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Appropriating the Past: Romanesque Spolia in Seventeenth-Century Ireland

by RACHEL MOSS

Although a relatively young subject, the historiography of Irish architecture has had a remarkably significant impact on the manner in which particular styles have been interpreted and valued.¹ Since the genesis of the topic in the mid-eighteenth century, specific styles of architecture have been inextricably connected with the political history of the country, and each has been associated with the political and religious affiliations of its patrons. From the mid-nineteenth century, the focus on identifying an Irish 'national' architecture became particularly strong, with Early Christian and Romanesque architecture firmly believed to imbue 'the spirit of native genius',² while Gothic, viewed as the introduction of the Anglo-Norman invader, was seen as marking the end of 'Irish' art.³ Inevitably, with such a strong motivation behind them, early texts were keen to find structures that were untouched by the hand of the colonizer as exemplars of the 'national architecture'. Scholars, including the pioneering George Petrie (1790–1866) in works such as his 1845 study of the round towers of Ireland, believed that through historical research he and others were the first to understand the 'true value' of these buildings and that any former interest in them had been purely in their destruction, rather than in their restoration or reconstruction.⁴ It was believed that such examples of early medieval architecture and sculpture as had survived had done so despite, rather than because of, the efforts of former ages, and, although often in ruins, the remains could be interpreted purely in terms of the date of their original, medieval, creation.

Informed by such studies, from the mid-nineteenth century a movement grew to preserve and consolidate a number of threatened Romanesque buildings with the guiding philosophy of preserving the monuments as close to their original 'pre-colonial' form as possible. Consolidation of the ruins of the Nuns' Church at Clonmacnoise (Co. Offaly) is traditionally amongst the earliest and most celebrated of these endeavours, undertaken by the Kilkenny and Southeast Ireland Archaeological Society in the 1860s,⁵ setting a precedent for both the type of monument and method of preservation that was to become the focus of activity from the 1870s, and thus for the first State initiatives in architectural conservation.⁶

The perception that Ireland's early medieval architecture remained relatively unaltered until the interventions of the later nineteenth and the twentieth centuries has tended to persist to the present day, with antiquarian drawings or other late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century records often interpreted as reliable evidence of how a

building or assemblage of sculpture originally looked. However, at least two centuries before the nineteenth-century Celtic Revival, Romanesque monuments were being re-used, restored and in some cases relocated. This article will argue that, while by the end of the nineteenth century the Romanesque style had come to be valued as an expression of authentically native architecture, and thus a 'national' style worthy of preservation, in the seventeenth century this was not the case, and different sections of the population used buildings, or in some cases their component parts, in a manner that conveyed a range of quite specific meanings. Set against the broader, European context these activities were quite precocious and reflect a set of religious and social circumstances unique to seventeenth-century Ireland.⁷

I

With little Roman settlement in Ireland, and scant evidence of Scandinavian influence in architecture, Irish buildings remained remarkably conservative up to the late eleventh century, and it was only with the introduction of elements of Romanesque architecture that Ireland began gradually to acknowledge external influences in its more prestigious buildings.⁸ Thus, ironically, the very style lauded by nineteenth-century scholars as truly 'Gaelic', was in fact one of the earliest overseas imports, albeit utilized with a distinctive Irish accent;⁹ its common nomenclature, 'Romanesque', betrayed its reminiscence of the monuments of ancient Rome found across much of Europe but not on the island of Ireland.¹⁰ While the *romanitas* of Romanesque appears to have eluded the Irish scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, its 'Roman' appearance was not lost on earlier generations, in particular some of the earliest proponents of Classical architecture in Ireland.

One such proponent was Richard Boyle, first Earl of Cork, an ambitious, self-made man, who became the owner of vast swathes of property in southern Ireland. One of the ways in which Boyle sought to shape his self-image was through his patronage of art and architecture, and he is credited with being not only one of the most prolific patrons of the period but also one of the most sophisticated, introducing to Ireland some of the latest architectural fashions from his native England.¹¹ In 1611, for example, as part of continuing works to the former College of St Mary's at Youghal (Co. Cork), which Boyle had taken over as a residence, he contracted two English masons, Richard and John Hammond, to build a Classical gateway with pediment, columns and prominent coats of arms, described in some detail in the earl's diaries.¹²

Boyle's concern with the ostentatious display of wealth and family identity on the gatehouse, one of the more public parts of his Youghal residence, was entirely in keeping with his desire to be accepted as one of Ireland's ruling elite. It is interesting, however, to compare this fashionable and expensive design with the gatehouse of Lismore Castle (Co. Waterford), the building that was to become Boyle's principal residence from the 1620s until his death. Here the gatehouse that leads into the main courtyard of the castle is simpler in its design, the principal external façade presenting a squat arch, crowned by Boyle's arms incorporating his motto, 'God's providence is our inheritance'.¹³ As if to complement the motto, the continuous arch beneath is not articulated with diamond-cut stones, as one might expect, but rather is constructed



Fig. 1. Gateway to Lismore Castle, Co. Waterford (Photo: Author)



Fig. 2. Detail of Romanesque carving on the gateway arch (Photo: Author)

from jambstones worked with a shallow roll moulding on the arris and voussoirs carved with chevron and billet ornament, obviously re-used from an earlier building (Figs 1 and 2).¹⁴

The decoration of the gate arch would have contrasted starkly with a portico erected opposite this entrance, no longer extant but described by Smith in 1773 as cut from Bath stone and in the Doric order 'which from its neatness and regularity is judged to have been designed by Inigo Jones'.¹⁵ While it is possible that the builders of the gatehouse simply exploited a convenient source of ready-cut material, it seems unlikely, particularly given the prominent location of the feature, Boyle's obvious concern with appearances, and the fact that costs do not appear to have been an issue in the works at Lismore. Unfortunately no explicit reference to the construction of the gatehouse arch survives. In 1622 Boyle ordered the addition of an upper level to 'the gatehouse', confirming the patron's direct involvement and his concern for the impact made by his gatehouse buildings,¹⁶ in 1631, five masons were recorded as 'at work on the gatehouse'.¹⁷ Unfortunately no further detail is given as to the nature of the work, and it is not until 21 March 1634/5 that Alexander Hill, the Holborn-based sculptor, was paid 'for cutting coats of arms for the schoolhouse and new gatehouse' at Lismore.¹⁸ Of particular note here, perhaps, is that over the winter of 1633 to 1634 Boyle also paid to have the 'Ruyns of the boddie and ille of [the cathedral church at Lismore] cleared',¹⁹ suggesting the most probable source for the stone, although work, again sponsored by the earl, described in 1638 as 'pulling down of the Ruyns of the owld defaced chapels

of Lismoor²⁰ may also have proved a fruitful enterprise in terms of the procurement of twelfth-century building materials.

The re-use of recognizably ancient material in the decoration of such a public part of his residence ties in with a key concern of Boyle's: his strategy to legitimize his recent rise to prominence in Ireland. Clodagh Tait has demonstrated how the earl used the design and positioning of funerary monuments to himself and his family to establish his dynastic credentials.²¹ At Youghal this not only involved the construction of his own tomb, but also the restoration in 1619 of the tomb of Richard Bennett and Ellis Barry, 'first founders' of the chapel.²² Through the reconstruction of their thirteenth-century tomb in an antiquated form, Boyle was posthumously creating a relationship with this ancient local ruling family.²³ In a similar way at Lismore, it might be argued that the juxtaposition of Boyle's arms with the demonstrably ancient fabric of the town helped to give historical sanction and authority to this *nouveau riche* settler.

The choice of decorated Romanesque stones over any of the other historical debris that would have been available to Boyle at Lismore may not, however, have been entirely random. Surviving fabric suggests that Lismore cathedral had been extensively reworked during the thirteenth century, and that at least some of the available salvage would therefore have been Gothic.²⁴ The earl appears to have been happy to see the restoration of St Mary's Youghal carried out in what might be termed 'Gothic survival' style, appropriate to the architecture of the surviving parts of the church. At Lismore Castle, it is possible that he saw Romanesque as more appropriate to a twelfth-century castle, but the manner in which the Romanesque arch was reconstructed suggests a stronger desire to adapt the medieval aesthetic to a more Classical one, with the absence of bases and capitals bringing the arch much closer in form to contemporary 'settler classicism', comparable, for example, with the west doorway of Derrygonnelly Old Church (Co. Fermanagh) of 1627: a semi-circular arch with continuous sequence of diamond-cut voussoirs surmounted by an armorial plaque.²⁵

Boyle's interest in contemporary, fashionable art and architecture would, almost by definition in the early seventeenth century, have extended to an interest in antiquities. This would appear to be confirmed by a note in his diary that in 1628 he gave a booklet with hand-drawn designs of 'famous monuments in perspective' to the Earl of Arundel,²⁶ while a 1643 inventory of his books and papers kept in Dublin include historical works such as *Holinshed's Chronicle*, and a copy of *Pacata Hibernia*.²⁷ The nature of his relationship with Arundel, a great collector of antiquities,²⁸ is unclear, but it is of note that the latter was in Ireland in 1634, during which time he was involved in sourcing stone, possibly for the construction of his cabinet room;²⁹ and, as Thomas Cocke has pointed out, Arundel was one of the key figures in the defining of architectural styles in the seventeenth century,³⁰ a time when what we now refer to as Romanesque was equated by some contemporaries with the ancient style of Rome, albeit in a debased form.³¹ Thus it appears that Boyle may have deliberately selected Romanesque stonework for his gateway for its Classical aesthetic, and in so doing created an entrance also in accord with the twelfth-century date of the castle.

