. Possible entrance on southern side.

LACKAGH MORE Td. O.S. 22 16.675127

Steep sided simple motte. 4m high. Summit diameter 16m. Base circumference 128m. Fosse 7-7.5m wide and fills with water in winter. Overgrown with small trees.

LADYCASTLE LOWER Td. O.S. 14 16.919292

"Tumulus" [1939 (ed)]. Motte-and-bailey castle 4-5m in height. Circular summit area, diameter 14m. Depression at centre of summit 60cm deep and 3m in diameter. The bailey, located to the East of the motte, is now permanently flooded. The fosse is 6m wide on the South side and to the North the motte is 20m. from the bank of the river Liffey. Overgrown.

LONGTOWN DEMESNE Td. O.S. 14 16.856259

"Tumulus" [1939 (ed)]. Motte 6m high, summit 17.5 N/S by 18m E/W. Fosse 4.5m wide and .8m deep. No evidence of outer bank. Evidence of concrete foundations, with a square opening 30cm wide, on top of motte. O.P.W notes 1972 suggest that an ice-house may have been built into the mound. Overgrown.

MAINHAM Td. O.S. 14 16.868301

"Queen Buan's Grave" [1939 (ed)] Motte-and-bailey castle, motte 7m high with saucer shaped summit. Circumference at base 141m. Bailey situated to S/E is now levelled. Outer bank levelled on East, West and South sides.

MAYNOOTH Td. O.S. 5 16.937737

Strongbow in 1174 granted to Maurice FitzGerald "the middle cantred of Ui Faelain" [Expugnatio Hibernica, p.143], which included Maynooth. The earlier earthen castle of Maynooth was replaced in the early thirteenth century by the extant stone castle which consists of a rectangular keep with surrounding curtain walls.

MORRISTOWNBILLER Td. O.S. 23 16.783148

Motte 8m in height, summit 14m N/S by 11m E/W. Circumference at base 140m. Long elongated bailey to east. This bailey, though ill-defined through lack of banks, may have measured as much as 80m E/W and tapered away from the motte 40m to 27m N/S. Fosse around the base of the motte was 9m wide in places. The summit afforded good views, with fen land to the immediate west and rising ground to the north.

NAAS WEST Td. O.S. 19 16.892195

Motte-and-bailey castle surmounted by inhabited bungalow. Motte 9m high, summit 27m N/S by 29m E/W. A ledge, 1m wide, encircles the motte 3m below the summit. Bailey located to west, 36m in length. "Unfortunately it has been desecrated by the building on top of it of a particularly ill-kept labourer's cotage" [I.T.A. Survey, (1942)]. An early nineteenth century map provides a plan of the motte with a barrack house on top; "A Plan of Naas Gaol and adjoining concerns", by J.Longfield (1824), N.L.I. Ms.21.F.35 (44).

NARRAGHMORE Td. O.S. 32 16.780989

Hugh de Lacy built "a castle [castellum] for Robert FitzRichard at Norrach" ; Expugnatio Hibernica, p.195. The exact site of this castle has yet to be located.

OLDCONNELL Td. O.S. 23 16.810160

Motte 10m high, summit 22.4m N/S by 20m E/W. Bailey 46m N/S by 30m E/W. Impressive site in flat open pastureland close to river Liffey. This site is in a good state of preservation although recently fencing and the planting of trees on the southern extent of the bailey have caused some limited destruction.

RATHMORE EAST Td. O.S. 20 16.957196

"Rathmore Moat". Large motte-and-bailey, 12-14m high, summit 17m N/S by 20.5m E/W. Bailey which was situated to the N/W now destroyed. The massive outer bank measured 18-20m at the base and rises to a height of 7-8m above surrounding ground level.

RATHSILLAGH UPPER Td.            O.S. 31                            16.755012

"Bades Moat", a small motte-and-bailey castle is recorded in Armitage's Book of Mottes, p.34. Height, c.4m and summit 6m in diameter. This site was also recorded on Taylor's map but has since been destroyed.

#### POSSIBLE SITES

BALLYSAX GREAT Td.                    O.S. 28                            16.796081

An inquisition regarding the holdings of Roger Bygod after his death listed a ruinous tower [turra] at the manor of Ballysax in 1306. [I.P.M., Vol.IV, p.305, no.434.] It is possible that this tower may have been central to an earthen fortification.

