

CATHAIR 2012 NA MART

Journal of the Westport Historical Society



No. 30 | Price €10

CONTENTS

Some Evidence for Prehistoric Activity on the Inishkea Islands. Sharon A. Greene.....	4
George A. Birmingham. <i>General John Regan – A Hearty Wish for Reconciliation between Every Human Being.</i> Professor Masahiko Yahata	8
The Ballina Workhouse-A Lasting Legacy. Susan Zajac.....	19
The Old Bog Road. Jim Staunton	30
1886. The Lamentable Truth: Poverty and Distress in Swinford Union. Seán Jordan.....	32
Killeenbrenan Friary: Flag-ship house of the Franciscan Third Order in Ireland? Yvonne McDermott	42
Joseph MacBride 1860-1938. Anthony J. Jordan	59
History of Rosturk Castle, Rosturk, County Mayo. (Part 2). Fintan Masterson	70
Westport – Traditional Music & Song. Charlie Keating.....	79
Historical Background of the Titanic Tragedy. Alex Dylan Nolan	91
The DeBurgo-O'Malley Tomb and Chantry Chapel at Ballintubber Abbey, Co Mayo. (Part 2). Jim Higgins.....	104
Dennis Browne and Revolutionary Justice. A Song Fragment Relating to the Uprising of 1798. Jim Higgins.....	115
Fr. John Flatley (1846-1929) Turbulent Priest. Michael McGinely.....	118
War of 1812 – United States & Great Britain Peter Henry	137
Ninetieth Anniversary of Kilmeena Ambush.....	141
Proceedings 2011.....	143
Sponsors	147
Clew Bay Heritage Centre	149
Friends of Clew Bay Heritage Centre.....	151
Appreciations	152
Books for Sale	158

Killeenbrenan Friary: Flag-ship house of the Franciscan Third Order in Ireland?

Yvonne McDermott

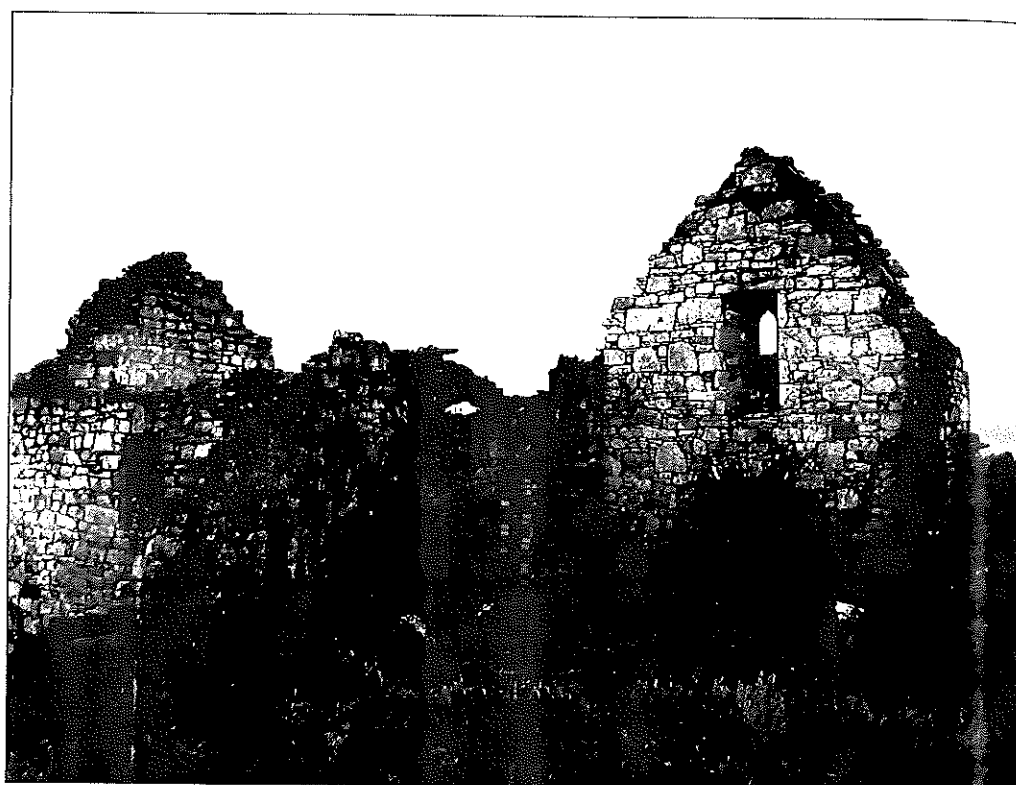


Plate 1: Killeenbrenan Third Order friary, viewed from the east, showing interior of west gable and south transept.

The Friary of St Mary the Virgin, also known as Killeenbrenan Friary (Pl. 1), is located in the townland of Moorgagagh, near Shrule, Co. Mayo. The friary's name has been variously rendered as Kilbrennan, Killina Bonaina (Mooney 1958-9, 59) and Cyllynbonnaynn (Twemlow 1909, 25). It was a house of the Franciscan Third Order Regular, also known as the Franciscan Tertiaries.

The Franciscan Third Order

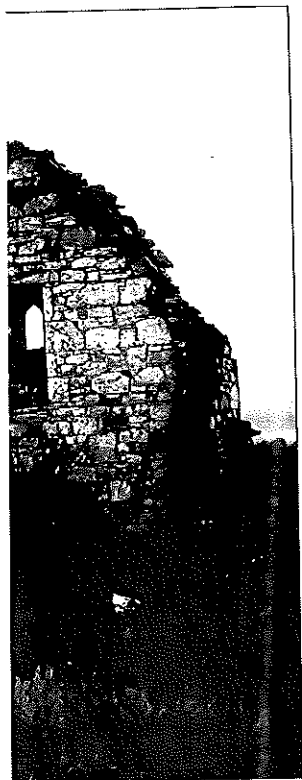
The Franciscan Third Order Secular or Order of Lay Penance was probably established in Italy (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 263) for men and women, as

an alte
comm.
setting
indeed
thirteen
Order
abstine
works
263). T
commu
sanctifi

The Th
establis
with 47
Observ
193). T
with 16
in the I
of this c
appeal
of the
formal
trace an
unparai
of the C
the lens
an insig
the stor
had die
sevente
Clabaig

In Irela
of the f
indicate
not exci
1426 (d
refers to

house of the eland?



showing interior of west

nbrenan Friary (Pl. 1),
Co. Mayo. The friary's
ina Bonaina (Mooney
. It was a house of the
anciscan Tertiaries.