The acceptability of incorporating Romanesque material into 'iconic' parts of domestic buildings at that time is also demonstrated at Mellifont in Co. Louth. Following the dissolution of the Cistercian abbey there, the south range of the cloister

was converted into a mansion by the English Moore family, later Earls of Drogheda. The late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century house has now almost entirely disappeared; however, excavations at the site during the 1950s revealed a pattern of cobbling in the former cloister garth that converged on the twelfth-century octagonal lavabo, leading Liam de Paor to suggest that it may have been used as an entrance porch to the house.³² Roger Stalley has since convincingly demonstrated that the second storey of the lavabo, which still survives today, was probably added at this time to convert the structure from a medieval wash-house into a fashionable polygonal entrance to the residence of one of the new ruling elite.³³

While the incorporation of the Romanesque lavabo at Mellifont may have come about simply by virtue of its prior existence on site, the use of Romanesque material as forms of Hiberno-Classical spolia in a slightly later seventeenth-century public building was less self-evident. The so-called 'Main Guard' at Clonmel (Co. Tipperary) for many years attributed variously to Inigo Jones, Christopher Wren or William Robinson by virtue of its precociously integral Classical design, demonstrates perhaps even more clearly how, in certain circles, classicism and the Romanesque came to be associated with one another during this period (Fig. 3).³⁴

The Main Guard was built *c.* 1675 by James, twelfth Earl and first Duke of Ormond, as a courthouse for the palatinate of Co. Tipperary, as a tholsel, and to provide private apartments for the Ormonds.³⁵ Together with the Boyles, the Ormonds were amongst the most significant patrons of art and architecture in Ireland during the seventeenth century although, unlike the Earls of Cork with their vast fortunes, the Ormonds experienced almost constant financial worries.³⁶ In his periodic role as Viceroy of Ireland, James was responsible for a large number of building projects, including much of the seventeenth-century reshaping of the city of Dublin. Although apparently a man of simple tastes, he was acutely aware of the need to demonstrate, as he put it in a letter to his son 'the importance to keep up the splendour of government'.³⁷ The Main Guard certainly fitted this description. Amongst the earliest fully Classical buildings in Ireland — at least those in a provincial context³⁸ — and built so as to intrude upon the vista down the main street of the town, there is little doubt that the structure was intended to convey a message of power and sophistication to the local populace. Described by Edward McParland as 'a symbol of universal order and imposed civility',³⁹ in many respects the building would not be out of place in a contemporary English county town. Certain details, however, in particular the quite squat proportions of the colonnade piers, are the reason why more cautious scholars have been reluctant to attribute the building to any of the 'greats' of seventeenth-century Classical architecture.⁴⁰

Recent conservation and restoration work on the building has, however, revealed at least part of the reason for these rather peculiar proportions.⁴¹ As conservation work progressed the building revealed itself to contain significant quantities of salvaged material. For example, one of the armorial plaques carved in 1674/5, had been carved on the base of a large scallop capital, and further scallop capitals had been used as rubble in the fabric of the building, their carved features concealed for over three hundred years (Figs 4 and 5).⁴² The shape and dimensions of the scallops suggest that they once capped large drum piers of similar dimension to the squat piers that form the



Fig. 3. The 'Main Guard', Clonmel, Co. Tipperary (Photo: Author)

open loggia on the ground floor of the building; this leads one to the conclusion that the circular piers incorporate sections of Romanesque piers, re-used in a Classical setting.

Great arcaded churches were a relative rarity in twelfth-century Ireland and were limited to a small number of cathedrals and to the churches of the Cistercians.⁴³ In the case of the Clonmel stone, a Cistercian church appears to be the most likely source. The Cistercian abbey of Inislounaght stood about two miles west of Clonmel along the River Suir. Founded in 1148 as a daughter house of Mellifont, the abbey at Inislounaght was typically Cistercian in plan, and apparently had a nave arcade with drum columns. In 1541, following its dissolution, the Royal Commissioners gave its new owner, Sir Thomas Butler, permission to 'throw down' the church.⁴⁴ It appears, however, to have remained more or less intact for about a hundred years following this. In 1626 the ecclesiastical historian, Sir James Ware, not one usually noted for his commentaries on buildings, was moved to comment on the ruins in terms of their 'beauty and antiquity',⁴⁵ and in 1654 the Civil Survey refers to the walls as 'still standing'.⁴⁶ However, by the following century there was practically nothing left of the church structure, and today



Fig. 4. Romanesque scallop capital re-used in the fabric of the façade (Photo: Author)

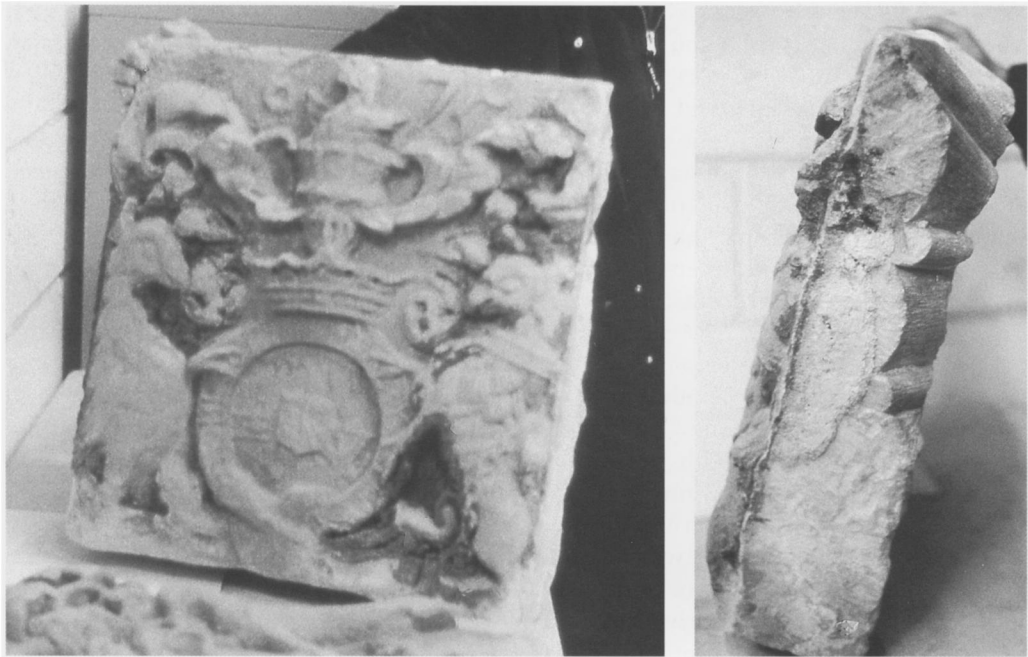


Fig. 5. Ormond arms, front and side view following their removal from the façade of the Main Guard (Photo: Author)

all that remains on the site are ashlar blocks, a twelfth-century doorway and a fifteenth-century window, both the latter re-used in the nineteenth-century parish church. It would appear therefore that the abbey ruins, or more precisely those of the church itself, were used as a convenient quarry for the new building project downstream at Clonmel at some time in the early 1670s. While the use of recycled Romanesque material in this instance may well reflect an exercise in cost-cutting on the part of the financially-strapped earl or his architect, it is nonetheless of note that the twelfth-century piers were deemed to be of sufficiently correct proportion to pass as part of a new, up-to-date essay in Classicism, fitting for a building of this type.

II

The sixteenth-century Dissolution had a varying impact on different types of ecclesiastical architecture in Ireland. While religious houses in the eastern part of the country, such as Mellifont and Inislounaght, were dissolved and sold either to new English settlers or the established 'Old English' gentry, the greater distance from the centre of government and local sympathies meant that a number of western friaries continued to function, albeit in a lesser capacity, and by the early seventeenth century there were even attempts by Roman Catholic priests to start renovating a number of Franciscan houses across the country.⁴⁷ Earlier, 'Celtic' monastic sites did not fare so well. At some of the larger of such sites, such as Clonmacnoise, there is evidence to suggest that a number of churches had remained in both monastic and parochial use up to the Dissolution, but that these were soon stripped of their valuables.⁴⁸ At many smaller sites a single church was already in use as a parish church and thus continued as such following the Dissolution. Contrary to popular belief, it was not Henrician Reformation that saw the destruction of many of these, but rather the 1641 Rebellion and the turmoil that followed it.⁴⁹

Like the salvage of stone outlined above, many early monastic churches, some incorporating Romanesque sculpture, were treated as useful sources for easily procured stone.⁵⁰ It was not, however, only the Protestant ruling classes who reclaimed sculpted stone for use in an iconic manner. Carved rubble from the twelfth century also held meanings, albeit very different, for another section of society, providing an interesting and contemporaneous contrast with the values instilled into it at Lismore, Mellifont and Clonmel.