BARONSLAND Td.                            O.S. 32                            16.836033

"Round Burr". O.P.W. field notes for 1972 state; "A roughly circular hill with a flat top. The upper part of the hill appears to be a motte which was built on a natural ridge or low hill. The earthwork has steep sides and a flat circular top. The North part of the site is threatened by quarrying." This site would appear to have been destroyed a few years after this report was filed.

BROADLEAS COMMONS Td.            O.S. 29                            16.934080

"Knockashee Moat". Built on a natural rise, the base circumference is 62m. Much destroyed, the present surface diameter 10m N/S by 5m E/W. Height from W. is 1.8m and 3.5m from E. No evidence of bailey or outer fosses and banks. A brook named "Knox" mentioned in the manor of Ballymore, 1256-66, was annotated "Cnoc Sidhe or Knockshee (from the moat)", Alen's Reg, p.120,122. "Known also as the Fairy Hill the moat was demolished for top-dressing many years ago and but little of it is now left", J.R.S.A.I., Vol.61, (1931), p.124.

BURTOWN BIG Td.

O.S. 35

16.755946

"Tumulus destroyed" pencilled addition to 1837 O.S. sheet in O.P.W. library. This dubious site is included on the basis of a report in J.K.A.S., Vol.V, p.293, which details the partial levelling and ploughing of "Birtown Moat...which stood in the same field as the old churchyard at Birtown".

CASTLEWARDEN NORTH Td.

O.S. 15

16.968250

"Castlewarden Moat" [1911 (ed)]. A hybrid among earthworks in Co.Kildare. This site has been described as both a small motte-and-bailey and a moated site. [Normans, Vol.1, p.379 and Glasscock,R.E., (1975), op.cit., p.106, cite it as a motte whereas Hall,D.N., Hennessy,M., & O'Keefe,T., (1985), op.cit., label it a moated site]. The site is an oval shaped earthwork defined by a large fosse, 7m wide in places, and an outer bank. The internal platform measures 24m N/S by 33m E/W. At the eastern end of the interior is a raised area, 19m N/S by 9m E/W and 2-3m above the level of the interior. It is this feature which gives it the appearance of a much denuded motte-and-bailey. It was reported of Castlewarden in 1309 that "even though it is called castle garny there is not there a castle or house" ; [P.R.O. London, SC 8/270/13495]

LEIXLIP Td.

O.S. 11

16.033345

Adam de Hereford was granted Leixlip by Strongbow as part of a larger grant sometime before 1176. [Song, 3106-7]. The fact that he retained it in his own hands, in conjunction with its important location, would suggest that the later stone castle at Leixlip replaced an earlier earthen fortification.

## APPENDIX 3

## MOATED SITES in Co.KILDARE

ARDSCULL Td. O.S. 35 16.721974

St. Joseph photographs ASU 83: 1967, BOC 60: 1973 depict a rectilinear enclosure. 1837 (ed) 6 inch sheet defined a rectilinear enclosure 200ft NNW/SSE by 150ft ENE/WSW. The site's destruction was described in J.K.A.S., Vol.II, 1896, p.193-4; "a small square rath..levelled..for top-dressing" in the late 1880's. The article notes the discovery of animal bones and an unflagged chamber during the course of demolition. No visible traces survive.

BALLINDOOLIN Td. O.S. 2 16.648781

Sub-square enclosure, 36m E/W by 31m N/S, with internal rectangular feature, 19m by 8.2m, evidenced by low earthen banks. The internal platform is level with the surrounding field area. Shallow fosse, 5m wide in places and 50cm deep. Slight traces of inner banks.

BALLYCULLANE UPPER Td. O.S. 40 19.813817

1909 edition depicts northern half of partially destroyed rectilinear earthwork. This is not evidenced on 1837 ed. O.P.W. Files for 1972 noted that the "earthwork consists of a low bank c.2m wide" with "no trace of the other half in the adjacent field".

BALLYRAGGAN Td. O.S. 40 19.832828

Depicted on 1837, 1872 and 1909 editions. Interior 43m E/W by 39m N/S. Abutts field fence and county boundary on its southern side. The fosse is completely ploughed out but the banks are still traceable. The north east corner is noticeably raised, faint traces of a fosse along eastern side suggest a possible width of 5m. The ditch on the southern side measures c.4m and is 1m below the level of the central platform. Sited on a rise, and in places reaches a height of 1.5m above the level of the surrounding land. Situated in good pasture land. The earthwork is subject to constant erosion from grazing cattle. Locally it is known as the Mound Field and thought to have been the site of a cemetery.