Penance was probably
or men and women, as

an alternative form of religious life for those whose circumstances and other commitments, such as marriage, did not permit them to enter a conventual setting. The origins of the Franciscan Tertiaries are rather obscure and indeed, contentious. They were in existence by the early decades of the thirteenth century (Ó Clabaigh 2002, 82). Members who followed the Third Order Rule continued to live in their own homes, engaging in fasting and abstinence, reciting the office, observing simplicity of dress and undertaking works of charity, among other requirements (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 263). The Third Order Regular subsequently emerged, consisting of cloistered communities, following the Third Order Rule, 'the better to ensure their own sanctification and to undertake apostolic activities' (Mooney 1958-9, 58).

The Third Order Regular became especially popular in late medieval Ireland, establishing 43 new houses in Ireland between 1400 and 1508, as compared with 47 new houses founded by the Franciscan First Order (Conventual and Observant), Dominicans, Augustinians and Carmelites combined (Watt 1998, 193). These were mainly concentrated in the west and north of the country, with 16 in the Archdiocese of Tuam, 22 in Armagh, five in Cashel and none in the Episcopal province of Dublin (Watt 1998, 193). While the popularity of this order is apparent statistically, it is difficult to account for its particular appeal in Gaelic Ireland. Ó Clabaigh (2002, 80) remarks on the paradox of the Franciscan Third Order being the 'most widespread and influential formal religious movement' of the time and yet the one which has left least trace archaeologically or in written sources. The popularity of this order is unparalleled elsewhere in Europe, but in Ireland is primarily a phenomenon of the Gaelic world, where written records are scant. It is mainly through the lens of the Calendars of Papal Registers (CPR) that it is possible to gain an insight into this order but, of course, these documents only tell part of the story in terms of official correspondence from the Holy See. The order had died out by the early seventeenth century, although Donatus Mooney, a seventeenth century Observant Franciscan, provides some useful insights (Ó Clabaigh 2002, 80).

In Ireland, the Third Order Regular built its first convents in the first half of the fifteenth century (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 264). Irish evidence indicates that this form of Franciscan life was mainly for men, but perhaps not exclusively so, or at least, not in its early years. A papal document of 1426 (discussed below) mandating the construction of Third Order friaries refers to 'friars and sisters of the said order in Ireland' (Twemlow 1906,

452-3). It is not clear if this refers to secular Tertiaries (as opposed to those living in convents) as this is the only reference to sisters in the document in which friars are alluded to on several occasions. This reference should be approached with caution, as the use of 'brothers and sisters' that often occurs in papal letters may have been a formula used in Rome to refer to an order which had men and women among its congregations, though not necessarily living in conventual communities together (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 264). A 1428 grant to Killeenbrenan Friary refers only to brethren. No references to sisters occur in documentary accounts relating to the Third Order Regular in Ireland after 1457 (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 264). There is little architectural evidence to support the notion that men and women lived together in Third Order Regular communities, nor is there any later memory of it (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 264). It is likely that the reference to sisters resulted from the use of a formula of address and is not an indication that women lived in these communities.

Foundation and founder

While the date of foundation of Killeenbrenan Friary is unknown, documentary accounts confirm that it was in existence by 1428 when a papal indulgence was granted to those who visited the friary and gave alms for the 'repairs and conservation of the church ... which by reason of the wars which have affected those parts is threatened with ruin' (Twemlow 1909, 25). This friary is especially significant as it appears to have been the first regular convent of the Franciscan Third Order established in Ireland (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 271). While this claim cannot be definitively proven, Killeenbrenan is the earliest house of this order in Ireland for which there is documentary evidence. A 1426 document gives the impression that there are already communities of the Franciscan Third Order Regular in Ireland by this time. It does not mention any specific house of the order, but rather permits members to have Mass and the divine office celebrated *submissa voce* (literally, in a low voice) 'in their houses and monasteries, or ... churches' (Twemlow 1906, 427).

The petition of Patrick Yclinnan and other friars of the Third Order 'to found 'houses and monasteries and churches' for this order was granted in another papal letter of 1426, apparently a significant year for this order in Ireland. They had been granted land in the diocese of Tuam and other dioceses for the foundation of regular friaries and were permitted to build a friary with a 'church, bell-tower, bell, cloister and other offices' (Twemlow 1906, 452).

as (as opposed to those
isters in the document

This reference should
; and sisters' that often
ed in Rome to refer to
gregations, though not
r (Gwynn and Hadcock
refers only to brethren.
nts relating to the Third
dcock 1988, 264). There
n that men and women
s, nor is there any later
s likely that the reference
s and is not an indication

an Friary is unknown,
nce by 1428 when a papal
friary and gave alms for
ich by reason of the wars
th ruin' (Twemlow 1909,
ars to have been the first
olished in Ireland (Gwynn
ot be definitively proven,
Ireland for which there is
the impression that there
Order Regular in Ireland
se of the order, but rather
ce celebrated *submissa voce*
onasteries, or ... churches'

of the Third Order 'to found
der was granted in another
r for this order in Ireland,
iam and other dioceses for
mitted to build a friary with
ices' (Twemlow 1906, 452).