The monastic (and later parochial) church of St Tola at Dysert O'Dea in Co. Clare (Fig. 6) incorporates a south doorway and west window both constructed from Romanesque sculpted stone. The window, and indeed the entire western part of the nave, have been rebuilt, with voussoirs decorated with beakhead, foliate and chevron designs of different proportions mixed together on the external face (Fig. 7).⁵¹ Similarly the doorway, although often written about as though in its original location, is more likely to have started life in a west wall, and is an obvious reconstruction; it lacks carved stone in the eastern jambs of the inner and second order, later substituted by plain blocks, and has a particularly awkward junction between jambs and arch, the third order missing capitals altogether and the outer order arch partially 'overshooting' the corresponding jambs (Fig. 8). The nature of the damage to many of the stones, in



Fig. 6. *Dysert O'Dea, Co. Clare, St Tola's church from the south-east (Photo: Author)*



Fig. 7. *West window of Dysert O'Dea church (Photo: Author)*

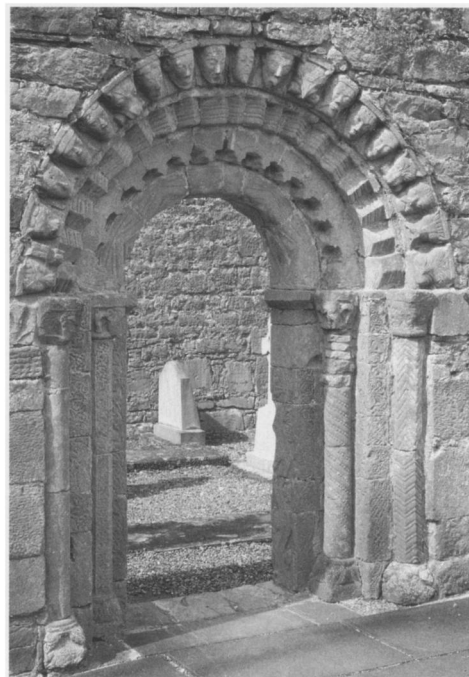


Fig. 8. *Doorway in the south wall of Dysert O'Dea church (Photo: Author)*

particular including the upper and lower edges of the inner order jamb stones, further suggests that prior to its reconstruction the stones were probably lying loose for some time before being rebuilt in this position.

Early sources for the history of the church at Dysert O'Dea are scant. In the 1302 Taxation, 'Disert' is valued at 11 marks, one of the highest values in the diocese, suggesting a church of some size and importance.⁵² By the Royal Visitation of 1615 the church was faring less well, and is described 'chancell up church down', valued at £10.⁵³ Unfortunately the degree to which the nave of the church was 'down' is not clear, and likewise neither is the date at which the doorway and window might have been reconstructed. A drawing of the doorway, although not altogether accurate, was made by Henry Pelham c. 1779–82 and later engraved for inclusion in Francis Grose's *Antiquities of Ireland* of 1790, demonstrating that it had been reconstructed before that date.⁵⁴

Worked stone from the church may also have been used in the re-erection of the twelfth-century high cross at the site (Fig. 9).⁵⁵ The cross comprises capstone, head, shaft and base, mounted on a composite plinth consisting of at least six blocks of twelfth-century stone, which may once have formed a Romanesque altar or else possibly, as Peter Harbison has suggested, have been cornerstones from the church.⁵⁶ The head of the crucified Christ is apparently of later date than the rest of the monument, and appears to have been carved specifically to replace the original head. For the date of this reconstruction we are on safer ground, as an inscription cut into the east face of the base records that 'This cross was newly repaired by Michael O'Dea, son of Connor Crone O'Dea in the yeare 1683'.

The (Catholic) O'Deas had lost title to the castle at Dysert in the early seventeenth century, but in 1663 they won the right to re-tenant the castle, paying rent directly to the Bishop of Killaloe.⁵⁷ By this time the church appears to have fallen out of use altogether. An account given by its rector, John Twenbrook, of his experiences during the Catholic Rebellion of 1641, recounts the loss of all of his possessions and his church living and names a number of curates and vicars who had turned 'papist', the latter allegation subsequently being levelled at him as well.⁵⁸ That the church fell out of use at this time, like so many Irish medieval parish churches, is confirmed by the Royal Visitation of 1693, which records the church as 'out of repair'.⁵⁹ An abandoned, dilapidated church would certainly have facilitated O'Dea's appropriation of stone for the base of the cross, but to O'Dea the church would have symbolized much more than a convenient quarry, as evidenced by an inscribed plaque in memory of his wife, who died in 1684, erected in the chancel, which by the nineteenth century was commonly referred to in the area as 'O'Dea's chapel'.⁶⁰

In 1680, the antiquary Thomas Dineley recorded that the McNamaras and 'Molowneys' were still brought to their ancient burial place at Quin (also in Co. Clare) 'to be interr'd with their ancestors'.⁶¹ This preoccupation was particularly strong amongst the Catholic Irish, who sought to continue associations with specific monasteries with which they had been linked, forming, as Samantha Meigs has suggested, 'fixed points in a turbulent world'.⁶² The case of the O'Dea's link to the ancient monastic site at Dysert is clearly demonstrated in the century before Michael's work, specifically in 1589 when, the *Annals of the Four Masters* record:



Fig. 9. Twelfth-century cross, Dysert O'Dea, Co. Clare (Photo: Author)

Dermot Oge, the son of Dermot, who was son of Conor (Bishop of Limerick) who was son of Morogh an Dana, O'Dea, died, and was interred in his own town of Disert-Tola in the cantred of Kinel Fearmaic, in the upper part of Dal-gCais.⁶³

It has already been demonstrated, through the case of the first Earl of Cork, that where a fitting ancestral burial place did not already exist, patrons, particularly those drawn from the ranks of the new English settlers, were not adverse to appropriating an ancient church, or part of it, and restoring it so as to provide a fitting burial place.⁶⁴ In a similar fashion it appears that ancient churches also continued, or in some cases were 'revived', as places of burial for ancient Gaelic families. Indeed, in 1622 Bishop Rider of Killaloe complained that the abbeys that had been dissolved in his diocese were still used by the people as burial places for their dead friends, and that on certain days of the year they were visited by great crowds of country people, presumably while attending the funerals of their deceased relatives. He specifically names a recusant priest, Daniel O'Gorvan, as hindering the activity of the Anglican minister at Dysert and nearby Rath.⁶⁵ Following the 1641 Rebellion it is likely that the Early Christian site was reclaimed as a

place of Roman Catholic worship, and O'Dea may have consolidated the ancient church associated with this ancestors, providing an appropriate burial place in which his wife, and one assumes himself, on his death could be interred.⁶⁶

The re-establishment of territorial claim by Catholics can be seen in work effected at other early monastic churches at the time. For example, Clonmacnoise was reoccupied for a time by Catholic clergy following the 1641 Rebellion. A wall plaque records the repair of the cathedral there in 1647 by the Catholic Vicar General, Charles Coughlan, but other buildings also appear to have been consolidated; Arthur Champneys, for example, suggests that the plain inner order of the Romanesque chancel arch at Temple Finghin dates to this period.⁶⁷ The concern with preserving the ancient character of the buildings at this time is most explicit in the construction by Edmund Dowling of a western extension to a pre-Anglo-Norman church there in 1689. The seventeenth-century building is not only in the same simple style as the earlier church, but even includes *antae*, a clear attempt to emulate the ancient architecture at the site.⁶⁸

While the repairs to churches by individual members of the laity may have been due to a personal desire to improve an ancestral burial place, the repair of certain monuments, such as the high cross at Dysert O'Dea, was probably motivated by a desire for a more public demonstration of Catholic faith. An account of the Barony of Forth in Co. Wexford, written in the 1680s to accompany Sir William Petty's proposed *Atlas of Ireland* commented that 'There were very many crosses in publique roads, and crucifixes in private houses and Churches [...] builded of Stone, Timber or metal [...] which whenever found, were totally defaced, broken or burned by Cromwellian soldiers'.⁶⁹ During the 1680s, the repair and re-erection of such crosses were not exceptional events, another example being found at Kells in Co. Meath, where a similar inscription records that the tenth-century 'market' cross was re-erected by Robert Balfe in 1688.⁷⁰ This 1680s date also coincides with the erection of a number of wayside crosses across the country, which Heather King has suggested reflect a 'religious enthusiasm' encouraged by the return of a Catholic monarch to the throne; and this may also have encouraged a revival in more ancient *foci* of worship.⁷¹ The use of visible devotional *foci* of this type is certainly well-attested during the period and, following the passing of the Popery Act in 1704, was to lead to the requirement for magistrates once more to demolish 'all crosses, pictures and inscriptions that are anywhere publicly set up and are the occasions of any popish superstitions'.⁷²