BRAY LOWER Td. O.S. 35 16.722927

St. Joseph AVM 14: 1968, BDO 45: 1970. A ploughed out moated site with irregular associated feature to the immediate east. The crop marks, best example BDO 45: 1970, show a roughly square enclosure depicted on the 1837 edition as c.150ft E/W by 160ft N/S. Both photographs pick up faint traces of a double line along the western edge which perhaps indicts the original fosse.

CARRIGEEN NORTH Td. O.S. 38 16.839867

1837 edition depicts a roughly square enclosure c.100ft by 100ft. This site is of interest as it is located at between 400 and 500ft O.D.

CHERRYVILLE Td. O.S. 22 16.693120

N.L.I. Ms. 21.F.36 (127), dated Oct. 1839, depicts a tree lined rectangular enclosure called "The Rath". The 1939 revised O.S. edition places it as situated under Cherryville railway junction.

CLOGORROW Td. O.S. 35 16.691976

Site Name "Core-Ally". St. Joseph BDH 67: 1970, BGH 57: 1971. This moated site was only shown on the 1873 edition, depicted as 200ft. square. "It was about an Irish acre in extent, not a perfect square, as the northern and southern sides were somewhat larger than the eastern and the western. An embankment surrounded it. Outside this was a fosse, from ten to twelve yards wide, always full of water...A cave ran diagonally across it from the south-east corner." Darby, M., J.K.A.S. Vol.3 1899-1902 p.191. The site is now an area of flat, presently under tillage, and located on a slight rise. No visible traces. The townland forms a portion of the southern bounds of the Monavullagh Bog.

CLONSHANBO Td. O.S. 10 16.858343

"Killeen Moat" (O.S. 1911). St. Joseph AVO 78: 1968, AVR 11: 1968. Both photographs show a rectangular enclosure with a complex of possible associated earthworks to the immediate south. O.P.W. Files note that this site had been ploughed out by 1972.

CLOWNINGS Td. O.S. 14 16.934276

"Puddlehall Moat" (O.S. 1939) . 46m NE/SW by 51m. The fosse measured c.10m wide in places. The north and south sides were water filled as they were connected by a ditch at the S.W. corner to the field drainage system. The eastern side was filled in and the western ditch was dry covered by small trees and scrub. There were interior corners but these were not over exaggerated.

COOLSICKIN/ Td. O.S. 21 16.633142  
QUINSBOROUGH

St. Joseph BGH 70: 1971, BGH 71: 1971. The latter of the two photographs show undefined cropmarks to the immediate east of the site. Moated site depicted on 1939 edition only.

DRUMSRU Td. O.S. 17 16.722233

Site depicted on 1837 and 1910 editions. The site was completely overgrown. Slight evidence of external banks. The fosse which used to be fed by river to the south was silted up. (The river had been straightened in the last century). The fosse measures an average 4-5m width, the interior 36m NW/SE by 32m. Slight internal banks were of stone and earth construction. The land is reclaimed bordering on bog.

DUNFIERTH Td. O.S. 4 16.781378

31 N/S by 36 E/W internally. Fosse width averages 11-12m. The corners were raised making the site saucer shaped in profile and it is overlooked by higher ground to the north. A well outside the western fosse may have provided a water supply, and the area around the N.W. corner is quite boggy. The bottom of the fosse was boggy with silt but not wet. The outer and inner banks have been much denuded by livestock. No internal features.

DUNFIERTH Td. O.S. 4 16.779377

Ploughed out site 30m by 30m with ditch traceable to 1.5-2m width. This site is to the west of the above in adjacent field.

DUNMANOGE Td. O.S. 39 19.724831

St. Joseph BGN 53: 1971 depicts retilinear enclosure with possible causeway on southern side.

FASAGH Td. O.S. 26 16.655068

O.P.W. Files notes that the site was reported destroyed between 1953 and 1955. It was depicted on the 1838 edition as a square enclosure c.250ft by 250ft. The 1942 revised edition marked it as a planted enclosure, with it's northern side destroyed.