The friars had already begun to construct a friary in the diocese of Tuam by this time. In addition, they were permitted to 'celebrate the divine office according to the manner of the Roman court'. Those who heard the divine office and received the sacraments at these churches could not be compelled by parish priests to do so elsewhere, recognition of the official status of these establishments (Twemlow 1906, 452). This is perhaps also indicative of the tensions that sometimes existed between the mendicant orders and parish clergy. Killeenbrenan was one of the first Franciscan Tertiary friaries to be founded in Ireland, if not the first, as indicated by Gwynn and Hadcock (1988, 271). If they are correct, then Killeenbrenan may be the friary in the diocese of Tuam referred to above.

The Sloane Manuscript¹ lists the founders of a number of Franciscan friaries of the First and Third Orders in Connacht, but it does not mention Killeenbrenan (Blake 1928-9, 25-9). Knox (1908, 96) proposes that Killeenbrenan was founded by a member of the Burke family, a logical suggestion given the friary's location in the heartland of Burke control and its short distance from the Burke castle of Shrulue, a fourteenth-century hall house near the Black River (Burke 2001, 91). The papal letter of 1426, which mandated the petition of Patrick Yclinnan, indicates that Walter Burke, 'lord of Congnacnicuile², chief of his sept', and his brothers had granted lands to the friars. Given the date of this document and the probability that it alludes to Killeenbrenan, despite not mentioning it by name, it is likely that Walter Burke (Mac William Íochtair 1402-40) (Moody *et al.* 1984, 171) was the founder of this house. He was a brother of Richard (Risdeárd) Burke, who was responsible for the foundation of the Dominican friary at Burrishoole. Walter is also thought to have been the founder of a religious house at Annagh on the shores of Lough Carra, although this foundation may have been the work of his father, Thomas (Knox 1908, 156). Mendicant friaries, such as Killeenbrenan, were completely reliant on the generosity of others to ensure their survival and they often had multiple patrons who contributed on different levels, according to their means. Some of the confusion surrounding the patrons of mendicant friaries arises from the fact that a number of patrons were involved in founding and supporting these religious houses.

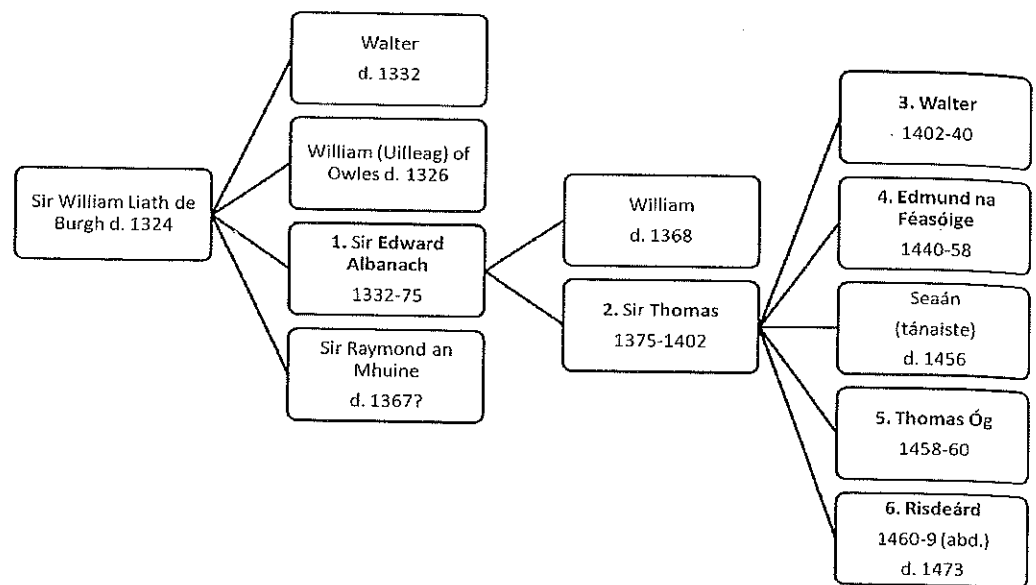


Fig. 1: Chart illustrating succession to Mac William Íochtair, with order of succession numbered (after Moody et al. 1984, 171).

An Armagh Friary?

In addition to having been erroneously believed to be located in Galway, due to its proximity to the border with that county, Killeenbrenan has also, much more surprisingly, been mistakenly located in Armagh. This error was discussed in Mooney's (1969, 34-6) article 'A Ghost Friary in Armagh', which traced this frequently repeated error through Archdall's *Monasticon Hibernicum* back to Louis Alemand's 1690 study of Irish monasteries. The friary is referred to by the name 'Kilsleve' in relation to discussion of the appointment of Fr Thomas Ornay³ as Perpetual Commissary of the Franciscan Third Order in 1457 and as Visitor of this order in Ireland. (Fr Ornay was a friar of Killeenbrenan, an appointment which will be explored in more detail below). While Alemand claimed to have derived this information from the writings of Luke Wadding, Mooney (1969, 35-6) concludes that the error first appears in Alemand's *Monasticum Hibernicum* in combination with a number of inaccuracies relating to this friary. Taken together (and subsequently repeated), these errors cemented the impression that Killeenbrenan was in Armagh. Alemand refers to the friary as 'Killave', unlike Wadding who uses 'Killavabrenaynd'. Mooney (1969, 36) explains that Alemand may have dispensed with the second element of the name as being unimportant and

possibly confused Killavae and Killevy in the diocese of Armagh. He must also have disregarded Wadding's account that the friary was in the diocese of Tuam, not Armagh.

'The chief of all houses in Ireland'

A papal letter of 1456-7 mandated the petition of the Franciscan Third Order Regular requesting that visitations of houses of this order should be carried out by one of their own members (Twemlow 1921, 141). This resolved the previously existing situation whereby they had been visited by friars from other mendicant orders, perhaps a reflection of the relative newness of the Franciscan Third Order Regular. This practice was discontinued on the basis that it was impractical due to the location of the Third Order houses and 'the dangers of the roads' (Twemlow 1921, 141). In addition, the Tertiaries had friars within their order who were suited to carry out this duty, thus it was unnecessary to appoint an external friar to this end (Twemlow 1921, 141). Thomas Oruayn, friar of Killeenbrenan, was therefore appointed visitor of the Franciscan Third Order Regular in Ireland.⁴ He was described as a priest of this order and an expert in canon law, in addition to being the oldest friar of the house of St Mary in Killeenbrenan, which is significantly described as 'the chief of all [Franciscan Third Order Regular] houses in Ireland'. Upon his death, it was stated that the order could choose a replacement visitor from amongst their own members or from any other order (Twemlow 1921, 141).