One of the most detailed contemporary accounts of how such monuments were used is provided by John Richardson in 1727, in his description of devotions directed towards the tenth-century high cross at Arboe in Co. Tyrone. The cross was believed at the time to have been one of three brought from Rome by St Patrick and erected on the site by St Colman.⁷³

They believe it is better to pray before it than in any common place, and that the water directly opposite to the cross hath great virtue in it for healing man or beast. The Pilgrims go thrice around the cross up on their knees at the west side of the cross they bow to it. When they have done this they leave a piece of silver on the pedestal for the use of the family descended (as they suppose) from Colman's clerk'.⁷⁴

The cross at Dysert O'Dea, or perhaps more specifically the stones from which it was constructed, appear to have provided a comparable focus for such devotion. Known

locally as the 'Crusha bánála' (probably a corruption of 'the White cross of [St] Tola') the actual stones themselves came to be imbued with intercessionary power; the capstone (which by the nineteenth century had fallen to the ground) was believed to provide 'an infallible cure for tooth-ache'.⁷⁵

Crosses were not the only devotional *foci* of the period. There is also relatively substantial evidence to suggest a resurgence in devotions at holy wells during the seventeenth century, some of them appearing for the first time, and marked out in the landscape by the construction of well-houses or other associated structures at which the 'stations' (cycles of prayers) would be performed.⁷⁶ Structures associated with wells are notoriously difficult to date, although there is evidence to suggest that the seventeenth century witnessed a particular concern for the creation of an appropriate devotional environment around the wells. For example, at St Doulagh's well, Balgriffin in Dublin, an elaborate octagonal well-house was probably built in the early years of the seventeenth century, and certainly decorated then with wall paintings of Saints Patrick, Brigid, Columbcille and Doulagh by Peter Fagan of Feltrim.⁷⁷ A stone plaque records the building of a well-house over St Laiser's well at Kilronan, Co. Roscommon, by Roger McDermot and his wife Geis Coner in 1686. The ruins of the adjacent church may also have been consolidated at this time, with stones from a single order of a Romanesque doorway reset in the south wall, probably to form a fitting setting for devotions to 'the bell of Kilronan', a relic housed at the site until the early eighteenth century and used by the locals to 'detect falsehood'.⁷⁸

That the revival of such forms of popular devotion aroused disquiet with the Catholic authorities is reflected in the Synod of Tuam in 1660, which prohibited 'Dancing, flute-playing, bands of music, riotous revels and other abuses in visiting wells and other holy places',⁷⁹ and was of more particular concern to the Established Church, with provision eventually made for their outlawing in the 1704 Act. Repeated attempts on the part of both authorities to halt these kinds of devotional practices led to the deliberate destruction and filling in of a number of wells, while the general decline in devotional activity over the past two centuries has also led to the demise of scores of these features across the country.

From surviving accounts it would appear that holy well complexes often included stones either carved or naturally marked, generally held to be associated in some way with the local saint. When associated with traditional foundation legends — recounting how the spring appeared when the ground was struck by a thirsty saint's staff, or where their tears fell — other tangible relics of the saint's presence or association with the site helped to make the link more immediate.⁸⁰ Stones which bore the 'impression of the saint's knees' were particularly popular,⁸¹ but so too was any 'ancient' carved stone that tradition held to have been placed there by the saint him- or herself (as, for example, a cross close to St Patrick's Well at Clunfad in Co. Monaghan), or any figural one that was a holy image of the saint him- or herself (as that of St Brigid at Urney).⁸² In the latter case, the kissing of the image was incorporated into the pilgrimage ritual at the well.

At least three holy wells in Ireland still incorporate Romanesque stonework. At Clontubrid (Co. Kilkenny) the well-house is crowned by a large finial of the type found on the gables of early Irish churches, but which continued in use until the twelfth century (Fig. 10).⁸³ The original location of the finial is not known. Clontubrid is listed

as a parish in the *Red Book of Ossory*, so it is possible that a Romanesque church once existed at the site, of which the finial is the only remaining vestige. The other, more likely, possibility is that the finial was brought from the Romanesque church at Freshford, about two miles from Clontubrid, which in 1731 was recorded as undergoing major repair.⁸⁴ The well at Ferns (Co. Wexford) contains pieces of chevron and a carving of a head, which could have been taken from any of the ecclesiastical buildings on the site (Fig. 11), while the small pieces of moulded ashlar incorporated into the well-house at Ardmore (Co. Waterford) may come from the adjacent church, or from the nearby monastic site.⁸⁵

While the primary motivation in incorporating such stones into well features was in all probability for the devotional reasons outlined above, it is possible that there was also a concern to 'rescue' and preserve worked stone from disused or ruined churches that were considered, by virtue of their obvious antiquity and their association with a sacred place, to be of almost relic-like status.⁸⁶ This becomes particularly evident with examples of stone that, although associated with holy sites, displayed what was interpreted as overtly 'pagan' imagery. Thus, for example, a carved stone excavated by a Breton pilgrim, Ludovicus Pyrrhus, at St Patrick's Purgatory (Co. Donegal) in 1693, which was believed to depict the mythical monster Caoranach, was kept 'for the satisfaction of the pilgrims' on the altar of a chapel on the south side of the church.⁸⁷ The dilemma faced by the Church in the preservation and display of such stones is also hinted at in the provincial statutes of Tuam, issued in 1631, in which parish priests were ordered to hide away, but to record where they had hidden, 'imagines obesae et aspectui ingratae' [gross images and disagreeable sights] such as sheela na gigs [exhibitionist figures].⁸⁸ This instruction to record concealment, as opposed to destroy, is indicative of a reverence towards ancient stone, regardless of whether or not current church teaching condoned the explicit imagery of the carving.

The 'Priests' Church', Glendalough, in Co. Wicklow provides one further example of the re-use of ancient fragments of Romanesque sculpture in an early modern context and emphasizes the importance of recognizing this period of early preservation and reconstruction. This tiny building, measuring just 5.85 x 3.7 m, is generally interpreted as a reliquary chapel, a building type relatively common in early Irish monastic sites.⁸⁹ That a tradition of particular sanctity associated with the building continued into early modern times is implied by its name, a reference to its use as a burial place for priests during the eighteenth century, and the tradition that soil from the building has curative properties (Fig. 12).

The building was first recorded in an antiquarian drawing of 1779 by Gabriel Beranger, now preserved in the collections of the Royal Irish Academy. This shows it much as it is today, with a central recess in the east wall spanned by a broken Romanesque arch. In the middle of the recess is a slit, shown in one drawing as being partially filled with soil and vegetation. In another version of the drawing the masonry used to fill the arch is marked by a dotted line and described in the adjacent text as being 'built up latterly with stones in part and the center [*sic*] with earth mixed with hay' (Fig. 13).⁹⁰

By 1845, when Petrie published his *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland*, the little structure had almost completely vanished and Petrie's illustration of it is a detail of just



Fig. 10. Holy well at Clontubrid, Co. Kilkenny, with detail of Romanesque finial at the apex (Photo: Author)



Fig. 11. St Mogue's well, Ferns Co. Wexford, showing chevron reset over the entrance arch (Photo: Author)

the lowest two courses of masonry (Fig. 14),⁹¹ while Sir William Wilde, writing in 1873, described it as 'now nearly invisible, owing to dilapidation and weed cover [...] what little masonry remains is occluded'; Wilde also noted that some stones 'from the Priest's Church' and the stone that now serves as its tympanum were stored together immediately inside the cathedral, on the right-hand side.⁹²

In 1874 the monastery and surrounding lands at Glendalough were vested in the Commissioners of Public Works, the state body made responsible for the care and preservation of ancient ecclesiastical buildings following the Irish Church Act (1869). The Priests' Church was one of the first buildings to come to the attention of Thomas N. Deane, the then inspector of monuments. Deane's primary concern in all of his conservation works at Glendalough was the consolidation of the sculpted stone, which



Fig. 12. Priests' Church, Glendalough, Co. Wicklow, from the north-east (Photo: Author)

was increasingly falling prey to theft.⁹³ Given the condition of the building, Deane had to resort to earlier images of the structure to guide his restoration. In his post-restoration report, he proudly announced that, 'On careful examination of the surrounding debris every stone was discovered, which enabled me to place it in exactly the same position as in 1779'.⁹⁴

The 1779 drawing by Beranger was the model for Deane's reconstruction and so it can be stated with relative confidence that the building as it has existed since the 1870s is faithful to its eighteenth-century form. However, a close examination of the twelfth-century stones that make up the arch, and indeed those that infill the arch, suggests that the stones were not originally cut as elements of this function or dimension.