FEARMORE Td. O.S. 26 16.642064

29m N/S by 31m E/W, fosse width averages 4m. This moated site is built on a rise in undulating well drained pastureland. Slight internal banks have been eroded by cattle and the effects of tree plantation. No obvious causeways and the corners are slightly raised. Stream located 30m to the immediate south. Map of Fearmore by Longfield, J., (1815) [N.L.I. Ms. 21..37 (137)] names the site as "Fort". The fieldname is "Raheen" - Longfield, J., [N.L.I. 16.F.8, dated 1833]. The townland to the immediate east is Gorteen.

FONTSTOWN LOWER Td. O.S. 31 16.740004

"A Survey of the Manor of Fontstown, Co.Kildare", by Scale, B., (1773) N.L.I. 21.F.11 in which it was called "Danes Fort". The site is now long since ploughed out, the present owner for over sixty years had no recollection of it's existance. The site is located on a slight slope to the south in an area of pasture and tillage.

GORTEEN Td. O.S. 4 16.781377

Moated site 29m NE/SW by 25m , fosse 5m. Internal banks 20-30cm above interior. The fosse is not visible on southern side. Located in poorly drained pastureland. The site had been previously planted with beach trees. No internal features or trace of original causeway.

GORTEENVACAN Td. O.S. 40 19.760813

St.Joseph AYL 48: 1969 depicts rectilinear enclosure with traces of large western fosse. Associated earthworks are also discernable to immediate north. Situated on a slight rise in open pasture the site was adjudged to measure 41m N/S by 25m(?) E/W. The earthworks to the north were unintelligible at ground level. There was evidence of a dried up stream to the south of the site. The site is also on St.Joseph BGH 44: 1971. A lease in 1608 for Richard Eustace to build a tower house at Gorteenvacan relates that he should make "a stone wall around about the town". (J.K.A.S., Vol.8 p.161).

GRANGEFORD Td. O.S. 38 16.792882

Shortly after 1276 "a wall...fosse and one breteche" were constructed at Grangeford. (P.R.O., E.101/230/13). Recorded as destroyed between 1953-55. (O.P.W. Files, 1955). The ploughed out remains measure c.34m in platform diameter.

GRIFFINRATH Td. O.S. 11 16.951345

Square wooded enclosure shown on 1837 edition. A map of the townland of Griffinrath by John Rocque in 1757 records the site as lying within "the moatfield". (J.R.S.A.I., Vol.108, p.113.)

GUIDENSTOWN NORTH Td. O.S. 17 16.701175

1837 and 1910 editions. Interior 49m N/S by 55m E/W, average fosse width 7m. The site has a flat internal platform with inner banks and raised corners. The NW and SW corners are 4m and 4.5m above the bottom of the fosse respectively. The inner banks are c.1.6-1.7m above the interior. Situated on a height with commanding views, it is a very impressive monument.

KILMEAD Td. O.S. 31 16.746987

"Moat" (O.S. 1907-9) 31m N/S by 37m E/W, fosse 9m wide in places and 5m at the base. The corners are considerably raised above the interior the inner banks c.1-1.3m above the platform. However the interior surface is completely overgrown, uneven, and slopes noticeably to the west. There is evidence of stone footings in the NE and SE quadrants of the site, however the totally overgrown nature of the site hampered further investigation. Possible evidence of original entrance near centre of northern inner bank. The site is an imposing earthwork situated on a rise in open gently undulating well drained tillage land.

KILPATRICK Td. O.S. 26 16.649064

The 1838 edition notes "Site of Rath" and depicts a square enclosure. "A Survey of Kilpatrick" by Scale, B., (1773), [N.L.I. 21.F.29], the square enclosure is annotated "Rath". A later map in 1833 by Longfield, J., N.L.I. 16.F.8 uses the word "Fort", however like the O.S. depiction the "Fort" is drawn with use of broken lines. It may thus be assumed that it was destroyed between 1773 and 1833. The land is flat and well drained in an area of mixed tillage and pasture. There is no local recollection of the site.

MULLAGHREELAN Td. O.S. 37 16.757885

St. Joseph BGN 36: 1971 shows a rectilinear cropmark. Nothing is shown on either 1837 or 1907 editions. There was no trace of this site at ground level when visited. The land was level well drained and in pasture.