The architecture of Killeenbrenan Friary

There is a poor survival rate for Franciscan Third Order friaries in Ireland, with a number of houses having no extant remains. This may be an indication of these houses having been flimsily constructed and may also reflect the use of perishable materials, such as timber, in construction. These friaries that survive range in size from modestly-sized houses, such as Kilboght, Co. Galway, to larger houses, such as Rosserk, Co. Mayo. Indeed, the latter is exceptional for both the extent and good condition of its remains. Alemand (1722, 304) describes Killeenbrenan as 'one of the most considerable houses of the [Franciscan Third] Order'. On the basis of the surviving evidence, it appears not to have been as extensive as Rosserk Friary, but was probably superior in size to many houses of this order in Ireland. This is indicative of the prominence of Killeenbrenan in the Franciscan Third Order in Ireland, as discussed above, in addition to the support they received from its patrons

3. Walter
1402-40

4. Edmund na
Féasóige
1440-58

Seán
(tánaiste)
d. 1456

5. Thomas Óg
1458-60

6. Rísdeárd
1460-9 (abd.)
d. 1473

Order of succession

be located in Galway, Killeenbrenan has also, Armagh. This error is most Friary in Armagh, Archdall's *Monasticon* Irish monasteries. The next to discussion of the history of the Franciscan Third Order in Ireland. (Fr Oruayn was a visitor of the Franciscan Third Order in Ireland, explored in more detail the information from the records that the error first originated with a number of friars (and subsequently that Killeenbrenan was unlike Wadding who stated that Alemand may have been unimportant and

in constructing this friary. As to its current condition, the friary is now in a ruinous state and while a decent portion of the building still stands, a great deal of masonry has collapsed, and, unusually, has not been removed from where it fell. Much of this rubble has subsequently overgrown with grass, rendering it difficult to make one's way around the friary. While such a state had befallen many friaries in the past, most have benefitted from official interventions to secure their structures. Sadly, Killeenbrenan has not been so fortunate. The walls have been prey to ivy and while some of this growth has been cleared, the growth of creepers has caused the walls to bow out significantly in places. These factors present challenges when it comes to interpreting the architecture of this friary.

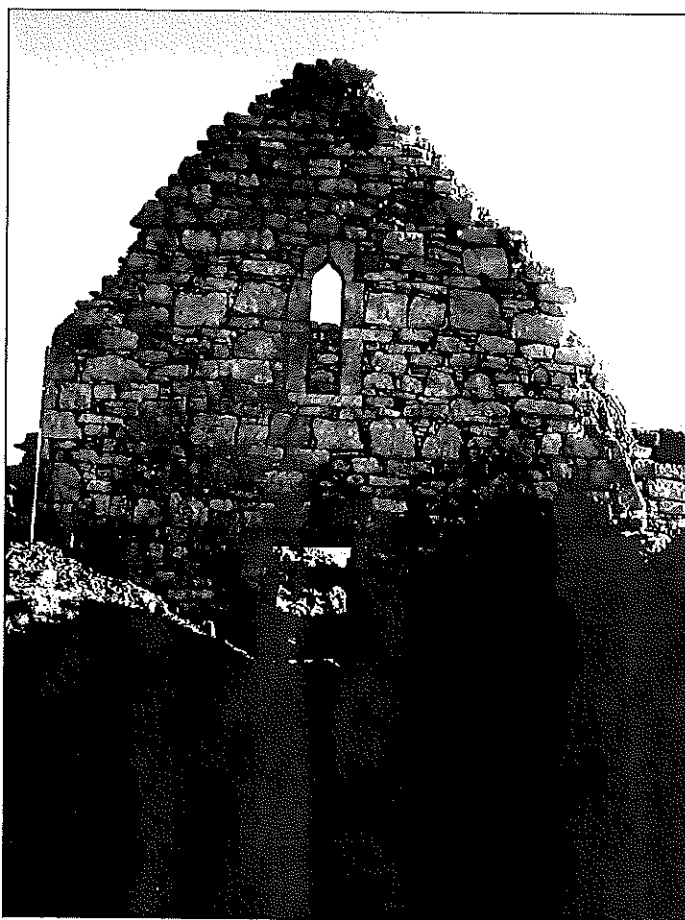


Plate 2: Western gable of Killeenbrenan Friary church.

In considering the architecture of this friary, it is worthwhile to firstly describe the overall layout of the friary as it now stands (Fig. 1). The friary consists of a long rectangular church, with a transept located to the south and a domestic range to the north. Both of these structures are towards the west end of the church. The church would once have been divided into a nave for the laity and a choir for use by the friary's religious community during Masses. There is an additional structure to the north of the choir.

The
Thi
(Pl.
of e
the
gab.
it.
and
a re
nor
on t
por
doe
nav
sect
The
win
ston

The
A ci



Plate

the friary is now in a
 ig still stands, a great
 : been removed from
 vergrown with grass,
 y. While such a state
 nefitted from official
 brenan has not been
 : some of this growth
 he walls to bow out
 es when it comes to

considering the
 hitecture of this
 ary, it is worthwhile
 firstly describe the
 erall layout of the
 ary as it now stands
 g. 1). The friary
 sists of a long
 tangular church,
 h a transept located
 the south and a
 mestic range to the
 rth. Both of these
 uctures are towards
 : west end of the
 arch. The church
 uld once have been
 ided into a nave for
 : laity and a choir
 use by the friary's
 igious community
 ring Masses. There is
 additional structure
 the north of the
 oir.