First, one can assume that the arch in its current form was originally closed, and that it is only due to the loss of voussoirs that there is now a breach at the apex. In fact, if one continues the present line of the arch around, it becomes clear that the apex would have been depressed, not forming a semi-circle, and thus would be inherently unstable. Another unusual feature of the arch is the fact that voussoirs, capitals and surviving base are splayed on the soffit/reveal, thus giving the rear arch a greater radius (1.025 m) than the original opening. Splayed voussoirs are generally employed for window openings, where it is preferable to have a small opening because of glazing costs and warmth, but a wide opening to facilitate the entry of light. Having a splay facilitates both, but this is only effective if the splay is on the interior of the building.⁹⁵ At the

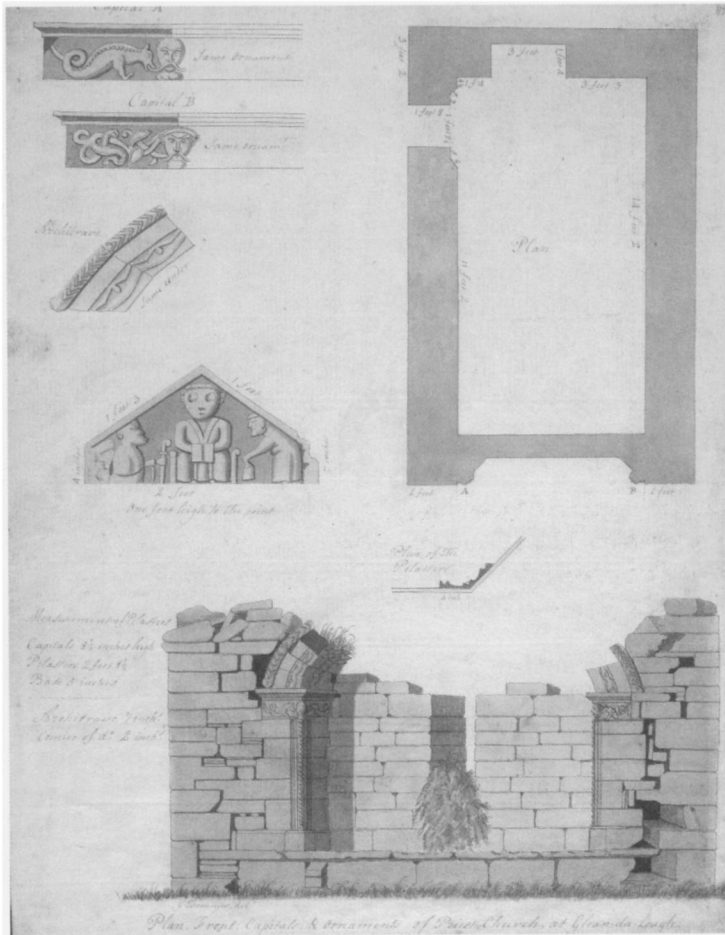


Fig. 13. Drawing of the Priests' Church by Gabriel Beranger, 1779 (Royal Irish Academy, MS 12.T.15 (115)) (By permission of the Royal Irish Academy © RIA)

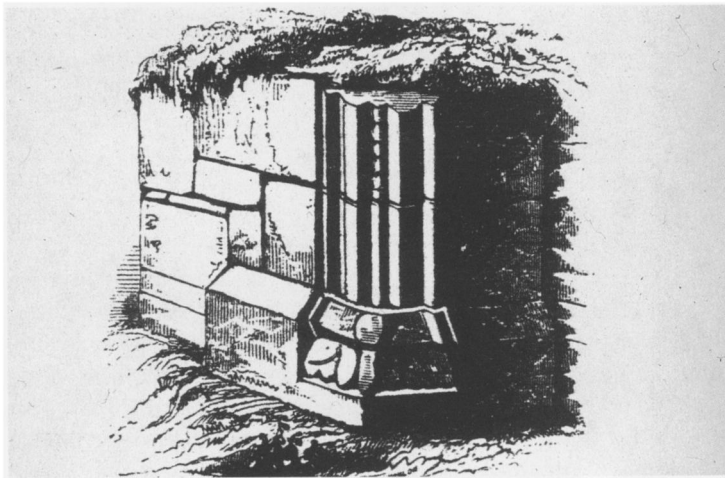


Fig. 14. Drawing of the Priests' Church, from George Petrie's Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland (1845)

Priests' Church it is on the exterior. Measurement of the surviving voussoirs suggests that they were made for a rear arch with a radius of approximately 0.83 m. A window of this scale, needless to say, would have been far too large for a building the size of the Priests' Church.⁹⁶

This, when put together with the evidence above, suggests that at some point prior to 1779 the Priests' Church had been reconstructed to incorporate the incomplete Romanesque arch. Like the examples seen at holy wells, at Dysert O'Dea and at other crosses, the most likely inspiration for this was devotional. Glendalough had been an important place of pilgrimage throughout the medieval period,⁹⁷ and it appears that it continued to fulfil this function during the seventeenth century. Its popularity, as with so many other sites of popular devotion, led to riotous activities including drinking and fighting, which had reached such extremes in 1714 that the high sheriff of Wicklow raised 'a posse to suppress a riotous assembly of Papists at the Seven Churches to pay a superstitious worship to St Kevin, [...] Wee [*sic*] pulled down their tents, threw down and demolished their superstitious crosses, [and] destroyed their wells'.⁹⁸

It seems quite probable that, as part of the creation of a pilgrimage landscape, the stones that now form the eastern arch of the building were arranged in the manner with which we are familiar today in order to provide a focus for pilgrims, most likely described as the burial place of Kevin. Although there are no contemporary records of how the building may have been used, descriptions exist for comparable structures. For example, Roderic O'Flaherty, writing in 1684, describes the use of St Coeman's burial place on the Aran Islands, another important focus of pilgrimage during the period:

I have seen one grievously tormented by a thorn thrust into his eye, who by lying soe in St Coeman's burying place had it miraculously taken out, without the least feeling of the patient, the mark whereof in the corner of the eye still remains.⁹⁹

Similarly the small church of St Declan (or 'St Declan's bed') at Ardmore was resorted to by pilgrims who collected earth from inside the building, believing it to contain the ashes of the saint.¹⁰⁰ The framing of such a burial place with a Romanesque arch was certainly seen as appropriate in the early eighteenth century, when, it has been suggested, a Romanesque doorway in the cathedral at Killaloe was salvaged and relocated to provide a focal point for pilgrims visiting the so-called tomb of Ó Briain kings there.¹⁰¹ In the case of Glendalough it would appear that by the time Beranger made his drawing in 1779 the more recent history and rebuilding had been forgotten, and thus the little structure was interpreted by the artist, and those who followed, as a curious example of twelfth-century architecture.

CONCLUSION

The re-use of Romanesque spolia in seventeenth-century Ireland represents a harnessing of the past to carry very different meanings into a present whose populations had extremely divergent interests. For both population groups, visibly ancient stone provided a tangible means by which to establish lineage — in some cases personal, and imagined — in others collective and authentic. In this respect Romanesque worked stone would have been preferred for its clearly recognizable antiquity. Irish Gothic is notoriously plain, and thus individual stones, or arches, would

have been less distinctively old, an issue compounded by the amount of 'Gothic survival' building that continued into the seventeenth century.¹⁰² On the one hand, the Romanesque aesthetic, providing a link to the Roman past that inspired some of the earliest experiments in Classical building, was used to create what was essentially an architecture of secular authority of administration. On the other, the most elaborately carved 'ancient' stones found at Early Christian sites in some cases took on the properties of relics in their own right, while in others provided as suitable setting for devotional activity. All of these examples serve as a reminder that even the simplest of historic buildings are seldom if ever frozen in time, instead representing often complex palimpsests of the ever-changing values that society places on them.

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NOTES

1 Antiquarian studies were much slower to take a hold in Ireland than in England. William Camden's *Britannia* (London, 1607) included some references to Ireland, and Molyneux's survey of 1681 (TCD MS 883/1-2) also contains observations of an antiquarian nature, although the survey's accounts were only (partially) published in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Similarly, Thomas Dineley's account of Ireland, c. 1675-80 (NLI MS 392), remained unpublished until the nineteenth century. It was not until the latter part of the eighteenth century that texts began to attempt a differentiation between styles of architecture, linking them with the history of the country. See, for example, James Anderson, *The Constitutions of the Antient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons. Containing their History, Charges, Regulations, &c. ... For the Use of the Lodges* (London, 1756), chapter 8; M. Youngs, 'The Origin and Theory of the Gothic Arch', *The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, 3 ([1787]-1800), pp. 55-88; Francis Grose, *Antiquities of Ireland*, 2 vols (London, 1791 and 1795); and Thomas Bell, *An Essay on the Origin and Progress of Gothic Architecture [...]* (Dublin and London, 1829), which are amongst the earliest works to clearly delineate between 'Saxon', 'Norman', 'Gothic' and Classical styles specific to Ireland.