MULLAGHREELAN Td. O.S. 38 16.761882

The 1837 edition depicts this site as an irregular sub-rectangular enclosure, with a curved rather than a squared NE corner similar to a flat bottomed "D" in plan. In the 1909 edition a field fence bisects the site of this earthwork. O.P.W. field notes state that the site was roughly 23.5m in diameter (1985).

MULLAMAST Td. O.S. 36 16.774959

St. Joseph AYL 84, AYL 83 and ALV 14. These aerial photographs show a rectilinear enclosure with associated field systems. The land slopes to the east in an area of well drained pasture and tillage. There were no surface traces.

MYLERSTOWN Td. O.S. 24 16.874143

43m N/S by 48m E/W, with internal banks and fosse 7-8m wide. The SW corner is raised 5m above the bottom of the fosse and 3m above the internal platform. The platform itself was level but like the rest of the site was totally overgrown. This impressive site is situated in well drained pasture land.

NEWTOWNALLEN Td. O.S. 39 19.743829

O.P.W. Field Notes 1972 note that a destroyed square or rectangular earthwork was survived by crop marks on E., S., and W., with field fence to the north. Diameter 38m N/S.

NEWTOWNPILSWORTH Td. O.S. 39 19.724832

St. Joseph BGN 53: 1971. A sub-rectangular earthwork with the old river course running along it's southern side. This is also shown on the 1837 edition. There is no evidence of this on the 1909 edition.

RATHGRUMLY Td. O.S. 31 16.718985

1837 edition notes the "Rath", 1909 edition omits this title. O.P.W. Correspondence (1955) notes that the site was bulldozed between 1953-1955. O.P.W. Field Notes (1972) noted "Owner stated it was a rectangular earthwork consisting of a fosse with a low bank inside it. The bank enclosed an area of roughly half an acre." St. Joseph ASU 77: 1967, BOC 58: 1973.

RUSSELLSTOWN Td. O.S. 35 16.715960

St. Joseph BOC 64: 1973. This aerial photograph shows a conjoined circular and rectilinear cropmark. There was no visible trace of either of these features at ground level although there were slight vegetational changes, which produced possible evidence of a small square enclosure 6m by 6m in the centre of the site. There was no evidence of raised corners, banks or ditches. Local information suggests that a reaccurant bald patch of ground was due to cattle feeding habits. Well drained flat pasture on slight elevation.

SALLYMOUNT DEMESNE/ Td. O.S. 29 16.868096  
CRAMERSVALLEY

Large moated site in strategic location with use of natural steep slope as northern boundary which overlooks the Liffey valley. The site is bisected by the east/west townland boundary. Platform area 47m E/W by 45m N/S. The townland division is exaggerated by light tree planting on northern half, the southern half is totally overgrown with scrub. Internal banks and wide fosse, 10m southern side, 6-8m elsewhere. Evidence of double ditch and possible causeway 3.2m wide on western side. Find scatter recorded in Sallymount Demesne of a flint javelin head and a straphandle of a medieval pottery vessel. [N.M.I. Finds Register 1961, (212) (7), 18.4cm W / 17.8cm N.].

SHEEAN Td. O.S. 31 16.665989

St. Joseph BDO 43: 1970 . Rectilinear cropmark of ploughed out moated site with large fosse. No evidence of this site on the O.S. 6 inch editions.

TANKARDSTOWN Td. O.S. 38 16.830862

A low bank and wide fosse delimit the slightly raised interior, 29m E/W by 33m N/S. Fosse 4-5m wide. Evidence of wall foundations of a small rectangular structure in the south-west corner of the site, 14.8m N/S by 6.6m E/W. North-west corner is raised above the rest of the site. Site overgrown.

TAWNRUSH Td. O.S. 31 16.743026

"A Survey of the Manor of Fontstown, Co.Kildare, by B. Scale (1773) [N.L.I. Ms. 21.F.11.]. Map of Boleybeg depicts a square enclosure in the centre of an arable field, defined by trees and bushes. The interior platform is also in arable, no fosse shown. Also shown on "Plan and Section of Mill Race in the Townland of Boley Great", [N.L.I. Ms. 21.F.21 (17)], as square enclosure dotted with trees at the centre. It was similarly depicted on the first edition 1837 O.S. six inch map. There is no trace of the site on the 1907-9 edition. The site is located in well drained undulating pature. A small stream runs to the south of the site with evidence of a dried up stream to its immediate north. The uneven nature of the field and differential grazing of sheep hindered identification of the exact siting. No surface traces.