The nave

This account of the architecture of the friary will begin at the west doorway (Pl. 2), the point of entry for lay visitors to the church and the principal point of entry to the friary. The western approach of a friary church typically sets the tone for what one can expect of the architecture of the site. The western gable of the friary has two principal features, the portal with a window above it. The doorway is of a simple, flat-headed type. It is surmounted by a lintel and has simple, unmoulded jambs. On the inner side of the wall, there is a relieving arch of wedge-shaped stones. A collapse of the masonry on the north inner side of the doorway has caused a slight tilt in the outer jamb on this side. There is a single-light ogee-headed window above the western portal. The window does not have either a hood-moulding or spandrels but does have a chamfered *intrados*. With the exception of the west wall of the nave, little of the rest of this part of the church still stands, although a small section of the south wall remains, immediately to the east of the transept. There is a blocked-up opening in this wall, which was probably once a window, considering its location. A series of *voussoirs* or wedge-shaped stones surmount this feature.

The choir

A circuit of walls indicate the former extent of the choir of Killeenbrenan.



Plate 3: Buttresses at south-east corner of choir

These do not survive to their full height, however. This fact, in combination with their overgrown state, makes it difficult to pinpoint the location of the windows in the choir. Some insights into the pattern of fenestration at this site can be gleaned from comparison with other friary sites. The east window would most likely have been the largest window of the friary. The character of the original phase of the church, namely the nave and choir, indicates that the design of the window would have been reasonably simple. This is not

conclusive, however, given that only one window and doorway survive from this portion of the church. Other windows would have been built along the south wall of the choir. It is not possible to conclude whether there would have been any windows in the north wall of the choir, as this is largely dependent on the layout of the domestic ranges, which are too fragmentary to permit such an interpretation. An additional mass of masonry stands at the south east corner of the choir (Pl. 3). Its location indicates that it was a buttress constructed to strengthen the choir wall. It is not keyed into the adjoining wall, which suggests that it was a later addition.

The transept

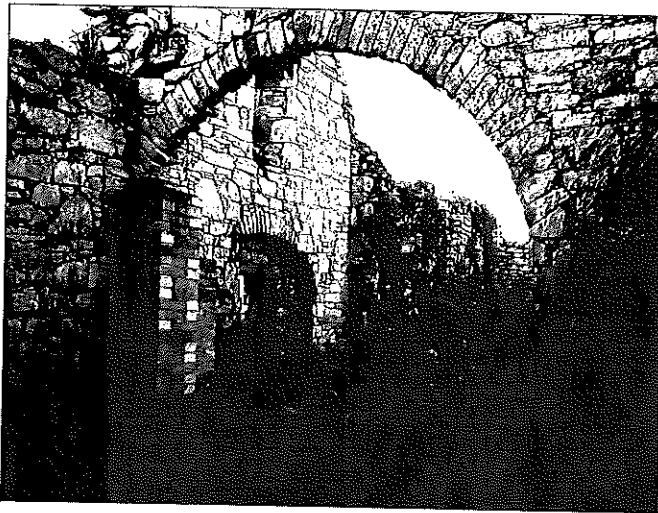


Plate 4: Transept arch, looking towards nave. The west doorway can be seen towards the centre of the image

The transept lies to the south of the church, emerging at a right angle from the nave (Pl. 4). This placement is somewhat unusual, as transepts are typically located midway along the church's length, where the nave and choir meet. The floor level of the transept is much lower than the rest of the friary, as its walls are still standing and thus no rubble has

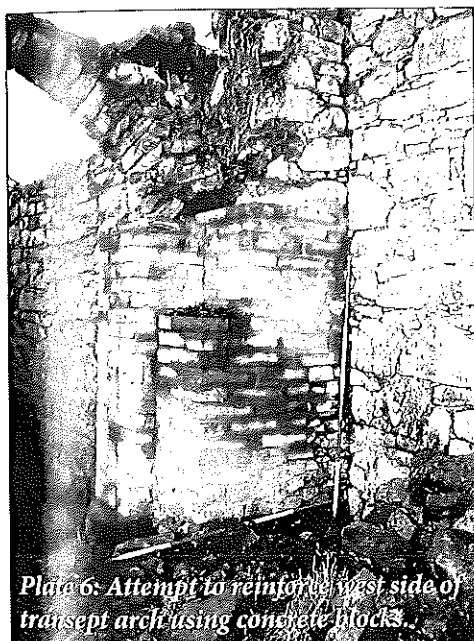
fallen here. However, the archway between the transept and nave is in a very precarious condition and looks likely to collapse (Pl. 5). The arch is only two stones deep at one point, as some of the masonry, which was originally above it, has fallen. The west side of the arch is in a particularly poor state. In addition, some masonry from the eastern jamb of the arch has collapsed, while only the construction of a modern pillar from concrete blocks on the western side of the arch, the result of a local initiative, has prevented the arch from collapsing (Pl. 6). This is, admittedly, not an ideal solution, but was considered necessary in the absence of any official attempts to ensure the building's structural stability. The transept was a later addition to the friary. This becomes apparent when one examines the fabric of the structure. The masonry is not bonded into that of the adjoining nave.

oorway survive from
 been built along the
 her there would have
 is largely dependent
 agmentary to permit
 y stands at the south
 hat it was a buttress
 ed into the adjoining



transept lies to the
 n of the church,
 ging at a right
 e from the nave (Pl.