2 Comment made by John O'Connell, patron of Honan Hostel Chapel, Cork, built in the Celtic Revival Style; *The Honan Chapel: A Golden Vision*, ed. Virginia Teehan and Elizabeth Wincott Heckett (Cork, 2004), p. 3.

3 Patrick Power, *Early Christian Ireland: A Manual of Irish Christian Archaeology* (Dublin, 1925), p. 34. For the background to this, see Jeanne Sheehy, *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past: The Celtic Revival 1830-1930* (London, 1980); and Colum Hourihane, *Gothic Art in Ireland 1169-1550* (London and New Haven, 2003), pp. 19-34.

4 George Petrie, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland Anterior to the Norman Invasion Comprising an Essay on the Origins and Uses of the Round Towers in Ireland* (Dublin, 1845). See also Henry O'Neill, *Illustrations of the Most Interesting Crosses of Ancient Ireland* (Dublin, 1857), p. iii.

5 Keith Emerick, 'Whitby and Clonmacnoise', in *Clonmacnoise Studies II; Seminar Papers 1998*, ed. Heather King (Dublin, 2003), pp. 209-12.

6 For a brief introduction to the State care of ancient monuments, see Rena Lohan, *Guide to the Archives of the Office of Public Works* (Dublin, 1994), pp. 85-87. The best general introductions to conservation and restoration policy and practice are both unpublished masters dissertations: Rachel MacRory, 'The Evolution of Policy for the Conservation of Historic Monuments in Ireland' (Master in Urban and Building Conservation thesis, University College Dublin, 1994); and Aine Doyle, 'The Conservation of Ruins in Ireland c.1850-1900' (Master in Urban and Building Conservation thesis, University College Dublin, 2003).

7 For seventeenth-century attitudes to medieval architecture in England and France, see Tina Waldeier Bizzarro, *Romanesque Architectural Criticism* (Cambridge, 1992); and for England, Stuart Piggott, 'Antiquarian Thought in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in *English Historical Thought in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Levi Fox (London and New York, 1956), pp. 93–114; Margaret Aston, 'English Ruins and English History: The Dissolution and the Sense of the Past', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute*, 36 (1973), pp. 231–55; Alexandrina Buchanan, 'Interpretations of Medieval Architecture c.1550–c.1750', in *Gothic Architecture and its Meanings 1550–1830*, ed. Michael Hall (Reading, 2002), pp. 27–52. For the re-use of medieval monastic buildings, see, for example, Maurice Howard, *The Early Tudor Country House* (London, 1987), pp. 136–62, and for secular architecture, Matthew Johnson, 'Reconstructing Castles and Refashioning Ideas', in *The Familiar Past? Archaeologies of Later Medieval Britain*, ed. Sarah Tarlow and Susie West (London, 1999), pp. 69–86.

8 For a summary of Roman contact with Ireland, see Vittorio di Martino, *Roman Ireland* (Cork, 2003). For the introduction of Romanesque to Ireland, see Richard Gem, 'St Flannán's Oratory at Killaloe: a Romanesque Building of c.1100 and the Patronage of King Muirchertach Ua Briain', in *Ireland and Europe in the Twelfth Century; Reform and Renewal*, ed. Damian Bracken and Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (Dublin, 2006), pp. 74–105.

9 Tomás Ó Carragáin, 'Skeuomorphs and Spolia: the Presence of the Past in Irish pre-Romanesque Architecture', in *Making and Meaning in Insular Art*, ed. Rachel Moss (Dublin, 2007), pp. 95–109; Rachel Moss, 'A Twelfth-Century Renaissance? Irish Romanesque Sculpture and the Insular Tradition', in *Making and Meaning*, ed. Moss, pp. 126–41.

10 For the historiography of Romanesque and the earliest uses of the term, see Thomas Cocke, 'Rediscovery of the Romanesque', in *English Romanesque Art 1066–1200*, ed. George Zarnecki, Janet Holt and Tristram Holland (London, 1984), pp. 360–66; Bizzarro, *Romanesque Architectural Criticism*.

11 For Boyle's background and political career, see Nicholas Canny, *The Upstart Earl: a Study of the Social and Mental World of Richard Boyle first Earl of Cork* (Cambridge, 1982). Papers relevant to Boyle's building projects in Ireland are at Chatsworth, Lismore papers xviii, xxv, xxvi, xxvii, and in the National Library of Ireland MSS 897, 6898, 6900, 6241, 6243. Some of these papers have been published in *The Lismore Papers*, 1st series, 5 vols (London, 1886), 2nd series, 5 vols, ed. Alexander Bullock Grosart (London, 1888). His patronage of the arts in Ireland is the subject of an unpublished MA thesis, Cathal Moore, 'The Artistic Patronage of Sir Robert Boyle, First Earl of Cork' (University of London, Courtauld Institute, 1990).

12 Chatsworth, Lismore Papers iii, no. 131, quoted in Rolf Loeber, 'Early Classicism in Ireland: Architecture Before the Georgian Era', *Architectural History*, 22 (1979), pp. 49–63 (p. 52).

13 Charles Smith, *The Ancient and Present State of the County and City of Waterford. Containing a Natural, Civil, Ecclesiastical, Historical and Topographical Description Thereof*, 2nd edn (Dublin, 1773), p. 32.

14 For a discussion of the arch stones in their Romanesque context, see Tadhg O'Keefe, 'Lismore and Cashel: Reflections on the Beginnings of Romanesque Architecture in Munster', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 124 (1994), pp. 118–52 (pp. 127–28).

15 Smith, *History of Waterford*, p. 32. It has been suggested that the portico was the work of the second Earl. However, Boyle's diary in 1627 describes the construction of 'the porch before the hall dore' at Lismore, an activity which lasted almost a month.

16 12 February 1622/23, 'I agreed with my carpenters to take awf the roof of my gatehouse, to have it bwyllt one storie higher, and to make and lay one fflowr more and to sett on the same roof again for xxx(s) ser', Grosart, *Lismore Papers*, ser. 1, vol. 2, p. 70. Chatsworth, Lismore Papers vol. xxv, fol. 321.

17 Walley, NLI 6898.

18 Walley, NLI 6898.

19 Walley, NLI 6898, Chatsworth Lismore Papers, xxvii, fol. 2; Grosart, *Lismore Papers* ser. 1, vol. iv, p. 6. Fragments of Romanesque sculpture are displayed at the cathedral and also built into the fabric of the wall visible in the roof-space; however, the earliest *in situ* architecture dates to the thirteenth century.

20 Walley, NLI 6243.

21 Clodagh Tait, 'Colonising Memory: Manipulations of Death Burial and Commemoration in the Career of Richard Boyle, First Earl of Cork (1566–1643)', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 101C, no. 4 (2001), pp. 107–34.

22 Tait, 'Colonising Memory', pp. 110–12.

23 A parallel can be drawn here with the 1570 'restoration' of Strongbow's tomb at Christchurch Cathedral, Dublin, by Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputy to Ireland. The original tomb, destroyed by the partial collapse of

the cathedral in 1562, was replaced by a similar one, probably moved from Drogheda, north of Dublin. Its restoration is commemorated by a plaque in the adjacent wall indicating Sidney's concern with associating himself with the 'founder's' tomb. Located close to where the Holy Cross of Christchurch had stood until the Reformation, the tomb subsequently became the focus for the swearing of oaths, providing it with the additional role of a quasi-relic. Kenneth Milne, *Christchurch Cathedral; a History* (Dublin, 2000), pp. 178, 231.

24 The north and south transept arches of the cathedral, which remain *in situ*, date from the thirteenth century, as do the clustered columns of the south transept and the plinth moulding on the exterior of the south wall of the chancel.

25 Rowan has described this doorway as a 'vigorous exercise in Renaissance work', suggesting the influence of the doorways at the Old College Glasgow in the design. Alistair Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland: North-West Ulster* (London, 1979), p. 225. For an illustration of the doorway, see *Historic Monuments of Northern Ireland: An Introduction Guide*, ed. Anne Hamlin (Belfast, 1987), p. 58.

26 Grossart, *Lismore Papers*, ser. 1, vol. ii, p. 285.

27 Grossart, *Lismore Papers*, ser. 2, vol. v, p. 128.

28 David Watson, *Lord Arundel and his Circle* (London and New Haven, 1985), pp. 77–96.

29 David Howarth, 'Lord Arundel as an Entrepreneur of the Arts', *Burlington Magazine*, 122 (1980), pp. 690–92. There are also a number of references to Arundel in Boyle's diaries, but none that relate specifically to discussions on art.

30 Thomas Cocke, 'Monuments of Power — the Rediscovery of the Romanesque in 17th Century England', *Country Life*, 175 (1984), pp. 1778–79 (p. 1778).

31 Cocke, 'Monuments of Power', pp. 1778–79; Thomas Cocke, 'Pre-Nineteenth Century Attitudes in England to Romanesque Architecture', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 36 (1973), pp. 72–97 (p. 74).

32 Liam de Paor, 'Excavations at Mellifont Abbey', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 68C, no. 2 (1969), pp. 109–64 (pp. 123, 135).