THOMASTOWN Td. O.S. 28 16.799054

O.P.W. Files : Site destroyed between 1953 and 1955. There is a discrepancy between the depiction of this site on the first edition map and that of the 1939 edition. However the later shows a rectilinear area defined by a fosse to the north/east and south/west

THOMASTOWN WEST Td. O.S. 22 16.685168

St.Joseph BDU 19: 1970. Cropmark of square/rectilinear enclosure. The field was in pasture at time of inspection, well drained land. No surface traces.

TIPPER SOUTH Td. O.S. 19 16.916189

"The Cave Rath" (1939 ed.). 1837 edition depicts a rectangular enclosure. 44m E/W by 30m N/S. The site slopes from the south, good views. Inner bank and fosse best preserved on southern side, fosse 4m wide. A roughly square 1m wide opening of depth 1m in the north-west corner is the presumed site of a souterrain. Depressions in the interior of the site may represent the collapse of this souterrain.

TURNINGS LOWER Td. O.S. 14 16.919278

Rectangular moated site depicted on 1837 (ed.), not on 1939 (ed). The site is in well drained pasture. A differential growth pattern represented by nettles in the area of the site may indicate the eastern extent of the site, however there are no definite surface traces.

YEOMANSTOWN Td. O.S. 19 16.853204

Rectangular enclosure, 40m E/W by 44 N/S, with internal stone foundations of rectangular building of E/W orientation, 18m by 8m, at centre. Possible entrance to platform in S.E. corner. Slight evidence of internal banks. The fosse survives to a width of 4m in places. Site in pastureland on west bank of the river Liffey. Not recorded on O.S. 1837 or 1938-9 maps. The stone foundations are recorded to be that of a Dominican chapel. Some time after 1666 the Dominicans of Naas moved to Yeomanstown where they stayed until 1756 when they next moved to Newbridge. (Gwynn, A. & Hadcock, R.N., Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland, (London, 1970), p.234)

#### POSSIBLE MOATED SITES

AGHANURE O.S. 35 16.716966

St Joseph aerial photographs evidence an irregular enclosure; BDH 69: 1970, BOC 61: 1973. Nothing shown on 1837 (ed) or 1939 (ed) O.S. maps. Field under crops, no surface traces.

BALSCOTT O.S. 11 16.996316

Small sub-rectangular enclosure shown on 1837 (ed) and 1939 (ed).

BARRETTSTOWN O.S. 19 16.867236

Rectangular enclosure with associated earthworks show up on G.S.I. N 387-8.

BELAN O.S. 38 16.776911

A tree filled square enclosure marked on 1837 (ed), nothing on 1909 (ed). No surface traces.



CLOGORROW O.S. 35 16.693977

Light traces of associated cropmarks show on St Joseph BDH 68: 1970, only slight trace of rectilinear enclosure on St Joseph BGH 59: 1971. No visible evidence at field level. Nothing shown on 1837 (ed) or 1939 (ed).

CLONDUFF O.S. 10 16.872363

Possible rectilinear earthwork to immediate south of Pale earthwork recorded by St Joseph AVM 27: 1968, AVM 28: 1968, AHK 4: 1963. Nothing shown on 1837 (ed) or 1911 (ed).

COLBINSTOWN O.S. 36 16.833981

St Joseph BDH 45: 1970 records rectangular enclosure. Nothing shown on 1838 (ed) or 1909 (ed), although "Moated house site" annotated to 1838 (ed) in O.P.W. library. The vicinity of the site was excavated during the pre-installation phase of Cork-Dublin Gas line. "There was no evidence of a large earthen structure which present landowner had removed. He claimed that it was not a "fort" but some sort of cattle or sheep pen". All the finds were modern. "The Archaeology of the Cork-Dublin Gas line", Dept. of Archaeology, U.C.C., pre-publication report, p.277,280,282.

COMMONSTOWN O.S. 38 16.813917

Rectangular enclosure recorded on 1837 (ed) at height of 570ft O.D. No surface traces.

CONLANSTOWN O.S. 17 16.722182

Rectilinear enclosure shown on 1837 (ed). No surface traces.