This placement is
 somewhat unusual, as
 epts are typically
 ed midway along the
 ch's length, where the
 and choir meet. The
 level of the transept
 uch lower than the
 of the friary, as its
 are still standing
 thus no rubble has
 and nave is in a very
 5). The arch is only
 which was originally
 rticularly poor state.
 e arch has collapsed,
 ncrete blocks on the
 is prevented the arch
 eal solution, but was
 empts to ensure the
 ddition to the friary.
 of the structure. The



*Plate 6: Attempt to reinforce west side of
 transept arch using concrete blocks.*

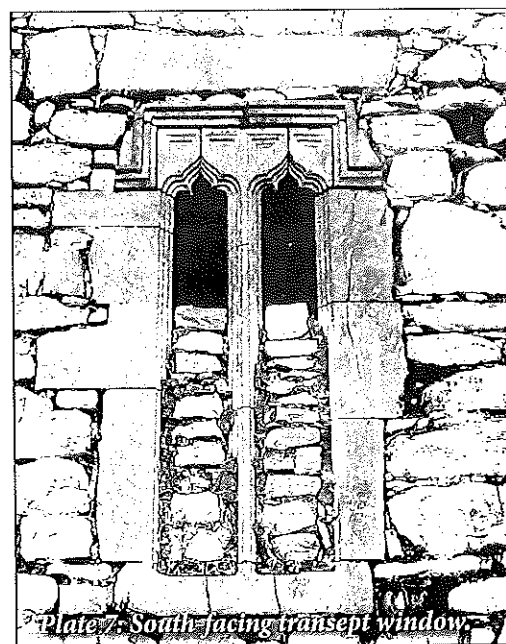


Plate 7: South-facing transept window.

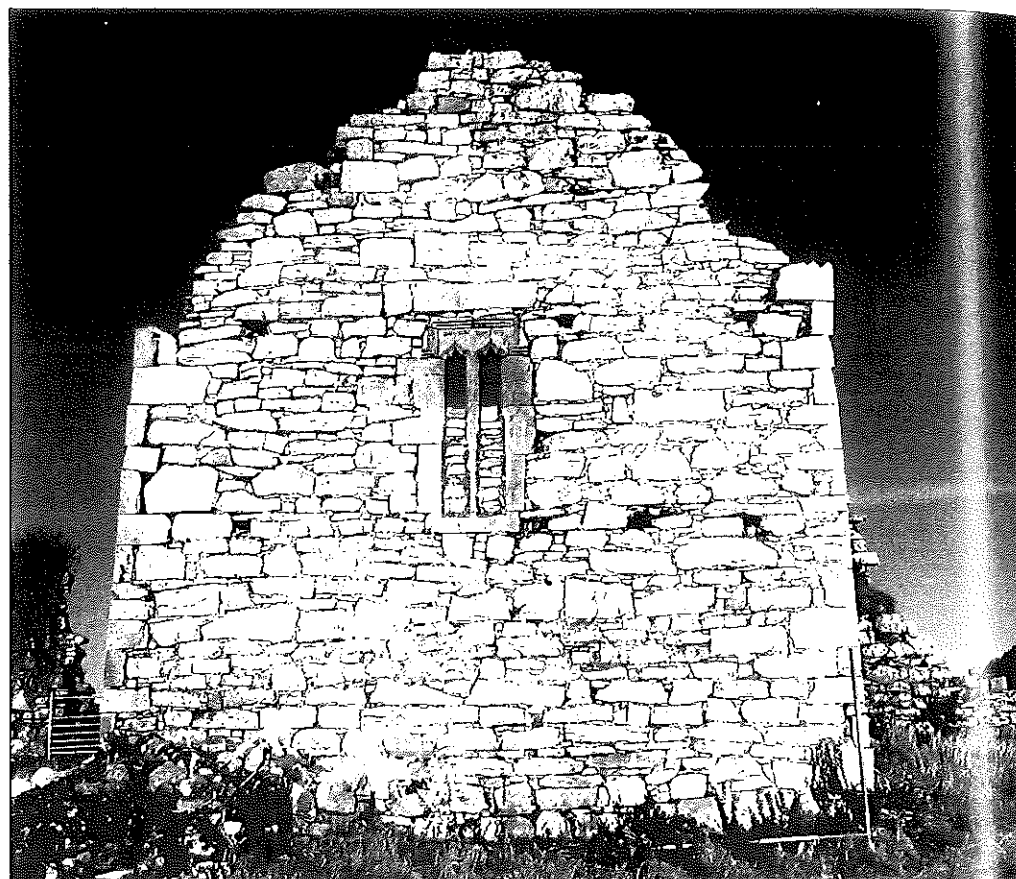
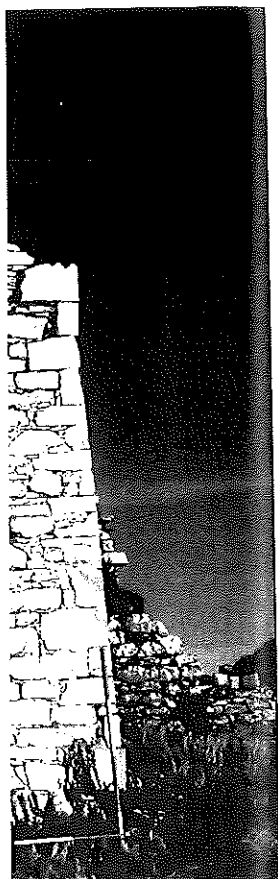


Plate 8: South gable of transept.

A twin-light cusped ogee-headed window is located in the south transept wall (Pl.s 7 & 8). The window is finely wrought, especially when compared with the example in the west wall of the nave, discussed above. The superior finish in the transept is indicative of the availability of generous patronage to finance its construction. The transept, of course, post-dates the construction of the rest of the church and came at a time when the Franciscan community here was well established in the locality. A stepped pattern embellishes the hood-moulding, spandrels and *intrados* of this south-facing window. This treatment is similar to that found on a ground floor window at the crossing of Burrishoole Dominican Friary, except that example has a five-stepped pattern, compared to three at Killeenbrenan. Nor does this window feature the punch-dressed surround used at Burrishoole. The Killeenbrenan window has been partly blocked up. There is a *piscina*, an arched recess with a drain hole, used for washing sacramental vessels, to the east of this window. It was executed from cut stone and has a simple pointed arch. Its presence indicates



1 the south transept ally when compared above. The superior enerous patronage to ates the construction anciscan community tern embellishes the acing window. This ndow at the crossing e has a five-stepped this window feature illeenbrenan window d recess with a drain f this window. It was Its presence indicates

the former existence of an altar at this location. This in turn suggests that the transept may have served as a chantry chapel, a part of the church endowed by a founder or founders for the regular saying of masses for the souls of the founder or others intended (Stevens Curl 2000, 140). Chantries range from being an altar to a partitioned area of the church, to a separate structure or addition to the building. The absence of an altar in the transept may indicate that the altar was removed or that it was constructed of wood. While stone altars were most desirable, perhaps because of their associations of greater permanency, and were most sought after for the principal altar beneath the east window, wooden altars were also used in medieval churches, particularly in subsidiary locations, such as chapels and transepts.