33 Roger Stalley, 'Decorating the Lavabo: Late Romanesque Sculpture from Mellifont Abbey', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 96C, no. 7 (1996), pp. 237–64 (pp. 254–55). For comparison with the conversion of English monasteries following the suppression, see Maurice Howard, *The Early Tudor Country House: Architecture and Politics 1490–1550* (London, 1987), pp. 136–62.

34 Margaret Quinlan, 'The Main Guard Clonmel, The Rediscovery of a Seventeenth-Century Courthouse', *Bulletin of the Irish Georgian Society*, 36 (1994), pp. 4–29.

35 The term 'tholsel', still in common use in an Irish context, refers to a building that was used variously as a guildhall, tollbooth or borough courthouse. A good idea of the interior appearance of the building can be gleaned from an inventory of Ormond's goods, written in 1675, which includes Clonmel. NLI MS 2527, fols 78–83, published in Jane Fenlon, *Goods and Chattels; a Survey of Early Household Inventories in Ireland* (Dublin, 2003), pp. 80–86.

36 Jane Fenlon, 'Episodes of Magnificence: The Material Works of the Dukes of Ormonde', in *The Dukes of Ormonde 1610–1745*, ed. Toby Barnard and Jane Fenlon (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 137–60 (pp. 141–42).

37 Maurice Craig, *Dublin 1660–1860* (Dublin, 1980), p. 13.

38 For the broader context of civic architecture in seventeenth-century Ireland, see Edward McParland, *Public Architecture in Ireland* (New Haven and London, 2000) (pp. 26–32).

39 McParland, *Public Architecture*, p. 31.

40 Rolf Loeber, *A Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Ireland* (London, 1981), p. 96; Quinlan, 'The Main Guard Clonmel', p. 7.

41 Conservation work was carried out by Margaret Quinlan Architects. I am grateful to Margaret Quinlan for the many discussions that I have had with her regarding the use of salvaged stone in the building.

42 These elements are now on public display in the building.

43 For example, Holy Trinity, Waterford and St Mary's, Limerick. It is possible that Christchurch Cathedral Dublin may also have had an earlier arcaded nave than the fragmentary thirteenth-century one that survives today; see Roger Stalley, 'The Construction of the Medieval Cathedral, c.1030–1250', in *Christchurch Cathedral Dublin; a History*, ed. Kenneth Milne (Dublin, 2000), pp. 53–74 (pp. 55–58).

44 *Extents of Monastic Possessions, 1540–1*, ed. Newport B. White (Dublin, 1943), p. 337.

45 James Ware, *Coenobia Cisterciensia Hiberniae* (1626), printed by J. T. Gilbert in *Cartularies of St Mary's Abbey, Dublin*, 2 vols (London, 1884), II, p. 224.

- 46 *The Civil Survey A.D. 1654–1656. Vol. 1; County of Tipperary: Eastern and Southern Baronies*, ed. Robert C. Simington (Dublin, 1931), p. 307.
- 47 Brendan Bradshaw, *The Dissolution of the Religious Orders in Ireland under Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 1974). For the continued use of western friaries and its impact on their architecture, see Roger Stalley, 'The End of the Middle Ages: Gothic Survival in Sixteenth-century Connacht', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 133 (2003), pp. 5–23. For the repair of a number of Franciscan friaries in 1604, see Sir Richard Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana or the History of Ireland from the Conquest thereof by the English to the Present Time*, 2 vols (London, 1689–90), II, pp. 9–10.
- 48 'Clonmacnoise was plundered and devastated by the English of Athlone; and the large bells were taken from the Cloigtheach. There was not left, moreover, a bell, small or large, an image, or an altar, or a book, or a gem, or even glass in a window, from the wall of the church out, which was not carried off. Lamentable was this deed, the plundering of the city of Kieran, the holy patron' (*Annala Rioghachta Eireann: Annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616*, ed. and trans. John O'Donovan, 7 vols (Dublin, 1848–51; repr. Dublin, 1856; repr. Dublin, 1990), V, p. 1523).
- 49 For a case study of the fortunes of parish churches in Co. Meath during this period, see Michael O'Neill, 'The Medieval Parish Churches in County Meath', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 132 (2002), pp. 1–56 (pp. 45–49).
- 50 For example, Boate records that limestone 'not newley come out of the Quarrie, but taken off old buildings' was the preferred material for lime slaking (Gerard Boate, *Ireland's Natural History* (London, 1657), p. 157).
- 51 For Dysert O'Dea church, see Peter Harbison, 'Dysert O'Dea', in 'The Limerick Area: Proceedings of the Royal Archaeological Institute', *Archaeological Journal*, 153 (1996), pp. 335–38; Françoise Henry, *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period 1020–1170 A.D.* (London 1970), pp. 130–32, 162–65; Harold G. Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, 3 vols (Dundalk 1955), I, p. 151; Seán Ó Murchadha, 'Disert Tola and its Environs', *The Other Clare*, 16 (1992), pp. 53–57; and 17 (1993), pp. 36–42; T. J. Westropp, 'The Churches with Round Towers in Northern Clare', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 24 (1894), pp. 25–34, 150–59, 332–40 (pp. 150–59).
- 52 *Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland; 1302–1310*, ed. H.S. Sweetman (London, 1886), p. 300.
- 53 M. A. Murphy (ed.), 'The Royal Visitation of 1615: Diocese of Killaloe', *Archivium Hibernicum*, 14 (1914), pp. 210–26 (p. 216).
- 54 Peter Harbison, 'The Boy with the Squirrel: Henry Pelham, 1749–1806', *Ireland of the Welcomes*, 48:3 (May–June 1999), pp. 18–25 (pp. 22–23); Grose, *The Antiquities of Ireland*, II, pl. 125.
- 55 For the cross, see Rhoda Cronin, 'Late High Crosses in Munster: Tradition and Novelty in Twelfth-Century Irish Art', in *Early Medieval Munster. Archaeology, History and Society*, ed. Michael Monk and John Sheehan (Cork, 1998), pp. 138–46; Peter Harbison, 'Iconography on the Dysert and Kilfenora Crosses: A Romanesque Renaissance', *The Other Clare*, 5 (April 1981), pp. 16–19; Peter Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 3 vols (Bonn, 1992), III, pp. 83–86.
- 56 Peter Harbison, 'Dysert O'Dea', in 'The Limerick Area: Proceedings of the Royal Archaeological Institute', *Archaeological Journal*, 153 (1996), pp. 336–37; Peter Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*, I, pp. 83–84.
- 57 An account over the legal wrangling associated with the castle and its lands is contained in a manuscript entitled 'An account of all of the lands and other profits belonging to the Bishop of Killaloe collected by me [Bishop Worth of Killaloe], 1661, so far as I could get information', published in Philip O'Dwyer, *The History of the Diocese of Killaloe from the Reformation to the Close of the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin, 1878), pp. 333–34.
- 58 The original account was contained within the '1641 Depositions' (TCD MS 829), witness testimonies of the Rebellion by Protestant settlers. Twenbrook's account is published in O'Dwyer, *History of Killaloe*, p. 222.
- 59 O'Dwyer, *History of the Diocese of Killaloe*, p. 425.
- 60 John O'Donovan and Eugene Curry, *The Antiquities of Co. Clare; Letters Containing Information Relative to the Antiquities of Co. Clare Collected during the Progress of the Ordnance Survey in 1839*, ed. Michael Comber (Clare, 1997), p. 46.
- 61 'Extracts from the Journal of Thomas Dineley, Esquire, giving some account of his visit to Ireland in the Reign of Charles II (Concluded)', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, ed. Evelyn Philip Shirley (with notes by the Hon. Robert O'Brien, and the Revd James Graves) (1867), 7, pp. 176–204 (pp. 180–81). Tait has also demonstrated that burial with one's ancestors, or in a place that would in time become a mausoleum for one's descendants, remained a central concern into the seventeenth century; Clodagh Tait, *Death Burial and Commemoration in Ireland 1550–1650* (Basingstoke, 2002), p. 66.