COOLRAKE O.S. 38 16.816899

Small rectangular enclosure shown on 1837 (ed), the western side had been removed by 1909 (ed). O.P.W. field notes for 1972 record "site destroyed". No visible surface traces.

COOLROE O.S. 34 16.652943

St Joseph BDH 66: 1970 shows L-shaped fosse. Nothing marked on 1839 (ed) or 1909 (ed).

DAVIDSTOWN DEMESNE                      O.S. 38                      16.815895

G.S.I. 134-5 shows rectilinear enclosure. Nothing marked on 1837 (ed) or 1909 (ed). Located on slope. No surface traces.

DERRYBRENNAN                              O.S. 12                      16.701277

G.S.I. N458-9 shows small sub-square enclosure. Nothing on O.S. maps. This cropmark could be the result of rearrangement of field fences since 1837.

DERRYOUGHTER WEST                      O.S. 30                      16.638038

"Rath" [1838 (ed)]. Site destroyed during river widening, c.1925-1930.

DREHID                                      O.S. 8                      16.732345

Partially defined rectangular enclosure marked on 1837 (ed) and 1911 (ed). Local information notes that it was referred to as the "rath" in the earlier part of this century. Possible enclosure 25m N/S by 35m E/W.

FEIGHCULLEN                              O.S. 17                      16.730207

Square enclosure shown on St Joseph APH 87: 1966, APH 89: 1966. Nothing shown on O.S. maps. Possible site of D.M.V.; Glasscock, R.E., (1970) op.cit., p.169,174-5. No surface indicators.

FENNOR                                      O.S. 27                      16.706103

Sub-rectangular enclosure shown on 1837 (ed) and 1939 (ed). O.P.W. notes 1955 record that Fennor "ringfort" had been destroyed between 1953-55.

GORTEENVACAN                              O.S. 39                      19.755818

St Joseph AYL 46: 1969 records a number of sub-rectangular enclosures defined by fosses. Nothing shown on 1837 (ed) or 1909 (ed).

GRANGECLARE WEST                      O.S. 13                      16.765238

L-shaped fosse defined on 1911 (ed). Taylor's map of 1783 shows this as the site of Grange Clare castle. Possible moated site.

GREYABBEY O.S. 22 16.727110

A large earthwork with deep wide fosse recorded in O.P.W. field notes for 1972. This is shown on both 1837 (ed) and 1939 (ed). Ploughed-out.

HALLAHOISE O.S. 37 16.747861

Irregular enclosure depicted on 1837 (ed).

KILBERRY O.S. 30 16.654985

St Joseph BGH 61: 1971. Kilberry Castle located within a rectangular enclosure.

KILKEA LODGE FARM O.S. 37 16.745896

St Joseph BDH 76: 1970 shows a central rectangular cropmark with associated earthworks. Nothing marked on 1837 (ed) or 1909 (ed). No surface traces.

KILKEA UPPER O.S. 37 16.737875

St Joseph AVM 7: 1968 shows associated circular and sub-rectangular enclosures. Nothing on 1837 (ed) or 1909 (ed). No surface traces.

KILKEA UPPER O.S. 37 16.757873

Irregular enclosure on 1837 (ed). No evidence of earthwork at ground level.

KILLINAGH UPPER O.S. 12 16.733278

Small square enclosure marked on 1837 (ed) but destroyed by 1909 (ed).

KILMONEY NORTH O.S. 17 16.703187

O.P.W. field notes 1957; "An approx. square area (34 by 43 paces) is enclosed by a bank 2-3ft high. No fosse apparent. Within enclosure was a low circular mound of stones, diam. 9 paces, height 2ft. ....Mound represents rubbish heap in a habitation site of medieval date". St Joseph ATA 67: 1967, AVR 6: 1968.

KILMURRY O.S. 9 16.846314

St Joseph AVO 86 shows possible moated site with associated earthworks.

KILRATHMURRY O.S. 2 16.659431

St Joseph AOZ 29: 1966, AYR 44: 1969, show rectangular enclosure. Not marked on 1837 (ed) or 1909 (ed). Landowner related that the site was bulldozed in the 1970's and had previously consisted of fences and trees.

KILRATHMURRY O.S. 2 16.650414

Sub-rectangular enclosure 41m N/S by 27m E/W. Platform raised 60cm N. side, 1.4m S. side. Fosse W. side 5m wide. Possible survival of ditch 4.5m wide at N.E. corner. No internal features. N.L.I. 21.F.34 (5).