Plate 9: Window in east wall of the transept.

The second window in the transept faces east (Pl. 9), permitting the rising sun to illuminate this area of the church. Like the previous example, this twin-light window has also been partly blocked up. Its two lights are cusped; this time there are four cusps adorning each light. The upper part of the mullion⁵ has broken away. The mullion and *intrados* feature the same stepped pattern employed on the south-facing transept window, but it was not used on the hood-mouldings or spandrels in this second instance.

Domestic buildings

There is no evidence for a cloister at this site. This is commonly the case with Franciscan Third Order houses. The absence of cloisters may reflect the smaller size of Franciscan Third Order houses compared to those of the Franciscan First Order, such as Moyne and Ross Errilly. Smaller friary communities sometimes constructed a single L-shaped range of domestic buildings at a right angle to the church, as they did not need a full three ranges of conventual buildings. However, even the largest surviving Franciscan

Tertiary friary in Ireland, Rosserk, has a courtyard but no cloister arcade. The construction of wooden cloisters is a possibility worth considering.

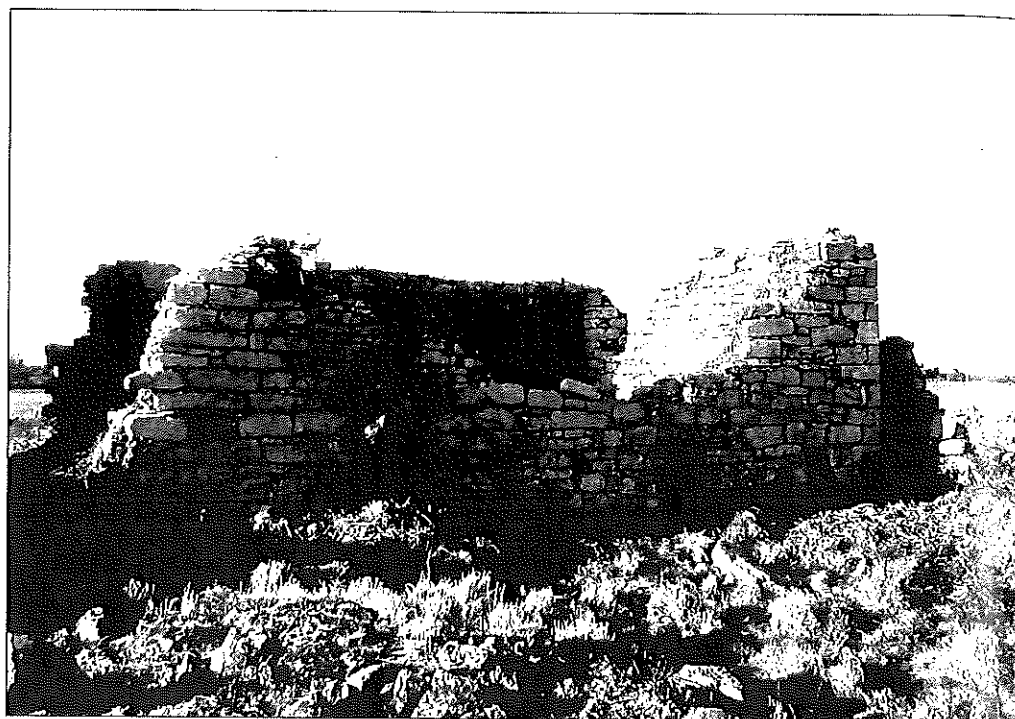


Plate 10: Building to north of friary church, with additional extension to right of picture.

The church's transept is located to the south, so the principles of mendicant friary planning indicate that the domestic buildings would have been located to the north of the church. There is a two-storey structure located at a right angle to the nave (Pl. 10). That it was indeed a two-storey structure is indicated by the presence of corbels to support a floor and the existence of windows on two levels. This structure continues the line of the west gable of the nave; however, the masonry of this structure is not keyed in with that of the nave. Part of a doorway survives in the west wall of this northern building, but the masonry on the north side of it has fallen away, leaving only the lower part of its south jamb *in situ*. There is a series of narrow windows with flat heads in the lower floor. As the building does not survive to its full height, only the sill stones and jambs of the windows survive at this level.

Another structure emerges immediately to the north of the one described

t no cloister arcade.
th considering.



ion to right of picture.

inciples of mendicant
ld have been located
are located at a right
structure is indicated
tence of windows on
st gable of the nave;
with that of the nave.
ern building, but the
only the lower part of
ws with flat heads in
ll height, only the sill

of the one described

above. This is in an even more ruinous state than its neighbour and its walls only survive to a low level, particularly in the northerly wall where they are scarcely above ground level. This building is connected to the two-storey building to the south of it by means of a section of masonry on the west side. The meeting point of these two buildings is indicated in the masonry fabric by the presence of a line of quoin stones, demarcating the end of the first building. There is an opening where these two walls meet, which spans the width of the space between the two buildings. It could possibly have been a doorway, although the opening into which it leads is rather narrow to have served as a passageway. The purpose of the northerly extension is not clear.

The site is now approached by means of a track coming from a north-easterly direction. However, the principal entrance to the site was once located to the west. This is indicated by the presence of two pointed arches, one larger than the other, which stand to the west of the complex of friary buildings (Pl. 11). Both arches are now blocked up, but would once have served as the principal entry point to the friary grounds, affording a view of the western doorway which the laity would have used to enter the friary.