- 62 Samantha Meigs, *Reformations in Ireland: Tradition and Confessionalism, 1400–1690* (Dublin, 1997), p. 13.
- 63 *Annals of the Four Masters*, ed. O'Donovan, VI, p. 1883.
- 64 A further example of such a practice is the church at Kilcredan in Co. Cork, where Sir Robert Tynte took advantage of the ruined state of the church to provide himself with a tomb to the south of the altar, and also rebuilt the church to provide fitting surroundings for his burial. Tait, *Death and Burial*, p. 71; P.G. Lee, 'The Ruined Monuments of Sir Robert Tynte and Sir Edward Harris in Kilcredan Church Ballycrenane, near Ladysbridge', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 31 (1926), p. 86.
- 65 James Frost, *The History and Topography of the County of Clare* (Dublin, 1893), pp. 549–50.
- 66 The abandonment of the church for Anglican worship is hardly surprising given the c. 1660 poll tax returns for the parish, which record a population of 814 taxpayers of whom only ten are recorded as English, *A Census of Ireland circa 1659 with Supplementary Material from the Poll Money Ordinances 1660–1661*, ed. S. Pender (Dublin, 1939), pp. 176–77. Although ethnicity as recorded in the returns cannot directly equate 'English/ Scots' with 'Protestant' and 'Irish' with 'Catholic', it nonetheless provides a strong indication of religious allegiances (William J. Smyth, 'Society and Settlement in Seventeenth Century Ireland: the Evidence of the "1659 Census" in Common Ground: Essays on the Historical Geography of Ireland presented to T. Jones Hughes, ed. William J. Smyth and Kevin Whelan (Cork, 1988), pp. 55–83 (p. 73)).
- 67 Arthur Champneys, *Irish Ecclesiastical Architecture* (London, 1910), p. 202.
- 68 For this church, now known as Temple Dowling, see Thomas J. Westropp, 'A Description of the Ancient Buildings and Crosses at Clonmacnoise, King's County', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 37 (1907), pp. 275–306 (pp. 286–87); Conleth Manning, 'The Adaptation of Early Masonry Churches in Ireland for Use in Later Medieval Times', in *The Modern Traveller to our Past: Festschrift in Honour of Ann Hamlin*, ed. Marion Meek (Belfast, 2006), pp. 243–48 (p. 245). For descriptions of Clonmacnoise in the seventeenth century, see John O'Donovan, 'The Registry of Clonmacnoise; with Notes and Introductory Remarks', *Journal of the Kilkenny and South-east Ireland Archaeological Society*, 4 (1856), pp. 444–60.
- 69 John Synott, 'An Account of the Barony of Forth, in the Co. Wexford, Written at the Close of the Seventeenth Century', *Journal of the Kilkenny and South East Ireland Archaeological Society*, ed. H. F. Hore, n.s., 4:1 (1862), pp. 53–83 (p. 69).
- 70 Harbison, *High Crosses of Ireland*, I, p. 107.
- 71 Heather King, 'Irish Wayside and Churchyard Crosses 1600–1700', *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, 19 (1985), pp. 13–33 (p. 28).
- 72 Quoted from John Richardson, *The Great Folly, Superstition, and Idolatry, of Pilgrimages in Ireland; Especially of that to St. Patrick's Purgatory* (Dublin, 1727), preface.
- 73 The eighteenth-century belief that high crosses had been made in Rome was not limited to the Arboe example. Thomas Wright suggested that the cross of 'St Boyn' [Muirédach's cross at Monasterboice in Co. Louth] had been 'sent from Rome, and erected by order of the Pope' (Thomas Wright, *Louthiana: or, an Introduction to the Antiquities of Ireland. In Upwards of Ninety Views and Plans*, 3 vols (London, 1748), III, p. 17).
- 74 Richardson, *Folly, Superstition, and Idolatry*, p. 66.
- 75 T. J. Westropp, 'Churches with Round Towers', p. 158. O'Dwyer says that it was the more modern head of Christ that was used 'by old women who held it in their jaw as a cure for toothache'; O'Dwyer, *History of Killaloe*, pp. 469–67.
- 76 P. J. Corish, *The Catholic Community in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Dublin, 1981), pp. 50–51.
- 77 John D'Alton, *History of Co. Dublin* (Dublin, 1838), pp. 222–25. The well at St Doulagh's is mentioned by Barnaby Rich in his 'Description of Ireland' of 1610. It is singled out as the only 'curiosity' in the neighbourhood of Dublin by M. de la Boullaye le Gouz in 1644, and is also mentioned by Grose in his *Antiquities of Ireland in 1790 (The Tour of the French Traveller M. de la Boullaye le Gouz in Ireland, 1644*, ed. Thomas F. Croften Croker (London, 1837), pp. 5, 82).
- 78 Daniel Grose, *The Antiquities of Ireland; a supplement to Francis Grose [1791]*, ed. Roger Stalley (Dublin, 1991), pp. 187–90.
- 79 Quoted from Kevin Danaher, *The Year in Ireland; Irish Calendar Customs* (Cork, 1972), p. 181.
- 80 Caoimhín Ó Danachair, 'Holy Well Legends in Ireland', *Saga och Sed* (1960), pp. 35–43; Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, 'The Pattern', in *Irish Popular Culture 1650–1850*, ed. J. S. Donnelly and K. A. Miller (Dublin, 1998), pp. 206–08.
- 81 For an account of the occurrence of these across the country, see *Tour of M. de la Boullaye le Gouz*, ed. Croften Croker, appendix XIV, pp. 102–05.

- 82 Richardson, *Folly, Superstition, and Idolatry*, pp. 67–70.
- 83 Moss, 'Twelfth-Century Renaissance', pp. 135–39.
- 84 The most comprehensive study of the well at Clontubrid can be found in William Carrigan, *History and Antiquities of the Diocese of Ossory*, 4 vols (Dublin, 1904), II, pp. 327–30.
- 85 The construction of the well-house is attributed to Hugh Byrne, a private soldier in the Donegal militia who settled at Ardmore after the 1798 Rebellion; however, given the long tradition of pilgrimage there, it is more probable that he was responsible for its repair than its creation. See Stiofán Ó Cadhla, *The Holy Well Tradition; the Pattern of St Declan, Ardmore, Co. Waterford, 1800–2000* (Dublin, 2002), pp. 18–19.
- 86 Conleth Manning has suggested that the preservation of doorways and sections of wall in churches when they were altered during the later medieval period may have been for the same reasons. Manning, 'The Adaptation of Early Masonry Churches', p. 247.
- 87 Richardson, *Folly, Superstition, and Idolatry*, pp. 5–7. The carving is described as depicting Caornach 'as a wolf, the most pernicious animal in Ireland, with a serpent's tail thrown over its back'.
- 87 P. J. Corish, *The Catholic Community in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Dublin, 1981), p. 37.
- 89 See, for example, Peter Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland* (London, 1991), pp. 119–21, who suggests further that the narrow east window was used by pilgrims to view the saint's relics and perhaps to allow them to create *brandaë* [secondary relics made from pieces of cloth that had touched the sacred remains]. For Irish reliquary chapels, see Tomás Ó Carragáin, 'The Architectural Setting of the Cult of Relics in Early Medieval Ireland', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 133 (2003), pp. 130–76.
- 90 The two drawings are RIA 12.T.15 (115) and RIA MS 3.C.30, p. 94. These have both been published and are discussed by Peter Harbison. 'Glendalough Drawings of 1779 in the Royal Irish Academy Library', in *Above and Beyond; Essays in Memory of Leo Swan*, ed. Tom Condit and Christiaan Corlett (Bray, 2005), pp. 445–60 (pp. 452–55).
- 91 Petrie, *Ecclesiastical Architecture* (Dublin, 1845), pp. 248–51.
- 92 William Wilde, 'Memoir of Gabriel Beranger, and his Labours in the Cause of Irish Art, Literature, and Antiquities, from 1760 to 1780', *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland*, ser. 4, 1 (1870–71), pp. 33–64, 121–51, 236–60, 445–85 (pp. 465–66).
- 93 *Reports, Commissioners of Public Works, Annual Report*, 24 (Dublin, 1875–76), p. 171.
- 94 Thomas N. Deane, 'National Monuments of Ireland; Account of the Work at Glendalough', *The Irish Builder*, 19:412 (15 February 1877), p. 52.
- 95 A double splay, one on the exterior and one on the interior is known in some Anglo-Saxon churches with particularly thick walls, but it is a feature not found, to my knowledge, in Ireland.
- 96 The style of carving and unusual stone from which the feature is carved link it to pieces of a large cornice now preserved in the stone store on site. The only surviving building large enough to accommodate these features would seem to be the cathedral, although short of them having incorporated in the eastern wall of the building prior to the late twelfth-century chancel, it is difficult to see what position they might have occupied here.
- 97 For example, Glendalough is included in the list of pilgrimage sites to be visited by Heneas McNichail as penance for strangling his son, recorded in the Dowdall Register in 1541. 'A Calendar of the Register of George Dowdall, Commonly called the "Liber Niger" or "Black Book"', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society*, ed. L. P. Murray, vol. VI, ser. 3 (1927), p. 152.
- 98 W. P. Burke, *The Irish Priests in the Penal Times (1660–1760) from the State Papers in HM Record Offices Dublin and London, The Bodleian Library and the British Museum* (Waterford, 1914), p. 310.
- 99 Roderic O'Flaherty, *A Choreographical Description of West or h-lar Connaught, Written AD 1684*, ed. James Hardiman (Dublin, 1846), p. 89.
- 100 Ó Cadhla, *The Holy Well Tradition*, p. 24.
- 101 Jason Ellis and Rachel Moss, 'The Conservation of the Romanesque Portal at Killaloe: Exposing the History of one of Clare's Finest Carved Doorways', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 129 (1999), pp. 67–89.
- 102 For the continuity of building in the Gothic style in Ireland, see Stalley, 'Gothic Survival'.