MARSHALSTOWN O.S. 38 16.804881

St Joseph AYL 56: 1969. Rectangular enclosure with associated cropmarks. No surface traces.

MOATAVANNY O.S. 38 16.807868

G.S.I. S 132-3 shows cropmark of rectilinear enclosure. Now located in area of marsh. No trace. Not shown on O.S. maps.

MOORTOWN O.S. 18 16.840194

G.S.I. 375-6 shows sub-square enclosure. Nothing evident from O.S. maps.

NICHOLASTOWN O.S. 35 16.742921

St Joseph BDH 71: 1970, AVM 12: 1968, show rectilinear cropmark. Not marked on O.S. maps.

PAINESTOWN O.S. 10 16.871327

Small square enclosure 30m by 30m [O.P.W. field notes 1985].

PARSONSTOWN O.S. 8 16.727332

St Joseph AVT 86 shows rectangular enclosure with possible house platform to centre. Nothing shown on O.S. maps.

PUNCHESTOWN LOWER O.S. 20 16.983196

G.S.I. N 381-088 shows sub-rectangular cropmark. Not marked on O.S. maps. Located on slope. No surface traces.

RATHANGAN DEMESNE O.S. 17 16.675180

Rectilinear enclosure shown on 1910 (ed). No surface traces.

RATHMORE O.S. 8 16.706311

Both the 1837 (ed) and 1911 (ed) show a square planted enclosure. No surface traces.

RATHMUCK O.S. 27 16.702095

Remains of rectilinear enclosure marked on 1837 (ed) and 1939 (ed). Ill-defined, c.32m N/S by 28m E/W. Outer fosse 4m wide. Overgrown and much eroded by cattle.

SMALLFORD O.S. 35 16.700977

Known locally as the "Fox Covert", this site was ploughed out in the 1960's. Interior c.45m N/S by 35m E/W.

## APPENDIX 4

Townland	Grid Ref.	Platform Area (Sq. metres)	Fosse Width (Average)
ARDSCULL	16.721974		Levelled
BALLINDOOLIN	16.648378	1123	5
BALLYCULLANE UPPER	19.813817		Levelled
BALLYRAGGAN	19.832828	1677	5
BRAY LOWER	16.722927		Levelled
CARRIGEEN NORTH	16.839867		Levelled
CHERRYVILLE	16.693120		Levelled
CLOGORROW	16.691976		Levelled
CLONSHANBO	16.858343		Levelled
CLOWNINGS	16.934276	2346	7
COOLSICKIN/ QUINSBOROUGH	16.633142		Levelled
DRUMSRU	16.722233	1152	5
DUNFIERTH	16.781378	1116	11
DUNFIERTH	16.779377	900	2
DUNMANOGE	19.724831		Levelled
FASAGH	16.655068		Levelled
FEARMORE	16.642064	899	4
FONTSTOWN LOWER	16.740004		Levelled
GORTEEN	16.781377	725	5
GORTEENVACAN	19.760813	1025	Levelled
GRANGEFORD	16.792882		Levelled
GRIFFINRATH	16.951345		Levelled
GUIDENSTOWN NORTH	16.701175	2695	7
KILMEAD	16.746987	1147	9
KILPATRICK	16.649064		Levelled
MULLAGHREELAN	16.757885		Levelled
MULLAGHREELAN	16.761882		Levelled
MULLAMAST	16.774959		Levelled
MYLERSTOWN	16.874143	2064	8
NEWTOWNALLEN	19.743829	1330	Levelled
NEWTOWNPILSWORTH	19.724832		Levelled
RATHGRUMLY	16.718985		Levelled
RUSSELLSTOWN	16.715960		Levelled
SALLYMOUNT DEMESNE/ CRAMERSVALLEY	16.868096	2115	8
SHEEAN	16.665989		Levelled
TANKARDSTOWN	16.830862	957	5
TAWNRUSH	16.743026		Levelled
THOMASTOWN	16.799054		Levelled
THOMASTOWN WEST	16.685168		Levelled
TIPPER SOUTH	16.916189	1320	4
TURNINGS LOWER	16.919278		Levelled
YEOMANSTOWN	16.853204	1760	4

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