Plate 11: Archways to west of the site which once served as the entrance to the friary complex.

Conclusion

Killeenbrenan Friary was 'the chief of all [Franciscan Third Order] houses in Ireland', according to a mid-fifteenth century account (Twemlow 1921, 141). This reflects its position as one of the earliest, if not the first house, of this order to be founded in Ireland. Killeenbrenan was part of a new movement in the mendicant orders, which saw the previously lay Third Order begin to establish cloistered communities. The friary struggled initially and required the papal grant of indulgences to obtain sufficient support to sustain its community, which was bound to a life of poverty. The friary is of modest proportions when compared to contemporary houses of the Franciscan First Order in Ireland, such as Moyne and Ross Errilly. It is also smaller than Rosserk Third Order Friary, although Rosserk appears to represent the exception rather than the rule for houses of this order. Conversely, Killeenbrenan is larger than other Tertiary houses, such as Kilbought, Co. Galway. While the Franciscan First Order tended to found large houses in late medieval Ireland, the Third Order favoured smaller houses and these often occurred in clusters. For example, Killeenbrenan is located close to the Tertiary houses of Cloonyvornoge and Beagh, both of which are in Co. Galway and have no extant standing remains.

This friary was constructed in a piecemeal fashion, with additions being made gradually, in different phases, as patronage and resources became available. Decorative features in stone are kept to a minimum and are confined to the windows of the transept, which are not part of the original phase of construction of the church.⁶ The simplicity of the buildings and restraint in decoration is indicative of something constructed out of necessity rather than being intended for display or status. The transept is slightly more elaborate in appearance; this is perhaps a reflection of a patron's generosity and specified requirements. While this friary was evidently significant amongst its own order in Ireland, its architecture is in keeping with small-to-medium sized houses of the Franciscan Tertiaries in Ireland, probably reflecting the size of the community it once housed.

Third Order] houses in (Twemlow 1921, 141). the first house, of this art of a new movement y Third Order begin to d initially and required support to sustain its [he friary is of modest ses of the Franciscan illy. It is also smaller c appears to represent is order. Conversely, such as Kilboght, Co. found large houses in aller houses and these an is located close to th of which are in Co.

n additions being made rces became available. n and are confined to the original phase of ldings and restraint in of necessity rather than ghtly more elaborate in enerosity and specified icant amongst its own mall-to-medium sized ly reflecting the size of

Notes

¹British Museum MS No. 4814.

²Refers to Conmaicne Cúile Talad, an early medieval kingdom approximately coterminous with the lordship of Clann Uilliam Iochtair (Lower Mac William Burke) or the modern baronies of Kilmaine and Ross, Co. Mayo (FitzPatrick 2005, 358).

³Elsewhere rendered as Oruayn (Twemlow 1921, 141).

⁴His Irish-speaking neighbours may have known him as Tomás Ó Ruadháin, according to Mooney (1969, 36).

⁵The bar of stone that divides the widow opening into two.

⁶The use of perishable material for decorative purposes cannot be ruled out. Late medieval friaries in Ireland provide evidence of the use of wooden statues, walls paintings and stained glass, but these rarely survive *in situ*. However, there was much more to the decorative scheme of these buildings than their ruinous state and the preponderance of stone may suggest to the popular imagination.

Bibliography

Printed Primary Sources

Twemlow, J.A. (ed) (1906). *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland, Papal Letters*, Vol. VII AD 1417-1431. Mackie & Co., London.

Twemlow, J.A. (ed) (1909). *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland, Papal Letters*, Vol. VIII AD 1427-1447. His Majesty's Stationery Office, London.

Twemlow, J.A. (ed) (1921). *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland, Papal Letters*, Vol. XI AD 1455-1464. His Majesty's Stationery Office, London.

Secondary Sources

Alemand, L.A. (1722). *Monasticon Hibernicum*. William Mears, London.

Blake, M.J. (1928-9). The Franciscan convents in Connacht with notes thereon. *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*. Vol. 14, pp. 25-9.

Burke, E. (2001). *Burke People and Places*. Fourth Edition. Edmund Burke Publisher, Dublin.

FitzPatrick, E. (2005). Assembly and inauguration places of the Burkes in late medieval Connacht. In: P.J. Duffy, D. Edwards & E. FitzPatrick (eds) *Gaelic Ireland c. 1250-c.1650: Land, Lordship and Settlement*. Four Courts Press, Dublin.

Gwynn, A., and Hadcock, R.N., (1988). *Medieval Religious Houses Ireland*. Irish Academic Press, Dublin.

Knox, H.T., (1908). *The History of the County Mayo*. Hodges, Figgis and Co. Ltd., Dublin.

Moody, T.W., Martin, E.X. & Byrne, F.J. (1984). *A New History of Ireland, IX: Maps, Genealogies, Lists: A Companion to Irish History, Part II*. Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Mooney, C., (1958-59). The Franciscans in County Mayo. *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*. Vol. 29, pp. 42-69.

Mooney, C., (1969). A ghost-friary in Co. Armagh. *Seanchas Ard Mhacha: Journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society*. Vol.5, No.1, pp. 34-36.

Ó Clabaigh, C.N. (2002). *The Franciscans in Ireland, 1400-1534: From Reform to*

Reformation. Four Courts Press, Dublin.

Stevens Curl, J., (1999). *Oxford Dictionary of Architecture*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Watt, J. (1998). *The Church in Medieval Ireland*. Second Edition. University College Dublin Press, Dublin.

Yvonne McDermott graduated from Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Castlebar, with a B.A. in Heritage Studies and subsequently completed an M.A. by research on the topic of mendicant friaries at the same institute. She lectures on the Heritage Studies programme in GMIT Castlebar, where she teaches Archaeology and Folklore.

Cathair na Mart 2011 Launch.



Pictured at the launch of Cathair na Mart 29; Michael Mulloy, Jarlath Cunnane, John Mulloy. (c. Conor McKeown).